

Welcome to Spring!!



April 2003

## Females Get Addicted Faster than Males

A new study finds that girls and young women get addicted to alcohol and other drugs much faster than boys, the *Associated Press* reported Feb. 5.

"They get hooked faster, they get hooked using lesser amounts of alcohol and [other] drugs and cocaine, and they suffer the consequences faster and more severely," said Joseph A. Califano Jr., chairman of the *National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse* at Columbia University.

The nationwide survey of females aged 8 to 22 was conducted over three years. It found that girls tend to experiment with drugs if they reach puberty early, have eating disorders, want to reduce stress or alleviate depression, or have been physically or sexually abused.

On the other hand, boys typically try drugs for thrills or heightened social status.

Califano said that the findings suggest that treatment be designed to address this gender gap. He added that some traditional prevention methods might be the wrong approach for females.

"With some exceptions the substance-abuse prevention programs have really been designed with a unisex, one-size-fits-both-sexes mentality," Califano said. "We have not put together prevention programs that go to the things that influence girls and influence young women. We now know that girls are different than boys – let's recognize it and let's help them."

The study also recommends that parents, educators, and doctors boost preventive efforts with girls who fall into the various risk categories.

(Source: JTO Wire, February 6, 2003)

## Steroid Use Growing Among Young Boys

Steroid use has long been popular among athletes, but now law-enforcement officials are seeing an increase in the number of young boys using steroids to look good, the *New York Times* reported Nov. 22.

While athletes use steroids to gain strength or speed, some youths are turning to illegal steroids to obtain designer bodies. According to narcotics police, young boys who don't play sports are using body-enhancing drugs to get the buff look of a body builder.

"Everybody wants to be big now," said Zeb Nava, a senior at Clearfield High School in Utah. "The majority now are guys that don't do it for sports. They do it for girls. For the look."

According to the latest national survey conducted for federal agencies, nearly half a million teenagers in the United States use steroids each year. Some using steroids are as young as age 10, putting them at risk for abnormal development.

A survey conducted last year for Blue Cross Blue Shield found that steroid use among boys ages 12 to 17 increased by 25 percent from 1999 to 2000.

(Source: JTO Wire, November 25, 2002)



## Nebraska Bill Would Raise Penalties for Marijuana

A bill introduced in the Nebraska legislature would make the fine for marijuana possession the same as for alcohol, the *Lincoln Journal Star* reported Jan. 23.

Under the measure drafted by Sen. Doug Cunningham (D-Wausa), possession of less than one ounce of marijuana would be a Class IV misdemeanor, the same penalty given to a minor in possession of alcohol. The misdemeanor carries a maximum fine of \$500.

"It didn't seem logical to lower the minor-in-possession [of alcohol] fine," said Cunningham. He said that the difference in the current penalties send the wrong message – that it's less harmful to smoke marijuana than to drink as a minor.

In 1978, the Nebraska Senate decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana because a conviction carried lifetime consequences. Don Fiedler, an Omaha attorney representing the Nebraska Criminal Defense Attorneys Association, said that young people with a marijuana conviction were unable to get scholarships and were banned from certain professions.

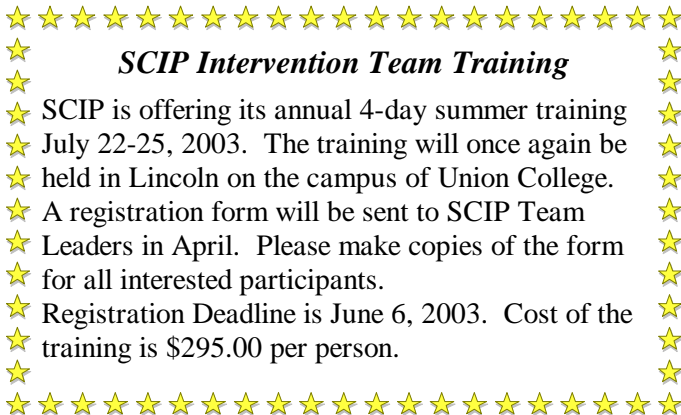
"People are more forgiving of those who use alcohol," said Fiedler. "When you make marijuana possession a crime, that has serious implications for the rest of their lives."

Fiedler is among those opposed to Cunningham's proposal. He recommended that the lawmakers make the penalty amount the same as alcohol without upgrading marijuana possession to a misdemeanor.

(Source: JTO Wire, January 29, 2003)

### SCIP Intervention Team Training

- ★ SCIP is offering its annual 4-day summer training
- ★ July 22-25, 2003. The training will once again be
- ★ held in Lincoln on the campus of Union College.
- ★ A registration form will be sent to SCIP Team
- ★ Leaders in April. Please make copies of the form
- ★ for all interested participants.
- ★ Registration Deadline is June 6, 2003. Cost of the
- ★ training is \$295.00 per person.



