

DAET COALITION NEWSLETTER

A community resource to help prevent youth substance use in Ashland

Ashland's Kids Have...

Decisions at Every Turn

Prevent Youth Substance Use

SPRING 2015

A LETTER FROM THE COALITION

Hello Everyone,

My name is Jemima Valdouin. It is an honor to be the new Drug Free Communities (DFC) Project Coordinator for Ashland. I am excited to be working with you all in continuing and supporting the work that the Decisions at Every Turn Coalition has been doing in this community.

Much of my past experience has been working in positive youth development and prevention. For 5 years I have worked in Boston with underprivileged youth who live in low-income communities, areas where there is heavy drug use, neighborhoods filled with violence, and other social issues that affect youth. I mentored and supported youth with their schoolwork, applying for college, job searching, and making positive decisions. Many of them lived in communities where they were constantly exposed to drugs, alcohol, gang violence, domestic abuse and homelessness. My involvement in their lives consisted of educating them on the dangers of these behaviors, as well as being a positive role model so that they were not a product of their environment and could succeed in being great students, sons, daughters, and citizens.

Prior to this position, I was the Underage Drinking Prevention Coordinator for the City of Medford. My work consisted of doing leadership conferences for the middle and high school students, working with local liquor stores to ensure that they were abiding by the city ordinances and federal regulations for selling alcohol, including checking ID's to ensure they did not sell to those who were underage, working with different sectors such as the police department, fire department, school committee, faith-based organizations, community centers and other organizations that support youth development, as well as coordinating events for parents and community members to learn more about substance abuse and its effects on youth.

There are many upcoming opportunities for us to meet one another, including our upcoming Coalition meetings. As I continue this work in Ashland, my hope is that we can work together as a community to continue to reduce substance use among our youth to build a safe and healthy community.

Jemima Valdouin, Program Coordinator
Jemima.Valdouin@AshlandDecisions.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

We have many new initiatives to share with you in this issue. We've incorporated **social media** into our outreach efforts, released another edition to the **Parenting for Prevention** educational series, are hosting two very informative **community discussions on marijuana prevention** in April, have expanded our **Community Conversations**, and are planning our first **Coalition Retreat**. Keep reading for additional details on these exciting new programs and resources.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT



Positive youth engagement occurs when young people have a meaningful role in the facilitation of positive change. Successful youth-adult partnerships propagate benefits across the spectrum – youth learn valuable life-skills, adults develop a deeper understanding of youth and their values, and community culture and norms reflect youth perspectives.

The DAET Coalition eagerly welcomes the energies of Ashland youth and strives to provide youth opportunities to develop leadership skills, to contribute a voice to program and policy decisions that affect youth, and to take meaningful ownership of coalition projects. Take a look at some of the ways youth are actively involved with the coalition.

Youth Social Norms Campaign

STAND (Students Taking a Noble Direction) is a youth-focused effort by Ashland High School students to correct misperceptions about the extent to which their peers consume alcohol and marijuana. Working with an adult advisor, the students created the campaign name, chose all of the campaign graphics and messages, posted campaign posters at AHS, presented campaign information to the Ashland School Committee, and serve as peer leaders within the school community by encouraging conversation about youth substance use.

Coalition Meetings

Each month we welcome youth to attend the Coalition meeting. We solicit their input on agenda items, defer to them on youth-related matters, and invite them to share information to help decision-making.

Youth Events

A special community discussion for students in grades 9-12 was recently held at Ashland High School. The event was hosted by Rick Cresta and explored teen perceptions about marijuana. The goals of the event were to increase youth awareness about the risks of marijuana use and to inform DAET's understanding of youth beliefs related to marijuana.

DAET is planning its first coalition retreat and will offer a special breakout session for youth to brainstorm ideas for increasing collaboration between Ashland youth with adults and the broader community.

If your son or daughter is interested in becoming involved with DAET, email us at CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org

To learn more about youth engagement: <http://www.actforyouth.net/>

AROUND ASHLAND

Around Ashland celebrates the collaborative energies of our community partners who work with us and within the broader community to provide a positive environment for Ashland youth.

This issue features the Ashland High School SADD Chapter

Ashland High School SADD Chapter Conducts Annual Sticker Shock Campaign

Ashland High School's Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter held its annual Sticker Shock campaign on Saturday, March 14th. This year's campaign was strategically timed to take place on the weekend before St. Patrick's Day for maximum impact. Sticker Shock began in 2005 when Mothers Against Drunk Driving began placing stickers on alcoholic beverages warning the purchaser against supplying alcohol to underage drinkers. Since then, it's been an annual event in Ashland, when students from SADD visit the town's package stores and place warning labels on six-packs, 12-packs, and cases of beer.

MADD ended their financial sponsorship of Sticker Shock several years ago and when the stickers ran out, Ashland's Decisions at Every Turn coalition, which works to decrease teen substance abuse by empowering youth to make positive and healthy choices, picked up the funding to print customized blaze orange warning labels that state both Ashland SADD and Decisions at Every Turn sponsorship. Students visited Main Street Wine and Spirits, Lucky Farms, Clock Town Liquors, Che's Beer and Wine, and Sunnyside Liquors.



Underage drinking is a serious problem at most high schools, so it's important for students to come together and remind the public to not buy alcohol for people under 21. This is the seventh consecutive year that the students of SADD have participated in this program. People often do not realize the consequences of buying alcohol for minors, so by annually conducting Sticker Shock, it reminds those who purchase alcohol to think twice about who's getting it.

