**September 2016 Volume 1, Issue 4**



Ounce of Prevention

Newsletter

**Message to Coalition Members**

Welcome to new Coalition Members, **Krystal Blencowe**, Health Program Specialist, Steuben Rural Health Network, **Sunnie Smith**, Reality Check Coordinator/Public Health Educator, Southern Tier Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STTAC.

**“Featured” Member Statement**

*(Amanda Chafee, Steuben County ADA/Steuben Prevention Coalition Chairwoman*)

“My passion for the DA’s Office is prosecuting crimes against children, so the mission of the Coalition is a perfect fit for my chosen profession. Through my work with the Coalition, I have co-chaired the Youth Action Forum since its inception. I remain committed to the Coalition because I believe in giving the youth of our county the best possible future!”

**September is National Recovery Month**

September is the annual national recovery observance month aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of mental and substance abuse issues and celebrate people who recover.

For more information visit [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

**Notice of Award**

The Steuben Prevention Coalition/Catholic Charities of Steuben County has received their 4th year Drug Free Communities grant through the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention on August 31, 2016 for the grant year 9/30/16 – 9/29/17.



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**Steuben Prevention Coalition**

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**Trending: Heroin -**

**Opioids**

***Surgeon General Asks All Doctors for Help in Addressing Opioid Crisis***

*September 6th, 2016*

U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy has sent a letter to every doctor in the country, asking for their help in solving the opioid epidemic, CNN reports.

Murthy is asking all doctors to sign a pledge at TurnTheTideRx.org to educate themselves to treat pain safely and effectively; to screen patients for opioid use disorder and provide or connect them with evidence-based treatment; and to talk about and treat addiction as a chronic illness, not a moral failing.

“I know solving this problem will not be easy,” Murthy wrote. “We often struggle to balance reducing our patients’ pain with increasing their risk of opioid addiction. But, as clinicians, we have the unique power to help end this epidemic.”

***FDA Increases Warnings About Risk of Combining Opioids and Benzodiazepines***

*September 6th, 2016*

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has stepped up warnings about the dangers of combing opioid painkillers with benzodiazepine sedatives. The agency is requiring new warnings on labels for opioids such as oxycodone, hydrocodone and morphine, as well as for benzodiazepines such as alprazolam and diazepam.

Xanax is a commonly used benzodiazepine. A total of 389 drugs are covered by the new warnings, The Wall Street Journal reports.

“It is nothing short of a public health crisis when you see a substantial increase of avoidable overdose and death related to two widely used drug classes being taken together,” FDA Commissioner Robert Califf, MD, said in a news release.

**Article:**

***Doctors Feel Ill-Equipped to Counsel Patients About Medical Uses of Marijuana***

(USA Today)

Many doctors feel ill-equipped to counsel their patients about the potential medical uses of marijuana, USA Today reports. Some states are establishing physician training programs to address marijuana’s health effects. Currently, 25 states and the District of Columbia allow medical marijuana. Some states are starting to require doctors to take continuing medical education classes that discuss how marijuana interacts with other medications and affects the nervous system. In most states that allow medical marijuana, patients with qualifying medical conditions must receive certification from a doctor. Many doctors say that without knowing the health effects of marijuana, they are uncomfortable writing a certification. Many also say they are uneasy about dealing with medical marijuana because the drug remains illegal under federal law.

**Article:**

***Legal Marijuana Having Deadly Impact in Colorado***

***Colorado HIDTA report highlights increases in marijuana-related traffic fatalities and marijuana use by kid***

(SAM – Smart Approaches to Marijuana)

ALEXANDRIA, VA - A new report, released yesterday by the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) office, shows a dramatic spike in traffic-related fatalities attributed to marijuana use in the almost four years since the state legalized the drug. Drivers testing positive for marijuana were a factor in 21 percent of all Colorado traffic deaths in 2015, up from only 10 percent in 2009.

At the same time, Colorado now ranks number one in past-month marijuana use among youths and college-age adults. Moreover, youth past-month use is now 74 percent higher than the national average, up from 39 percent higher than the national average in 2011-12.

"This information, compiled from publicly available statistics, is yet another example of hard data demonstrating what we have already suspected to be true: that legalized marijuana policies have a tremendously negative -- and costly -- impact on public health and safety, especially on our roads," said Dr. Kevin Sabet, co-founder of Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM). "Reports like this continue to prove that corporate, commercial interests are being prioritized over the well-being of our communities."

According to the study, the increasing frequency of marijuana use correlates with a higher frequency of traffic deaths related to the drug. Marijuana-related traffic fatalities in Colorado have increased 62 percent since 2013, immediately after marijuana was legalized. And despite medical and recreational marijuana businesses being banned in 68 percent of local jurisdictions, there are still a total of 940 retail marijuana stores and marijuana dispensaries in Colorado, more than all the 322 Starbucks locations and 202 McDonald's in the state combined.

Jo McGuire, co-chair of SAM's Colorado affiliate and president & CEO of 5 Minutes of Courage, a Colorado advocacy group for drug-free communities, workplaces, and youth, commented, "These outcomes are certainly not what Colorado voters intended when they were promised 'controls.' It is time Colorado policy makers are held accountable to protect the citizens who were duped by the marijuana industry."

"Colorado has become a corporate free-for-all for pot businesses," said Jeffrey Zinsmeister, SAM's Executive Vice President. "As the report shows, the marijuana industry is rapidly becoming the next Big Tobacco, placing profits before public health and public safety."

