

---

---

# Parenting for Prevention

---

---

Student Assistance Services Corp., 660 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York, 10591

May, 2008

---

## Hot Off The Press



This newsletter reports about an exciting and significant step that the National Institute on Alcohol

Abuse and Alcoholism has taken to address the issue of underage drinking. It has sponsored a special supplement in a medical journal for pediatricians that considers the issue of underage drinking in a developmental framework.

This report can be accessed by going to [www.pediatrircs.com](http://www.pediatrircs.com) and then type into the search box "Developmental Nature of Underage Drinking." A box will come up with that name on it and once that is checked the supplement will come up on the screen and it can be downloaded or printed.

It is the goal of coalition work to get all the sectors of a community involved in the effort to reduce underage drinking and drug use. An article in a prestigious medical publication about the developmental issues involved in underage drinking goes a long way to educating and involving the medical community in a very proactive and positive way.

*Patricia Murphy Warble, Editor*

## New Approach to Underage Drinking

### *Getting the medical community on board*

In early April, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) announced that it has sponsored a special supplement to *Pediatrics*. This supplement will allow, for the first time, the medical community and particularly physicians, to get in one place, the reviews and analyses of current research on biological, behavioral, and environmental changes during childhood and adolescence that foster the initiation, maintenance, and acceleration of the illegal use of alcohol by underage youth.

"We now recognize that underage drinking must be addressed, not as an isolated phenomenon, but as one fully embedded in the context of child and adolescent development," said NIAAA Director Ting-Kai Li, M.D. "From birth through adolescence, a complex cascade of biological, psychological and social development interacts with dynamic environmental influences, leading to behavior that may either move individuals toward or away from underage drinking."

The following is from the NIH News website, and describes the information that is available in the supplement.

- Ann S. Masten, Ph.D., professor in the Institute of Child Development at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, and colleagues, present a rationale for the developmental approach to alcohol in an article offering age-related data on patterns of onset, prevalence and the course of alcohol use and disorders in young people.
- Robert A. Zucker, Ph.D., professor of psychiatry at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and his team looked the relationship between early developmental processes and the continuity of risk for underage and problem drinking by summarizing the evidence on early pathways toward and away from underage drinking. This article has a particular focus on the risk and protective factors, mediators, and moderators of risk for underage drinking that become evident during the preschool and early school years.

- In “ Transitions into Underage Drinking and Problem Drinking: Developmental Processes and Mechanisms between Ages 10-15” - Michael Windle, Ph.D., professor and chair, Department of Behavioral Sciences and Health Education at Emory University in Atlanta, and his group examined pre- and mid-teen groups during the time when the initial initiation and escalation of alcohol use commonly occurs, in relation to puberty, structural and functional maturation of the brain, and changes in social contexts.
- Looking at the next age group, youth aged 16-20, Sandra Brown, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of California, San Diego, and colleagues review the normative neurological, cognitive, and social changes that typically occur in late adolescence. Their report discusses evidence for the impact of these transitions on individual drinking trajectories. The team also describes evidence linking heavy alcohol use in late adolescence with neurological and social impairments.
- “Ensuring that pediatricians have access to this new data and a comprehensive view of how alcoholism affects our youth, matched to their developmental processes, will help physicians take a new look at these issues and the impact that early alcohol consumption can have on the life of not only the child, and teenager, but for the life of the individual,” said Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D., director of the NIH.
- Examining prevention strategies, Richard Spoth, Ph.D., director of the Partnerships in Prevention Science Institute at Iowa State University, and his team reviewed the current evidence base for preventive interventions addressing underage drinking. They recommend applying emerging consumer-oriented and community-participatory models for intervention development and research as a strategy.
- In an article called, "Developmentally Informed Research on the Effectiveness of Clinical Trials (DIRECT): A Primer for Directly Assessing How Developmental Issues May Influence Treatment Response among Adolescents with Alcohol Problems" Eric F. Wagner, Ph.D., associate professor in the Community-Based Intervention Research Group at Florida International University, reviews the degree to which developmental processes have been considered in adolescent alcohol treatment research and discusses promising concepts and methodologies from applied developmental science.
- Alcohol treatment outcome studies discussed by Deborah Deas, M.D., M.P.H., professor of psychiatry at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, include family-based interventions, motivational interviewing, behavioral therapy, cognitive behav-

ioral therapy, and limited pharmacotherapy studies.

These papers address the complex relationship between development and underage drinking. According to Vivian B. Faden, Ph.D., deputy director of NIAAA’s Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research and co-editor of the *Pediatrics* supplement. “By providing clinicians with this information, we anticipate that this supplement will advance the goals set forth in the U.S. Surgeon General’s recent *Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking*.”

Released in March of 2007, the Surgeon General’s first *Call to Action* on underage drinking appealed to Americans to do more to stop America’s 11 million current underage drinkers from using alcohol, and to keep other young people from starting. This report can be accessed by going to [www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov).



