



**CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY
REGIONAL ACTION COUNCIL**

CNVRAC Conducts 2011 Annual Meeting

2010 at the CNVRAC saw another year of great strides forward in preventing substance abuse in our twelve town sub-region. Many great accomplishments have been made. Our 10th annual meeting held on June 3rd at the Waterbury Courtyard Marriot, was our most heavily attended annual meeting ever, with over seventy participants in attendance. A variety of community stakeholders and chief elected officials from throughout our service area were in attendance. The CNVRAC would not be able to do the work we do throughout the year without all of these individual's support. We would like to extend our sincerest thanks and gratitude to the Waterbury Marriott for hosting us for another year and to all of our attendees whose work and dedication to their communities is invaluable.

Welcoming and introductory comments were provided by Mary Anne Van Aken, Chairman for the CNVRAC steering committee. Marry Anne's devotion and service to the CNVRAC steering committee and her communities Local Prevention Council is inspiring to say the least. After her comments she turned the microphone over to the CNVRAC's Executive Director, Jennifer Dewitt, who delivered the annual report and announced the new slate of officers for the Board of the CNVRAC. Jennifer provided an overview of the RAC's successes for the past 10 years. She expressed her excitement and joy in seeing the RAC grow from a small coalition into what it has become today.

"One of the biggest successes the CNVRAC has experienced in the past two years has been the increased willingness of communities and schools to participate in a comprehensive data collection."

One of the biggest successes the CNVRAC has experienced in the past two years has been the increased willingness of communities and schools in our sub-region to participate in a comprehensive data collection. Having accurate and current data about the behaviors our young people are engaging in is a critical component of the strategic prevention framework (SPF). The SPF is an evidenced based prevention model used by coalitions all over the country that has been proven to reduce substance abuse problems in communities. Having an accurate data sample allows us to take the pulse of the communities we serve, so we can have a clear understanding of the problems our young people are facing. This allows us to more effectively target prevention services.

The data assessment tool we chose to use is the Search Institute's (SI) Profiles of Student Life: Attitude and Behaviors Survey. The Search Institutes 40 Developmental Asset Framework is an evidenced based model that promotes healthy youth development through the increased attainment of what the SI calls internal and external assets. The more assets a young person has the less likely they will be to engage in harmful behaviors such as underage drinking and illicit drug use. The Attitude and Behavior survey identifies how many assets young people in the community are experiencing.

After the data was analyzed the results were presented by CNVRAC staff along with youth at a community data roll out event. *-Cont. on page 2.....*

Summer 2011

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2011 CNVRAC Conducts Annual Meeting

.....Cont. from pg. 1 These community events were moderated by a SI lead trainer named Tim Duffey, M.Ed. Tim has now moderated several of these community events for the CNVRAC over the past year and a half. He is one of the biggest champions for the Developmental Assets that the CNVRAC has ever seen. It is for this reason that he was asked to be the key-note speaker at this years annual meeting. Tim gave an uplifting speech that was received very well by all who were in attendance. The CNVRAC thanks him and the search institute and we are looking forward to doing more work with their Asset model in the years to come.

The CNVRAC acknowledged the Middlebury, Southbury, Thomaston, Wolcott and Woodbury police departments with Key Community Partnership Awards for all of their service to the RAC over the past 10 years. Having active participation from law enforcement is vital to delivering effective prevention efforts at the community level. These police departments have all executed successful prescription drug take back events over the past two years that set a precedent for other towns throughout the state of Connecticut.

Collaborative Stakeholder Awards were given to Region School Districts' 14, 15, 16 as well as to the Waterbury Public School system for their willingness to be powers of example in allowing a comprehensive data collection to take place in their respective schools.

The year's Memorial Eileen Tate's Warrior in the Field Recognition was given to Jim O'Rourke, Executive Director of the Greater Waterbury YMCA. His service and commitment to serving youth and making Waterbury a better place are unparalleled. Thank you so much Jim for everything you have done for the RAC and the city of Waterbury as a whole. You rock!!

"This year's annual meeting was a wonderful experience. The CNVRAC looks forward to building on the increased participation, enthusiasm and interest in fighting substance abuse problems throughout our sub-region."

Jesse Mancinone, Prevention Coordinator for the CNVRAC, received a special recognition for his service to the RAC over the past three years as well has for his recent completion of a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. Jesse has delivered numerous presentations and workshops for the CNVRAC on the topic of substance abuse prevention to a variety of community stake holders including youth ages 10-18, college students, adults and human service professionals.

A surprise recognition was also given at the end of the meeting to Jennifer Dewitt on behalf of the CNVRAC steering committee. Jennifer has been the fearless leader of the RAC since she took over as executive director in 2004. She has been the back bone of this organization and without her none of the RAC's current successes would have been possible.