"Nearly three quarters of students (72%) have consumed alcohol (more than just a few sips) by the end of high school, and more than a third (37%) have done so by eighth grade." (<http://www.sadd.org/stats.htm>) Underage drinking is a serious problem. The Sticker Shock campaign helps bring the community together to remind people that it is not their choice to buy alcohol for minors, it's the law!

Sofia Alberini
SADD President



Find us at:

Decisions at Every Turn



Follow us at:

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STAY
INFORMED

Check us out at:

AshlandDecisions.org

COALITION REWIND

January

- Co-hosted *Positive Approaches to Avoid Power Struggles* with the Friends of the Ashland Public Library featuring Jane Greenstein, Ph.D.
- Featured new ways to get involved with DAET in the January Directions article "*Be a Part of Community Change*"

February

- Hired a new Program Coordinator and made announcement in the March issue of Directions
- Sent two representatives to the CADCA training
- Released 3 new Parenting for Prevention tip sheets: Opioids, Tobacco, and Risk & Protective Factors
- Held one *Community Conversation*
- Co-hosted *Understanding the Adolescent Brain* with the Friends of the Ashland Public Library featuring Elizabeth Byrnes, Ph.D.
- Outlined free programming and resources offered by DAET in the February issue of Directions

March

- Co-hosted *The Digital Age: Positive Parenting for Tech Savvy Clockers* with the Friends of the Ashland Public Library featuring Rich Boccuzzi and Scott Wood
- Convened the first meeting of the Policy subcommittee to discuss the creation of a Diversion Program in Ashland.

Parenting for Prevention

Parenting for Prevention is a DAET Coalition educational series for parents and other caring adults to increase awareness and knowledge about important youth issues & to encourage dialogue about making healthy choices.

- [Alcohol](#)
- [Communication \(NEW\)](#)
- [How to Talk to Your Kids at Any Age about Alcohol, Other Drugs & Making Good Decisions](#)
- [Marijuana](#)
- [Opioids](#)
- [Risk & Protective Factors](#)
- [Tobacco](#)

All of our tip sheets are available for download at:
www.AshlandDecisions.org/parent-tip-sheets.html.



Each April since 1987, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) sponsors **NCADD Alcohol Awareness Month** to increase public awareness and understanding, reduce stigma and encourage local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues.

This April, NCADD highlights the important public health issue of underage drinking, a problem with potentially devastating individual, family and community consequences.

The 2015 campaign theme highlights the pervasive impact that alcohol, alcohol-related problems and alcoholism have on individuals, on families and children, in the workplace and in our communities: **For the Health of It: Early Education on Alcoholism and Addiction.**

According to NCADD:

- Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for America's young people, and is more likely to kill young people than all illegal drugs combined.
- Each day, 7,000 kids in the United States under the age of 16 take their first drink.
- Those who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin at age 21.
- 25% of U.S. children are exposed to alcohol-use disorders in their family.

Learn more about Alcohol Awareness Month at <http://ncadd.org/upcoming-events/1427-april-marks-28th-alcohol-awareness-month>.

Parent resources: <http://ncadd.org/for-parents-overview>

Youth resources: <http://ncadd.org/for-youth>

Ashland Community Conversations K-5

A **Community Conversation K-5** is for parents or other adults interested in learning strategies for talking with younger children about making healthy choices. Learn age-appropriate conversations to help your child make good choices now to prevent them from making risky choices as they get older. **Help us reach our goal to connect with 200 parents this year.** Schedule a Community Conversation today.



To learn more contact ctirrell@ashlandmass.com or see our flyer: <http://www.ashlanddecisions.org/community-conversations.html>

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

DAET and the Friends of the Ashland Public Library are pleased to be co-hosting an ongoing parenting workshop series as well as community programming. Library sessions will provide parents with tips and talking points and the opportunity to collect new skills, share challenges, and get answers to compelling questions. Programs and parent workshops are free and open to all. For questions about programs at the library, please contact president@friendsoftheapl.com. Please direct other inquiries to CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org.

Topic	Speaker	Date, Location, Audience
Youth Marijuana Use: Know the Risks Parent Discussion	Rick Cresta, LICSW, MPH	Date: Tuesday April 28 Time: 7-9 PM Location: AHS, Cafeteria Audience: Parents of all aged children
Ready, Set, Go! Using Unstructured Time: How to Support Learning in Young Children without Pushing	Courtney Arsenault	Date: Thursday May 13 Time: 7-8:30pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of Pre-k to Grade 4

2015 COALITION MEETING DATES

Coalition meetings are open to anyone in the community. Come learn about the Coalition, our current initiatives, and volunteer opportunities. New members are welcome! An orientation meeting can be made by prior arrangement.

May 12	June 9
* Location Change AHS Main Office Conference Room	Ashland Middle School, Room #5

All meetings are held on Tuesday evening
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

COMING THIS FALL! .**DAET Coalition Retreat**

We are busy planning the first DAET Coalition Retreat to take place in early fall. All Ashland residents are welcome to attend. Help us plan for the upcoming year. Share your thoughts. Meet Coalition members and other Ashland adults and youth. Watch for our SAVE THE DATE with additional details.

DON'T FORGET TO SIGN UP FOR FUTURE DAET COALITION NEWSLETTERS

To receive notice about the next online issue,
join our email list at: CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org