



Coalitions Quarterly

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Coming Up:

April... Alcohol Awareness Month
April... Sticker Shock events
April 28, 29...MECAM Conference
May 10... Seller/Server Training
May 25...Drug Free Coalitions of
Madison County meeting

IYS Fact...

Did you know that 91% of 6th graders report that their family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use. By 12th grade, that number drops to 74%.

This data was taken from the 2010 Madison County Illinois Youth Survey.

For more information, please contact Donna Nahlik, Chestnut Health Systems, at (618)288-3100 or by email at dnahlik@chestnut.org

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Prescription Drug Disposal Projects on the National Radar

In our country- 1 in 5 teens has abused prescription drugs. In fact, every day in America- 2,500 teens abuse a prescription drug for the first time.

As a society, we use more medication now than we used to. We have become accustomed to going to the doctor and getting a prescription. That normalizes the act of taking medications and causes people to see prescription drugs as SAFE. Prescription Drugs serve an important purpose when used under a doctor's care, BUT- misuse can lead to overdose, addiction and even death.

Studies show that most people who end up misusing prescription drugs get those substances from an acquaintance or family member. This has prompted many local communities to conduct prescription "take back" events to assist the community in getting expired or unwanted medications out of peoples' homes. Several of these events were held in Madison County in 2010. SMARxT Disposal Project collections were held in Collinsville, Edwardsville, and Granite City. Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville hosted a collection day as well.

The national radar is also focused on this issue. The Drug Enforcement Agency has announced the second annual National Prescription Drug Take Back Day which will take place on **Saturday, April 30, 2011**. Area police departments can register to participate in the DEA program. The DEA will coordinate disposal of the medication collected in registered communities. Visit www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov for more information on this event.



Prescription drug take-back programs help to safely dispose of unwanted or expired

Seller/ Server Training

The Drug Free Coalitions of Madison County are hosting a seller/server training for all interested liquor licensees in Madison County. The training will be held in the Morris University Center at Southern Illinois University on Tuesday, May 10 from 9:00 a.m.—

12:00pm. Topics covered include:
"Why 21?"
"Compliance Checks— How? Why?"
"Checking ID— How to Spot a Fake ID"

Registration information has been sent to all Drug Free Coalitions of Madison County members. Individual coalitions are encouraged to share that information with the liquor licensees in their communities.

The training will be offered free of charge. Space is available for 100 attendees. Attendees will be responsible for any parking costs incurred.

Contact Donna Nahlik (dnahlik@chestnut.org) for more information.

In The News...Heroin

Heroin has been in the metro-east news several times during the past few months. Recent reports of increased heroin overdoses, especially among young people, have prompted concern among area communities.

Madison County Coroner Stephen Nonn reports that since January 2010 to present date there have been 21 heroin overdose deaths in Madison County, Illinois, alone.

There are several theories as to the reason for these increases. Costs for heroin have decreased in the past few years, and heroin buttons (small packets or gelatin capsules filled with heroin) can be purchased for as little as \$5 or \$10. Other theories suggest that

changes in how heroin can be used factor into its popularity. Increases in purity allow the drug to now be snorted. This is attractive to users who have traditionally been unwilling to use a needle to inject the drug. Most users do eventually resort to injecting the heroin as their tolerance level increases.

Press conferences conducted in both St. Clair and Madison Counties within the past few weeks serve to underscore the level of concern among local community officials. Local law enforcement agencies are partnering with the DEA, community coalitions, and other government entities to tackle this complex issue.

What can community groups do about heroin use when substances like alcohol and marijuana continue to be larger issues within our target age groups? It is important to monitor heroin use rates, especially given the increasing community awareness of heroin. Experts in this area tell us that heroin is gaining in popularity among adolescents. Reports also affirm that most young heroin users have used alcohol and marijuana before progressing to heroin. So...our message should continue to be that the best way to keep our kids from using heroin is to keep them from using alcohol and marijuana.

Coalition Spotlight: Take Action Coalition...Granite City

The Take Action Drug Free Communities coalition, serving the communities of Granite City, Madison, and Venice, was the first Madison County coalition to receive the Drug Free Communities grant. In their tenth and final year of the grant, Take Action has spent considerable time ensuring that the coalition programs will continue once the grant is no longer available to the community. The Madison/Venice group is now operating as a separate coalition and will continue to provide prevention services to both communities.

The coalition has made great strides in the Granite City area. Over the past several years, the Cleaner Greener Granite project has taken off, and several satellite projects are now sustained in the community. One of these programs, Melting Pot, the brainchild of Alderwoman Brenda Whittaker, began as a farmer's market but has now expanded to include various artisans and musicians. Melting Pot is described locally as "industry and art meeting in Granite City".

The Community Gardens are another program that has taken off and become part of the Granite City landscape. This was also a Cleaner Greener Granite project and has been a huge success...all starting with a great idea and one donated plot of land. Cleaner Greener Granite has involved the community in graffiti clean-up efforts. More than 50 volunteers came out to help clean up and repaint areas that had been defaced. Soon beautiful murals...depicting Granite City history and painted by local artists...replaced the graffiti on one stretch of the bike trail. This area, now known as Graffiti Alley, is a great addition to the Granite City landscape.

Take Action has implemented a variety of programs in their effort to reduce the number of youth in their area with access to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. They have organized and hosted a prescription drug take-back event and have assisted with the Recovery School, a program run by Chestnut Health Systems and Coordinated Youth

and Human Services. CYHS also runs the Teen Reach program in Granite City. Upcoming projects include cooperative efforts with the Granite City High School After-Prom committee to implement the "Parents Who Host Lose the Most" campaign and with local law enforcement to explore the problem of heroin in local communities.

When asked how the Take Action coalition involves members of the community in their group, Prevention Specialist Debbie Valencia replied, "We try to involve the community in efforts that relate to their lives. Then they see how what we are trying to do can make the whole community better." Debbie added, "People will give you two hours of their time. Once they have a taste of what you are trying to do, they will come back".

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