

Shrewsbury Community Alliance for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

We hope everyone had a happy, healthy and safe holiday season! The Alliance now has a page on the Boro website. Go to www.shrewsburyboro.com, click Commissions. You will find a list of family/teen websites, current substance abuse issues, events, photos of Red Ribbon Week activities, and our Resource Guide containing numerous helplines. Please check it regularly!

A very important upcoming Event:

What: “Surviving the Teen Years ...Everything You Wanted to Know about your Teen...But were Afraid to Ask!”

When: Thursday, March 26th 7-9 pm

Where: Red Bank Regional High School, Ridge Rd, Little Silver

Who: For any and all parents of teens and pre-teens! Come and bring a friend!

Topics: Teens and the Internet, Teens and Driving, Trends in Adolescent Behavior, Trends in Substance Abuse, Preparing my Teen for Transition, Boys to Men in the 21st Century

Format: Panel presentations, followed by ‘break out sessions’ by topic for further question/answers by parents

The panelists are representatives from RBR’s The Source, RBR’s Guidance Department, the Monmouth County Prosecutor’s Office, and local teen and family therapists. **Last year we had over 150 parents in attendance!** Please think about attending this year. No matter what middle or high school school your child attends.. a teen is a teen. Learn what you need to be a part of their world.

Barnes and Noble will have a table again this year selling books on all our topics. Refreshments supplied by local businesses will also be available. This forum is co-sponsored by your Alliance and RBRHS.

Alliance members regularly attend workshops to better educate ourselves about current substance abuse issues. In November, Ginni O’Dor attended a discussion concerning the seriousness of **Prescription Drug Abuse**. The professional panel included medical experts, drug enforcement agents and substance abuse counselors who pointed out that this abuse often goes undetected/unrecognized due to easy accessibility by people of all ages.

What to look for/signs:

- Finding any medications among personal affects without knowledge of illness
- Visits to online sites that are ‘pro-drug’ or ‘how to obtain’
- Unexplained disappearances of medicines from your medicine cabinet.
- Change in behavior, loss of interest in hobbies, declining grades, change in friends, physical appearance

How to prevent/what to do:

- Set an example; do not abuse Rx or OTC medications – follow labels
- Keep an inventory of meds in your house
- Communicate the dangers to your family. **Stop the myth – getting high on Rx or OTC meds is not safer than illicit/illegal street drugs**
- Properly disposed of unused or expired meds.
- If you suspect a problem: **GET HELP**. Many organizations are referenced in our Resource Guide on the webpage, or go to www.drugfree.org to find a treatment option near you, or if you are a parent of an RBR student **The Source** counseling center is a wonderful resource (732) 842-8000.

Did you know:

- About 1 in 5 New Jersey youths grade 9-12 report having used Rx not prescribed to them to get high
- Abusing Rx painkillers is like abusing heroin.** Both are opiates and their ingredients are very similar
- The risk of addiction and death from overdosing is **extremely high**.

Alcohol Poisoning:

Within the past two months there have been **two NJ youths that have died from alcohol poisoning** on college campuses. These two deaths could have been prevented if someone had called 911 or sought the help of a capable adult. Youth consume alcohol in ways that are very dangerous; they drink more heavily and engage in more binge drinking (5 or more drinks per occasion) than adults. These minors are hesitating to seek medical help in fear of legal charges. Additionally, these youth do not know the warning signs of alcohol poisoning.

Currently there is a bill in the NJ State Legislature; Bill # 3160 is called the 911-Lifeline Legislation. This bill, if approved, would encourage young people to call for help in the event of an alcohol medical emergency by providing those who call for help and/or are in need of help to be immune from charges otherwise triggered by violation of laws dealing with underage drinking. This bill does not condone the youth use of alcohol but is intending to save lives imperiled as a result.

The Alliance will keep you posted on this legislation. In the meantime please discuss the facts/dangers about alcohol poisoning with your family. Go to www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov for more information.

We welcome any and all ideas about how to best reach out to our community to prevent tragedies relating to alcohol or drug abuse. Please come to one of our meetings (2nd Monday of every month at 7 pm at Boro Hall) or e-mail Karen Lloyd at wildelloyd@aol.com if you have any suggestions. Thank you!