NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

April Marks 28th Alcohol Awareness Month

Each April since 1987, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) sponsors **NCADD Alcohol Awareness Month** to increase public awareness and understanding, reduce stigma and encourage local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues.

This April, NCADD highlights the important public health issue of underage drinking, a problem with devastating individual, family and community consequences.

As we did last year, this year's theme, "**Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow,**" will mark a month of April filled with local, state, and national events aimed at educating people about the treatment and prevention of alcoholism. Local NCADD Affiliates as well as schools, colleges, churches, and countless other community organizations will sponsor a host of activities that create awareness and encourage individuals and families to get help for alcohol-related problems.

Alcohol use by young people is extremely dangerous—both to themselves and to society, and is directly associated with traffic fatalities, violence, suicide, educational failure, alcohol overdose, unsafe sex and other problem behaviors. Annually, over 6,500 people under the age of 21 die from alcohol-related accidents and thousands more are injured.
Additionally:

- Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for America's young people, and is more likely to kill young people than all illegal drugs combined.
- Each day, 7,000 kids in the United States under the age of 16 take their first drink.
- Those who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin at age 21.
- More than 1,700 college students in the U.S. are killed each year—about 4.65 a day—as a result of alcohol-related injuries.
- 25% of U.S. children are exposed to alcohol-use disorders in their family.
- Underage alcohol use costs the nation an estimated $62 billion annually.

Reducing underage drinking is critical to securing a healthy future for America's youth and requires a cooperative effort from parents, schools, community organizations, business leaders, government agencies, the entertainment industry, alcohol manufacturers/retailers and young people.

"Underage drinking is a complex issue," says Greg Muth, chairperson of the NCADD Board of Directors, "one that can only be solved through a sustained and cooperative effort. As a nation, we need to wake up to the reality that for some, alcoholism and addiction develop at a young age and that intervention, treatment, and recovery support are essential for them and their families," says Muth. "We can't afford to wait any longer."

An integral part of Alcohol Awareness Month is Alcohol-Free Weekend (April 4-6, 2014), which is designed to raise public awareness about the use of alcohol and how it may be affecting individuals, families, and the community.

During this seventy-two-hour period, NCADD extends an open invitation to all Americans, young and old, to participate in three alcohol-free days and to use this time to contact local NCADD Affiliates and other alcoholism agencies to learn more about alcoholism and its early symptoms.

For more information about NCADD, underage drinking, NCADD Alcohol Awareness Month and NCADD Alcohol-Free Weekend, visit the NCADD website at: **www.ncadd.org**.