

# In The Know

A monthly newsletter to keep you current and In The Know on topics related to the Prevention of Substance Abuse

## Beating the winter blahs

With the cold months still lingering on, getting past the "winter blues" can be difficult. Here are some ways to help you get through these tough months, until the sun comes out!

Get moving; exercise can improve health, productivity and mood. Endorphins are released during exercise. Endorphins decrease the amount of pain that is felt and increase pleasure and happiness. Twenty minutes of exercise can start the secretion of endorphins. Aiming for thirty minutes a day can improve mental focus, improve energy levels and sleep. Pick an exercise that you enjoy such as dancing,

basketball or walking and work it into your schedule.

Get plenty of sleep. It is important for your body to rejuvenate and for your immune system to work properly. Not having screen time right before bed is important so you can get your body and mind ready for sleep.

Eat plenty of whole grains, vegetables, fruits and proteins, and avoid the carb-rich snack foods that boost and crash blood levels. Craving carbohydrates in the winter is expected; try to find nutrient rich foods that wouldn't make you feel sluggish afterwards.

Get sunlight when possible.

During the winter months we lack natural sunlight. Being outside when the sun is out can improve mood and help vitamin D deficiencies. Shoot for twenty minutes of sunshine a day.

If you smoke, kick the habit now. If you are interested in assistance to begin a tobacco free lifestyle, call 211 to sign up for a free cessation group. The seven week program is conducted over the phone. Or make a commitment to kick the habit on the annual Kick Butts Day! This year the event is held on March 19, 2014. On this day you can join thousands of Americans who refrain from smoking for one day. Ab-

staining from tobacco for one day can show you that you can conquer even more.

Stress management techniques to try during the winter:

- Yoga
- Exercise
- Socialize with others
- Laughter
- Music
- Volunteer
- Guided Imagery
- Journal
- Aromatherapy
- Take a walk
- Enjoy nature
- Watch a comedy
- Curl up with a good book
- Play with a pet.

## March is promotes gambling awareness

With the economy struggling there has been an increase in gambling across the country for many age groups. Economic hardships, such as a poor economy, loss of jobs, and stress all contribute to the increased incidence of gambling. There much to lose from risking money that is needed for bills and necessities; such as family, homes, furniture, credit, trust and good mental health.

To increase the knowledge and understanding of gambling addictions as a real and serious issue throughout the United States Gambling

Awareness Month is observed each March.

The Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) characterizes problem gambling as a need to bet more and when trying to stop becomes restless and agitated. The more severe addiction is pathological gambling which involves a loss of control, irrational thinking, and the inability to stop despite negative consequences in one's life. When a person reaches that level of intensity, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) classifies it as a mental dis-

order. Gambling, like other addictions, results in the gambler getting "a high" off of winning and can be known for "chasing their losses." Problem gamblers will often continue try to win back their lost money and in rare cases where money is won, it is often quickly gambled away

Problem gambling is a serious issue that if not controlled or treated can lead to ruined relationships, economic downfalls, legal issues, loss of employment and more. It is often difficult for a problem gambler to stop gambling, you cannot



make them, they must do it on their own.

If you or someone you know shows signs of a gambling problem, please visit the [www.ncadd-ra.org](http://www.ncadd-ra.org) website and click on the Gamblers Anonymous 20 Questions or call Steuben Council on Addictions at (607) 776-6441 for more information.

**Do you or someone you care about need help because of Drugs, Alcohol or Gambling call:**

**1-877-8HOPENY (1-877-846-7369)**

**24 hours a day, 7 days a week \* Free & confidential information and referrals.**

# In The Know and By The Numbers

A look at current statistics and figures relating to gambling.

- 20% of addicted gamblers have filed for bankruptcy.
- 20% of the homeless are gambling addicts.
- 60% of those addicted to gambling will commit crimes.
- Up to 50% of spouses of addicted gamblers are abused.

Source: April 14, 2008 Casino Watch Policy Briefs by Joseph Day, *Expanded Gambling: Casino's impact on a new community*

- 2 million U.S. adults are estimated to meet criteria for pathological gambling in a given year.
- Another 4-6 million would be con-

sidered problem gamblers.