## !! WARNING SIGNS !!

It is important to keep in mind that if a child shows any of the following symptoms, it does not necessarily mean that he or she is using drugs. The presence of some of these behaviors could be the product of adolescent stress. Others may be symptoms of depression or a host of other problems. Whatever the cause, they may warrant attention, especially if they persist or if they occur in a cluster. A mental health professional or a caring and concerned adult may help a youngster successfully overcome a crisis and develop more effective coping skills, often preventing further problems. The key is change; it is important to watch for any significant changes in your child's physical appearance, personality, attitude or behavior.

### Behavioral Signs

- ? Change in overall attitude/personality with no other identifiable cause.
- ? Changes in friends; new hang-outs; sudden avoidance of old crowd; doesn't want to talk about new friends; friends are known drug users.
- ? Change in activities or hobbies.
- ? Drop in grades at school or performance at work; skips school or is late for school
- ? Change in habits at home; loss of interest in family and family activities.
- ? Difficulty in paying attention; forgetfulness.
- ? General lack of motivation, energy, self esteem, "I don't care" attitude.
- ? Sudden over sensitivity, temper tantrums, or resentful behavior.
- ? Moodiness, irritability, or nervousness.
- ? Silliness or giddiness.
- ? Paranoia.
- ? Excessive need for privacy; unreachable.
- ? Secretive or suspicious behavior.
- ? Car accidents.
- ? Chronic dishonesty.
- ? Unexplained need for money, stealing money or items.
- ? Change in personal grooming habits.
- ? Possession of drug paraphernalia.

### Physical Signs

- ? Loss of appetite, increase in appetite, any changes in eating habits, unexplained weight loss or gain.
- ? Slowed or staggering walk; poor physical coordination.
- ? Inability to sleep, awake at unusual times, unusual laziness.
- ? Red, watery eyes; pupils larger or smaller than usual; blank stare.
- ? Cold, sweaty palms; shaking hands.
- ? Puffy face, blushing or paleness.
- ? Smell of substance on breath, body or clothes.
- ? Extreme hyperactivity; excessive talkativeness.
- ? Runny nose; hacking cough.
- ? Needle marks on lower arm, leg or bottom of feet.
- ? Nausea, vomiting or excessive sweating.
- ? Tremors or shakes of hands, feet or head.
- ? Irregular heartbeat.

(Source: <http://www.acde.org>)

## *This Rose by Another Name is a Crack pipe*



Some alcohol outlets and convenience stores in California and other states are offering a disturbing product line to customers: prepackaged kits for smoking crack cocaine. Some retailers are marketing directly to their addict customers by selling seemingly innocuous products that can be used to make homemade crack pipes.

Items that community leaders say are being sold as drug paraphernalia include novelty roses and automobile air fresheners — each packaged in small, glass tubes — and Chore Boys scrubbing pads. The glass tubes are used to make pipes, while the Chore Boys are used to make a crude screen for holding the crack rock in place.

Another item you wouldn't expect to find at a liquor-store checkout: tiny plastic baggies, which activists say are sold to dealers as crack packages. Retailers typically claim that the baggies are stamp or coin bags.

This is a marketing trend that is spreading from California to other states. In the Bay Area and Seattle, the main complaint has been not against liquor stores, but mini-marts at Shell gas stations.

Stores often display these unrelated items near the checkout. But in Southern California, some got more inventive — and brazen — by packaging an air freshener, Chore Boy, and a torch-style lighter and selling them for a huge markup to anyone who requested a "brown bag." Prices ranged from \$6 to \$12, fluctuating from day to day and peaking towards the end of the month, when many addicts get public-assistance checks.

Local anti-drug groups took their concerns about the sales to police and prosecutors, arguing that the co-location of these items was a clear sign that they were being marketed for illicit purposes. The Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership worked with state lawmakers to pass a nuisance-abatement ordinance that made sales of Chore Boys and the other crack-related items illegal if sold within 10 feet of the store's checkout area.

Sales of drug paraphernalia remains a moving target: Nothing can prevent stores from selling items like air fresheners and Chore Boys as long as they are located on different shelves, for example.

(Source: JTO Wire, March 21, 2003)

### Save the Dates:

In early October, BryanLGH Hospital in Lincoln sponsors activities in observance of Mental Illness Awareness Week. This year the focus is on youth.

Two national level speakers will be brought in for two free, public presentations. Both presentations are held at the Bryan Plaza, 7-8:30 p.m.

? On October 2, 2003, Bev Cobain will speak. She is a psychiatric nurse. Ms. Cobain authored the book, When Nothing Matters Anymore: A Survival Guide For Depressed Teens.

? Dr. Dimitri Papolos, author of The Bipolar Child, will speak October 7, 2003.

More information on both events and other opportunities that will be offered during that week will be sent in the fall.