

SPOTLIGHT: Danbury, CT's Community Outreach and Prevention Program



MCCA, NCADD's Danbury, CT Affiliate, offers a **Community Outreach and Prevention Program** which is an educational service to enhance the well being of all families, not just those at high risk of substance use, with an emphasis on underage drinking and drugging.

MCCA partners with Stand Together Make a Difference, the designated Local Prevention Council for Danbury. The goal of the program is educating the public toward a healthier, more positive lifestyle, and to make constructive life choices.

Statistics have shown that adolescents who are educated about the dangers of engaging in underage drinking and drug use are less likely to take part in such activities. MCCA is working to change these statistics and reduce underage drinking and drugging in Danbury.

There are several components of the Program.

- A two-hour "*Current Trends*" training, for Danbury public school PPS staff, Stand Together Make a Difference Coalition members, agency personnel and other interested parties held at the local High School with a presentation given by staff from the Governor's Prevention Partnership.
- "*Parents You Matter*" workshops presented at a couple of middle schools to introduce parents to the harms of underage drinking, review the Social Hosting Law, discuss the development of the adolescent brain and discuss tips for keeping their children safe.
- Workshops given to all 8th grade middle school students to discuss the dangers of underage drinking and drugging, brain development, teen perception of alcohol use, including Social Hosting Law implications, accessibility, predisposition to addiction and rules to set with friends when hosting a party.
- An informational card is available and disseminated to parents regarding the Social Hosting Law. It is also available in Spanish.
- A Drug Take Back Day is scheduled for September and April of each year. The public can drop off unused prescription drugs at the Danbury Police Department for safe disposal.
- A student forum for underage drinking is being discussed with Danbury Public Schools. This

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forum would involve a panel of speakers representing different perspectives of underage drinking such as law enforcement- legal implications and the Social Hosting Law, adolescent brain development, students in recovery, a medical perspective and also offer an introduction to protective factors and developmental assets which help keep children from engaging in risky behaviors.

- A Media Campaign, "Stand Together To Make A Difference for Danbury's Youth," is currently being developed to strengthen the Stand Together Make a Difference local substance abuse prevention coalition whose mission is to reduce substance use in Danbury.

The age of drinking onset in Danbury is about 13 years old. When drinking is delayed until age 21, the risk of serious alcohol problems is decreased by 70 percent.

The **Community Outreach and Education Program** provides consultation and collaboration with other agencies, schools, churches, and community centers, providing:

- Multi-agency coordination and collaboration;
- Prevention assessments and referrals;
- Health promotion and health fairs;
- School and other speaking engagements;
- Distributing materials on substance abuse education.

MCCA also offers a wide variety of treatment services and programs, including outpatient, as well as short and long-term residential inpatient treatment. Because it offers a full spectrum of services, clients who go to MCCA are able to take advantage of the many programs provided, facilitating the recovery process.

Help and support is also available to family members, a vital component in the recovery process. The various programs service seniors, Latinos, women, and others affected by alcohol and drug dependence.

For more information:

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www.mccaonline.com