Source: National Council on Problem Gambling

- 2.1% of adolescents already meet the criteria for problem gambling.
- 6.5% of those youth are in the category of at-risk or problem gambling.
- Approximately 68% of youth between the ages of 14 and 21 have gambled in the last year.
- 11% of adolescents report having gambled twice a week or more.

Source: Youth Gambling, NPGAW website, 2007 & National Council on Problem Gambling.

## Catholic Charities Steuben Prevention Services

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Prevention Director: Jim Bassage

Prevention Educators:

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Clerical Assistant: Peggy Wurzer

Drug Free Communities Coordinator:  
Norm McCumiskey

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Assistant: Pam Aini

Bath Hope for Youth Counselors:

Sherry Sutton—Campbell-Savona  
Bridgette Lanphear—Hammondspport  
Jennifer Beaty—Haverling

## The Council Corner

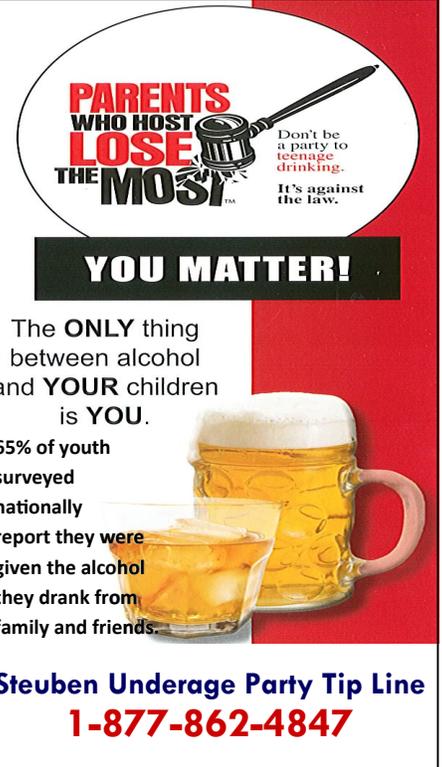
Steuben Council on Addictions would like to welcome Pam Aini to the team, as the Drug Free Communities Program Assistant. Pam was previously employed for 23 years as a Paralegal for the District Attorney, she also served as a court clerk in Canisteo Village Court, owner of Finger Lakes Paralegal Services and since 2010 has also served as the Administrator for the NYS STOP-DWI Association. Upon learning about the Drug Free Communities grant in Steuben County Pam was interested in exercising her background and experience to branch out into the world of prevention and become involved in work-

ing toward a drug free community for our youth. "I am very excited to join the team at and especially to be a part of the Coalition for Drug Free Communities. I look forward to working toward the goal of keeping our communities safe and our youth drug free."

This April, the Underage Drinking Taskforce will hold its Annual T-Shirt contest. This contest is open for students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> in the County. Students are to create a poster illustrating the dangers of drinking while under age, along with why adults should not provide alcohol to minors. The class with the first prize winner will win a t-shirt for all the students in his/

her class featuring their poster. Second prize will win a pizza party for their class and the third prize will win an ice cream party for the class! All posters are due to Jim Bassage no later than April 25<sup>th</sup>.

Recently, two of our educators, Stacey O'Dell and Michele Sexsmith attended the NYS Prevention Provider Training on Problem Gambling. The two trained prevention educators will be sharing the Problem Gambling Prevention Integration Initiative presentations to stakeholders in the county. Also, during March for Gambling Awareness Month, displays will be up throughout Steuben County during the month.



**PARENTS WHO HOST LOSE THE MOST**

Don't be a party to teenage drinking. It's against the law.

**YOU MATTER!**

The **ONLY** thing between alcohol and **YOUR** children is **YOU**.

65% of youth surveyed nationally report they were given the alcohol they drank from family and friends.

**Steuben Underage Party Tip Line**  
**1-877-862-4847**

Steuben Council on Addictions is a division of Catholic Charities Steuben. In The Know is a regular monthly update about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to help in the prevention of substance use and abuse. For more information please contact Stacey O'Dell, Prevention Educator at [sodell@dor.org](mailto:sodell@dor.org).

Catholic Charities  
Steuben County