# Robotripping

*Increase Seen in Westchester*

As has been reported throughout this year there is concern about the increased use of prescription drugs by teens. There are several public service announcements (PSAs) that are currently being shown on television that were developed by Parents; The Anti-drug to raise awareness about this topic. In fact, one of these PSAs was shown during the Super Bowl.

Although this continues to be of great concern, the use of over-the-counter cough and cold and medications is also a concern in this area. A recent article in *The Journal News* reports that hospitalizations in Westchester for cold-medicine overdoses have quadrupled since 2000 among 13- to 19-year-olds, according to data from the Regional Poison and Drug Information Center, which fields voluntary calls from hospital emergency rooms.

In the first 3 1/2 months of this year, 10 adolescents have been taken to local hospitals for detoxification after abusing cough medicines, said Dr. Thomas Caraccio, a toxicologist with the Long Island and Westchester Regional Poison and Drug Information Center.

Cough and cold medications are dangerous because they contain DXM, a synthetic drug similar to morphine which is a narcotic with addictive potential. DXM, which can cause out-of-body sensations

and hallucinations if ingested in large quantities. Excessive amounts of DXM have caused vomiting, seizures, high blood pressure, blackouts, irregular heartbeat and even death. An additional concern is that teens mix the medications with alcohol.

Public health officials say children as young as 11 years old are looking to the local drugstore or the bathroom medicine chest for the available, inexpensive and legal over-the-counter drug.

A Westchester survey found that 6 percent of 3,241 of the adolescents seen by Student Assistance Services counselors reported having used cough syrup or cold medicine to get high. Information about “robotripping” has been added to many of the school health curriculums in the county. The use of these medications has also been highlighted at meetings held at local schools to educate parents and teachers about this practice.

It is important for parents to understand that many teens are now focused on the medicine cabinet as a place to go to get medications that they can use to get high. In order to protect children it is very important for adults to keep track of medications in a vigilant manner.

Although this has been mentioned before, the following recommendations are made for parents regarding medications.

- Take an inventory of your home and keep all drugs whether over-the-counter or prescription, in a safe place.
- Maintain an accurate count of the number of pills in a bottle by writing the number of pills on the side of the bottle.
- Draw a line on liquid medications to make sure they are not being taken.
- Make sure that the color of liquid medications has not changed. Another ploy to hide drug use is to add water or juice to a medicine.
- If your child is on medication check their supply to make sure that they are not giving it or selling it to others.
- Get rid of drugs that are not being used. Do not keep drugs that may have been prescribed for a specific event and are no longer needed. This is especially true for pain medications which contain strong ingredients.
- If you visit family or friends, ask them to remove any medications from common areas. Older adults, like grandparents, may have medications that could be attractive to teens. Teens have also taken medicine from families that they baby-sit for so a phone call to them is also recommended.

## Now Is The Time To Plan For 2008-2009

The final meeting of the Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth is Wednesday, May 28. I urge you to come and hear what the youth have to say about some of the successful projects that they are involved in as members of their coalitions

As we are all aware, the reason we do what we do and the goal of our coalitions is to protect young people from underage drinking and drug use and related problems. Come hear from them, the students in our county as you begin to make plans for programs, workshops and presentations. You may want to incorporate some of these initiatives in your work for next year.

As the school year draws to a close, I want to thank everyone who was involved in the Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth and in local school and community efforts to keep youth alcohol and drug free.

## Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth Meaningful Projects That Involve Youth

Wednesday, May 28, 2008  
4:00 – 6:00 PM

Student Assistance Services  
660 White Plains Road  
Tarrytown, NY

### 4:00 Welcome and Introduction

- County Executive Andrew Spano

### 4:15 – 6:00 Panel Presentation

- **Youth Court**  
Teens from the Yorktown Alliance For Safe Kids will discuss the wayhow the youth court is an effective way to deal with problems in a positive way.
  - **Teen Drinking Action Council**  
This group of teens will discuss their prevention activities including a "Reality Wall" which will be displayed.
  - **Parents Who Host, Lose The Most**  
Students from New Rochelle High School will discuss the involvement of youth in promoting this initiative to parents.
  - **Youth Dialogue Day**  
Teens from Mamaroneck High School will discuss "dialogue day" which allows the youth to **speak** about their concerns while key leaders **listen**.
  - **Teen Center**  
Teens from Scarsdale/Edgemont will discuss this successful effort to provide a safe and stimulating place for teens.
  - **NYU Summer Student Research Team**  
Ossining High School students will discuss their experience about learning how to use research as an effective tool to gather information in order to implement community change that benefits youth.
- RSVP: to Patricia Warble, 332-1300**

Student Assistance Services  
660 White Plains Road  
Tarrytown, New York 10591