

June 2012



coalition news

Prevention news and information from the Tiverton Prevention Coalition

Area Clergy Commended for Prevention Efforts in Communities

Faith communities play a vital role in reducing alcohol and drug use among teens and their efforts were lauded by the Tiverton, Little Compton and Portsmouth Prevention Coalitions at the Tiverton Coalition's first Annual Clergy Breakfast on June 13.

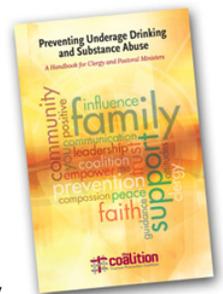


"Prevention is community work," said Tiverton Prevention Coalition coordinator Rebecca Elwell. "It's about reaching out and forming partnerships with various sectors of the community, encouraging them to play an active role. Faith communities are 'natural partners,' and we want to recognize their work in creating a safe, healthy, supportive environment in which to raise our children."

According to the CASA study [*So Help Me God: Substance Abuse, Religion and Spirituality*](#), teens who never attend religious services are twice as likely to drink, more than twice as likely to smoke, more than three times likelier to use marijuana or binge drink and almost four times likelier to use illicit drugs compared to teens who attend church services one or more times a week. Similarly, adults who never attend religious services are almost twice as likely to drink, three times likelier to smoke, five times likelier to use illicit drugs other than marijuana, seven times likelier to binge drink and almost eight times likelier to use marijuana than adults who attend religious services weekly or more.

One highlight of the clergy breakfast held at the Bay Point Inn in Portsmouth was the distribution *Preventing Underage Drinking and Substance Abuse: A Handbook for Clergy and Pastoral Ministers*, published by the Tiverton Prevention Coalition. The 12-page handbook, a compilation of reports and studies published by the federal government, includes sections on the role of religion in prevention, prevention strategies for faith communities and a list of core competencies for clergy and other pastoral ministers who want to enhance their prevention skills.

While clergy from area communities were the first to receive the new handbook, its value has already been recognized by other Rhode Island prevention organizations. The Narragansett Prevention Partnership, the South Kingston Partnership for Prevention and East Bay Community Action Program have requested copies for distribution. Local faith communities can get copies by [E-mailing The Coalition](#).



Miss the Town Hall Meeting?

Nearly 40 parents, teachers, counselors, school administrators, clergy, alcohol vendors and elected town officials attended Tiverton's first Town Hall Meeting on underage drinking and marijuana use on May 23.

The program was divided into three sections: what we think we know, what we know we know, and what we can do together to reduce higher than national average alcohol and marijuana use among Tiverton teens.

If you missed the presentation, check out Melissa Santos' ["Measuring Tiverton teens' use of, attitudes about alcohol, marijuana"](#) in *The Herald News* and view the PowerPoint presentation on [The Coalition website](#).



REBECCA'S notes

Faith-based communities, whether they gather in storefronts, churches, mosques, synagogues or temples, play a unique role in the lives of individuals and families. Regardless of the faith each professes, they all create a safe, stable, supportive environment for young and old alike — a place where people can turn for help or to celebrate their blessings.

The Coalition and faith-communities are really logical partners in prevention. What faith leaders do in their congregations, we seek to do on a community-wide basis by recognizing and supporting organizations that reduce the risk of substance abuse, and by encouraging other community organizations to do their fair share to protect Tiverton's youth from the dangers associated with alcohol and other drugs. In fact, the community-wide approach to prevention is the only way to ensure sustainable change.

The Coalition is delighted by the prospect of partnerships with our local clergy. We look forward to learning from them and to helping them develop and implement substance abuse prevention activities in their communities.

rebecca@tivertonprevention.org

Practicing Prevention

Teachers and coaches can play a vital role in influencing student attitudes about alcohol and sometimes it takes just a few well-chosen words.

Try this. Find a minute or two to express your genuine concern about results of the 2012 Tiverton Health and Wellness, where 48% of all THS students reported drinking alcohol in the previous 30 days. Among freshmen, the average was nearly 40 percent; among seniors, more than 60 percent. Importantly, tell them why you are concerned. Studies show underage drinking is a major cause of death from injuries among young people; increases the risk being a victim of physical or sexual assault; can cause a range of physical consequences, from hangovers to death by alcohol poisoning. Use your influence. A word from a respected teacher or coach can literally...save a teen's life. For more information, check out [To Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking: A Guide to Action for Educators](#).

Around the Country

"Bath salts" are the newest and in many States still legal way to get high. According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#), bath salts have already been linked to an alarming number of ER visits across the country, presenting with chest pains, increased blood pressure, increased heart rate, agitation, hallucinations, extreme paranoia, and delusions.



Sold under names like *Cloud 9*, *White Lightning Bounce*, *Bubbles*, *M-CAT*, *Mad Cow*, *Meow Meow*, bath salts have nothing to do with baths. Typically found at tobacco shops, gas stations and shops that sell drug paraphernalia, they contain various amphetamine-like chemicals, new synthetic drugs not yet regulated by the federal government. U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) has introduced legislation at the Federal level to outlaw ingredients in bath salts.

Thirty-eight states have already passed laws that criminalize use of these synthetic drugs. Rhode Island is not one of those states.

Please Forward!!

Forward the *Coalition News* to family, friends and associates. Ask them to [sign up for their own free subscription](#).
Help us spread the word.



Contact the Coalition

Phone: 401.835.5311

E-mail: Rebecca@tivertonprevention.org

www.tivertonprevention.org

