



Knowledge is Prevention

Preventing substance abuse by sustaining & strengthening a safe and healthy community, together.

Every month there is a focus.....

March seems like the month most social health agencies want to raise your awareness on a number of issues. In the field of substance abuse the topics and theme are Inhalants, Positive Parenting and Tobacco. Each advocacy carries a weight of explaining why it merits your attention.

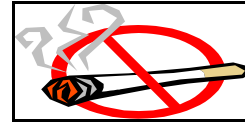
Inhalants are the drug of choice for upper elementary and middle school children. Sniffing the fumes of products creates a blockage in the brain depriving it of oxygen. The chemicals in the abused product bind to the red blood cells, blocking the CO₂, which is delivered to the brain. The brain is starving for this life-sustaining element. The result is a surreal feeling. Sometimes the feeling is momentary and sometimes the user passes out. Permanent brain injury can occur and there are times when the user has died.

It may not seem to correlate, but purchasing markers for children to sniff is a subtle form of inhalant use. The one thing to know is, if you do not want your child to do something, do not set up a situation that encourages it. The suggestion made by many child safety experts is refrain from purchasing markers with fragrances.

Talking to your children about inhalants is important but do you know enough to have that conversation? Log on to www.inhalants.org. This site will help inform and equip you with the knowledge you need to have a conversation and not a lecture.

Youth are also chasing this feeling by playing "the choking game" or in some areas they are "hanging". The deadly 'game is played' usually in a group setting but sometimes it is done when a child is alone.

Parent Awareness Month is the brainchild of Prevention Network of Michigan. Their website offers excellent information on a variety of topics. Brain development, discipline, parent information websites, building your child's resiliency, and helping your child succeed in school. Just like any thing you want to accomplish, the more you learn, the more effective you will be, log on to www.preventionnetwork.org.



Royal Oak wants to Kick Butts in '08

The ROCC is proud to promote and support Kick Butt Day '08. This national campaign is design to aid and promote Tobacco-Free Kids with an opportunity to Stand Out; Speak Up and Seize Control. This initiative of CASA, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University has celebrated this annual event with great success for the past thirteen years. This year CASA has put together Parent Power, which is an online destination where parents can engage in dialogue about how to raise their kids alcohol- and drug-free. Parents can log on at: www.casacolumbia.org.

Here you will be prompted by questions taken from their annual National Survey on American Attitudes on Substance Abuse, along with some well-crafted questions. There are encouraging parents across the country to share their experiences in talking/listening to their kids about drugs and alcohol. The comments, questions, concerns and ideas shared in the forum will then be used to help CASA shape and write a book called Parent Power, A Guide to Raising Healthy Drug Free kids, that will be published in 2009.

What are Hookahs:

A new trend among young people is to smoke flavored tobacco through a hookah (water pipe). Unfortunately, most hookah users think that this is a safe form of smoking and there is no age requirement.

The facts are:

- It is illegal for anyone under 18 to smoke tobacco in any form.
- Flavored tobacco contains the same amount of nicotine, carbon monoxide and tar. In fact as the pipe is being smoked, the toxic chemicals multiple in the water making the health risks even greater.
- Because Hookah users share the pipe, it carries the same risk as any other item used mouth to mouth.

Did you know.....

The Coalition just published a brochure listing all 72 Royal Oak smoke free restaurants? Each year more of our eateries are choosing to create a healthier environment for their customers and staff. The toxins from second hand smoke cling to clothes, skin and lungs. The lungs serve as grand central station, which circulates those poisons throughout your body. Since 75% of all adults are non-smokers, it makes sense that we want to be in a smoke free environment. To download the 2008 Royal Oak smoke free restaurant brochure, log onto our webpage at www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us.



While enjoying a smoke free eatery, extend a compliment to those locations that have a smoke-free policy.

Coalition News Briefs:

March 20: General meetings are open to the public, 6:45 – 7:45 p.m. at Churchill Community Center 707 Girard.

Three action teams have formed to address local community issues:

- Maintaining a welcoming environment while discouraging overindulgence
- Awareness campaign focusing on impaired and drunk driving
- Fostering a family entertainment center as well as keeping a safe night life atmosphere

April 2: In partnership with Community Media Network, an informational meeting will be held for local youth serving agencies and outreach programs that want to make a 7-minute promotional announcement of their programs and services, which will be aired throughout the next several months. Call the coalition office for more information 248-588-5050 x 241. This is a good time to advertise your summer programs!

April 17: General Meeting, 6:45 – 7:45 p.m. Network and share resources to strengthen the capacity of our community to address the prevention of substance abuse by increasing protective factors and decreasing factors known to encourage high risk behaviors.

April 18: Spirituality and Treatment Conference, *understanding and appreciating the link*. Churchill Com-

munity Education Center, 707 Girard. 7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Please register before April 11th. Contact our office by email: sherdianj@royaloakschools.com or call the coalition office at 248-588-5050 x231.

April 22 & 23: Video production of youth serving agencies, programs and services.

March – May: Each year the Coalition provides over 500 informational packets for incoming families at kindergarten round up, that encourage healthy growth and development of their youngsters, which impacts their educational foundation and future academic success

Community outreach: The coalition is often invited to sponsor a literature table at events, open houses and health fairs. If you would like to help staff a table, please call us. Not only is it fun to meet new people, but also you are providing information that is valuable for our families and children. 248-588-5050 x 231

Spring Break, a time to relax, prepare for the thaw and for some teens a time to travel. While we do not encourage un-chaperon vacations, there are some teens that do go away for the week without a parent or other responsible adult.

Before they leave home having the parental talk is necessary even though they might roll their eyes. Create a plan to help them get home if things get out of hand. Coach them on how to assess situations and tactics that will provide them a way out. Insist they check in daily; know their whereabouts and set up a code for executing the ‘plan’ can save them from a potential uncomfortable or dangerous situation.

Give them an emergency credit card so they can get on a plane. Instruct them how to contact a cab or shuttle for transportation. Using a map identify a near by police station or hospital. Find out how they can call for an ambulance or other emergency services. Not all locations have a 911 system. Lastly, state exactly what your rules are and the trust you have in them to stand firm despite the temptations that will be sure to come.

Strengthening our families and community:

New legislation was passed to award grants to counseling intermediaries that provide counseling services to homeowners that are likely to be in default and or foreclosure. Homeowners with sub prime or other single-family mortgages may use these counseling intermediaries as a resource to prevent foreclosure and establish a long-term, affordable payment plan to say in their home. Contact your local congressman office for more information.