The full Rocky Mountain HIDTA report can be found here.

For more information about marijuana policy, please visit <http://www.learnaboutsam.org>.

**Article:**

***“Drunkorexia on the Rise Among College Students”***

*Partnership for Drug-Free Kids – July 13, 2016*

A growing number of college students are trying to avoid alcohol-related weight gain through a practice known as “drunkorexia,” CBS News reports. Students skip meals, exercise heavily before drinking alcohol, take laxatives or diuretics, or vomit after drinking.

Some students engage in drunkorexia to get a faster buzz, the article notes. Researchers at the University of Houston presented data at the recent Research Society on Alcoholism annual meeting that suggests the practice is increasing.

They surveyed 1,184 college students, who said they had drunk alcohol heavily at least once in the previous month. More than 80 percent said they had engaged in at least one drunkorexia-related behavior in the previous three months. College athletes and those who lived in fraternity and sorority houses were more likely to engage in drunkorexia, study author Dipali Rinker told CBS News.

While previous studies have suggested drunkorexia is more common among women, the new study found young men are engaging in the practice, too.

In a news release, Rinker explained why drunkorexia can be harmful. “Potential outcomes may include less inhibition that could lead to more negative alcohol-related consequences,” she said. “Additionally, restricting caloric intake to those from alcohol could lead to vitamin depletion, as it may keep the individual from eating more nutrient-dense foods.”

***Alcohol Mixed With High Caffeine Energy Beverages May Increase Desire to Drink***

*Partnership for Drug-Free-Kids - July 20th, 2016*

Mixing alcohol with high-caffeine energy beverages may increase a person’s desire to continue drinking alcohol, according to a new study published in Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research.

The study included 26 adults who drank alcohol and energy drinks alone and in combination over six days, Medical Daily reports. After each session, participants rated their desire to drink. In addition, their breath alcohol concentration was measured.

Participants had a greater desire to drink after they consumed alcohol and a high-caffeine energy drink, compared with drinking the same amount of alcohol alone, the study found. The researchers said caffeine may increase the rewarding properties of alcohol.

**Trending: Heroin -**

**Opioids**

***Republican Senators Introduce Bill to Restrict Powerful Synthetic Opioids***

*September 8, 2016*

Three Republican senators on Wednesday introduced a bill that would restrict fentanyl and another powerful opioid, carfentanil, from entering the United States.

Fentanyl has been linked to an increasing number of overdoses and deaths. Carfentanil, used as an elephant tranquilizer, has been blamed for a number of overdoses in Ohio, The Hill reports.

Some drug traffickers are using the U.S. mail system to illegally import the opioids from China and India. The new bill, called the Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention (STOP) Act, would strengthen standards for foreign postal services. The bill, introduced by Senators Rob Portman of Ohio, Ron Johnson of Wisconsin and Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, would require the same types of electronic data that private carriers such as FedEx or UPS provide.

***Appalachia, Hit Hard by Prescription Opioid Epedemic, Now Seeing Influx of Heroin***

*August 17th, 2016*

Appalachia, which has long been dealing with an epidemic of prescription opioid abuse, is now seeing an influx of heroin, The Courier-Journal reports.

In other areas of the country, heroin quickly became a problem when authorities began closing “pill mills” that flooded communities with prescription pain pills. That is because heroin trafficking patterns went through major cities first, the article notes. It has taken longer to get to more remote areas such as eastern Kentucky.

Treatment centers, police and emergency rooms in eastern Kentucky are reporting an increase in heroin use in the area. One reason heroin is taking hold is because it is much cheaper than prescription opioids.

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**Myth vs. Fact (Alcohol)**

* Drinking is just a phase all kids go through and they will grow out of it.
* Many don’t grow out of it. Those who start drinking before they are 21 are more likely to drink more later in life versus those who do not drink until they are 21.

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**Wimodaughsian Free Library Memorial Dedication**

The Steuben Prevention Coalition was invited to display a table of information at the recent Wimodaughsian Free Library Dedication Ceremony on August 25, 2016.

The Wimodaughsian Free Library dedicated the Dr. Donald R. Davidsen Memorial and celebrated the completion of a second Construction Grant for the Library.

[](https://www.facebook.com/WimodaughsianLibrary/photos/a.10157285936725548.1073741851.277488940547/10157285944845548/?type=3) 

Photo 1 (L-R) - Assemblyman Phil Palmesano, Heidi Robinson, Sharon Murphy, Congressman Tom Reed’s Office

Photo 2 - Steuben Prevention Coalition Information display table.

**Myth vs. Fact: (Marijuana)**

* The Government sends otherwise innocent people to prison for casual marijuana use.
* Many inmates ultimately sentenced for marijuana possession were initially charged with more serious crimes but were able to negotiate reduced charges or lighter sentences through plea agreements.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Next Coalition Meeting**

**November 9, 2016**

**11:00 a.m. – Steuben County Sheriff’s Building**

Youth Action Forum

October 25, 2016

Bath Haverling Auditorium

Tall Cop Program

March 29, 2017

Haverling Central School

Underage Drinking Task Force Town Hall Meeting

TBD – late October or early November

Focus Groups

TBD



**MISSION:**

**To promote healthy and safe communities in Steuben County by reducing alcohol and drug use among**

**youth!**