This year's annual meeting was a wonderful experience. The CNVRAC looks forward to building on the increased participation, enthusiasm and interest in fighting substance abuse problems throughout our sub-region. A wise man once said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step". The CNVRAC believes that the journey of solving the substance abuse problem this country is facing is a long and arduous one that will be filled with challenges and resistance. However we have proven that a difference can be made in our communities by taking small steps, one step at a time, one community at a time and one young person at a time. We look forward to continuing this walk with all of you. Have a great summer everyone!



What Does the Data Say About Connecticut Youth?

The Connecticut School Health Survey (CSHS) is a comprehensive questionnaire that is given to over two thousand students from schools all over the state of Connecticut each year. The CSHS is a voluntary survey that is comprised of two components: a Youth Behavior Component (YBC) and a Youth Tobacco Component (YTC). This survey is anonymous and voluntary and was administered during one class period on a given day during the 2010 school year. Information from this survey is an important factor in taking the pulse of the young people living in the state of CT. Having an accurate assessment of the risky behaviors our youth are struggling with, such as underage drinking and substance abuse, allows us as prevention professionals, to more effectively target services, in the hopes that the likelihood of our young people engaging in these behaviors would be significantly diminished.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), "In the United States, 74% of all deaths among youth and young adults aged 10-24 years result from four causes: motor vehicle crashes (30%), other unintentional injuries (16%), homicide (16%), and suicide (12%). Substantial morbidity and social problems also result from the approximately 757,000 pregnancies among women aged 15-19 years, the estimated 9.1 million cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among persons aged 15-24 years, and the estimated 6,610 cases of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) among persons aged 15-24 years that occur annually. Among adults aged 25+ years, 59% of all deaths in the United States result from cardiovascular disease (35%) and cancer (24%)." (CDC, 2009)

They go on to state, "These leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and adults in the United States are related to six categories of priority health-risk behaviors: 1) behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence; 2) tobacco use; 3) alcohol and other drug use; 4) sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and STDs, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection; 5) unhealthy dietary behaviors; and 6) physical inactivity. These behaviors frequently are interrelated and are established during childhood and adolescence and extend into adulthood." (CDC, 2009)

Substance abuse is a problem common to all communities across the country. Connecticut is no exception. Connecticut youth were asked several questions pertaining to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use behaviors. An estimated 30,000 Connecticut high school students (17.8%) had smoked cigarettes on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey (i.e., current cigarette smoking). Nationwide, the rate was 19.5%. (CSHS, 2009)

An estimated 72,000 Connecticut high school students (43.5%) had had at least one drink of alcohol on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey. Nationwide, the rate was 41.8%. Approximately 36,000 Connecticut high school students (21.8%) had used marijuana one or more times during the 30 days before the survey. Nationwide, the rate was 20.8%. (CSHS).

An estimated 8,400 Connecticut high school students (5%) had drunk at least one drink of alcohol on school property on at least 1 day during the 30 days before the survey. Nationwide, the rate was 4.5%. (CSHS)

An estimated 10,000 Connecticut high school students (6.2%) had used marijuana on school property one or more times during the 30 days before the survey. Nationwide, the rate was 4.6%. An estimated 49,000 Connecticut high school students (28.9%) had been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug by someone on school property during the 12 months before the survey. Nationwide, the rate was significantly lower (22.7%) than Connecticut's.

While great strides have been made in addressing the substance abuse problem facing our youth, much work remains to be done. The CNVRAC is concerned that Connecticut youth appear to have significant higher rates than the national averages when examining substance abuse behaviors on school property. Having a caring and safe school climate is vital for successful development through these difficult years of their lives.

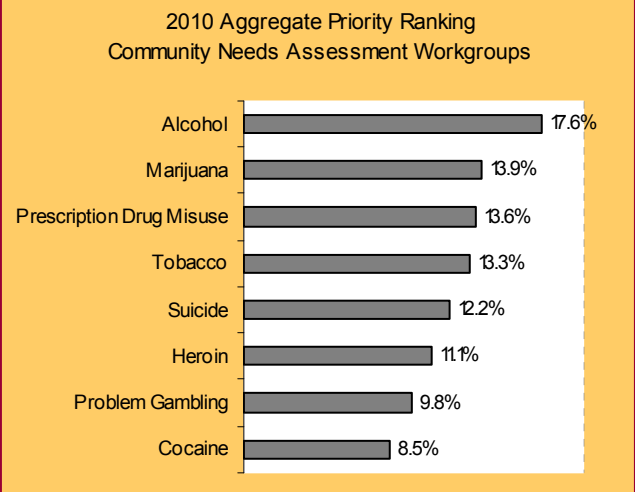
If you are interested in taking a closer look at the results for the CSH please visit Department of Public Health's website. The results are updated with a comprehensive report each year.



2010 Connecticut Prevention Priority Report

In the fall of each year all of Connecticut's Regional Action Councils' (RACS) conduct a data-driven needs and response capacity assessment concerning six substances as well as problem gambling and suicide. Each RAC convenes a Community Needs Assessment Workgroup (CNAWs) to use quantitative and qualitative data to describe and rank each problem according to magnitude, impact and changeability. Taken together, sub regional CNAWs ranked these eight problems in the following order: Alcohol, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, Tobacco, Suicide, Heroin, Problem Gambling, and Cocaine.

Did you know that Alcohol use poses the biggest threat to Connecticut youth? To find out how you can become active in your local community in addressing this problem please feel free to contact us here at the CNVRAC.—



Highlights from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) is a comprehensive assessment tool used by the federal government to measure the extent of the effects of drug and alcohol use as well as mental health disorder symptoms such as anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation on American citizens ages 12 and older. This survey is administered on an annual basis and is available for download on the U.S. Department of Justice's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's website which can be found at <http://oas.samhsa.gov/nsduhLatest.htm>. Alcohol continues to be the most widely abused substance by all individuals 12 and older. Marijuana is the most popular illicit drug followed closely by prescription drugs. Opiate based pain killers such as percocet and oxycontin are the most popular prescription drugs that are being abused currently in the United States. On a positive note however, Connecticut is one of the few states that saw a significant reduction in prescription drug use among youth ages 12-17 in 2010. This shows that prevention efforts in our state and sub-region are making a difference. Data from assessment tools like the NSDUH play a vital role in prevention because it shows us where we have been in the past, how we are doing in the present and what changes need to be made to lower the rates of mental health and substance abuse related disorders being experienced by people living in the United States.—

New CNRAC Website

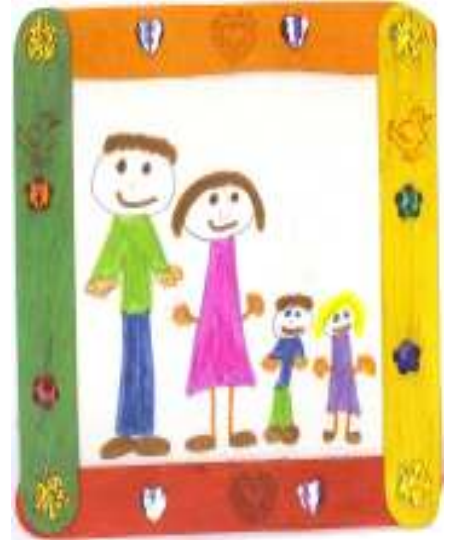
The CNVRAC is proud to announce that our website has been remodeled and put back online better than ever. We would like to thank Rikki Crea and Outsource communications for all of their hard work in remodeling our site. Our web address is the still the same. It can be reached by visiting www.cnvrac.org. Our new site has separate web pages for parents, youth and professionals. We also have added web pages specifically designed for our Local Prevention Councils, the 40 Developmental Assets, News and Events, Resources and Publications as well as a page with information on all of the presentations and trainings that are offered by the CNVRAC. For a more in depth view of these topics please feel free to visit and browse the new site.—



Family Boundaries is Asset 11 of Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, the qualities, experiences, and relationships that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. **Show them you care.**

Tips for building this asset

As a family, set clear, concise, and consistent boundaries based on your values and expectations. Make sure everyone—not just the children—is following the same rules, although there may be some differences depending on ages and maturity. Be sure to set up clear consequences for family members who break the rules. Also, make it clear everyone must always let the rest of the family know where he or she is.



Also try these techniques for building this asset:

- ♦ *In your home and family:* Meet monthly as a family to discuss boundaries: Are they fair? Do they still work? Do they reflect your values and principles? Adjust them as needed.
- ♦ *In your neighborhood and community:* Communicate with your neighbors about the rules and boundaries in your family. Ask for their support. For example, neighbors can remind children to ask a parent's permission before accepting sweets.
- ♦ *In your school or youth program:* Divide students or participants into groups. Have each group discuss family boundaries and consequences. Identify the reason for each rule.



Want to know more about the 40 Developmental Assets and ideas for helping young people build them? Visit www.search-institute.org/assets.

**Central Naugatuck
Valley Regional Action
Council**

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The Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Action Council's mission is to prevent and reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use in its service area among youth, and over time among adults, through community education, community mobilization, public awareness, and advocacy.

We are on the web!
www.cnvrac.org

**The CNVRAC
serves the following
communities:**

- Beacon Falls
- Bethlehem
- Cheshire
- Middlebury
- Naugatuck
- Prospect
- Southbury
- Thomaston
- Waterbury
- Watertown
- Wolcott
- Woodbury

What can the CNVRAC do for you?

- *Provide solutions to reduce addictions
- *Community Mobilization
- *Awareness, Education & Prevention
- *Legislative Advocacy
- *Public Policy Development
- *Technical Assistance & Training
- *Needs Assessment & Data Collection
- *Research & Evaluation
- *Program Development
- *Project Collaboration

Regional Action Councils are led by local educators, parents, business people, social service providers, law enforcement officials, clergy, government leaders and youth. They are designed to be responsive, fo-

We are a program of the Family Intervention Center.

We are Primarily Funded by the State of Connecticut , Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Other Funders include: City of Waterbury, CT—Problem Gambling Services and Naugatuck Savings Bank

