

# asac action

August 2009

## Area Substance Abuse Council Board of Directors

Nicole Pizzini  
President

Ann Stoner  
Vice President

Roseanne Matuszek  
Secretary

Dan Allison  
Treasurer

### BOARD MEMBERS

Joan Craig  
Don Davis  
Keith Dirks  
Norman Griser  
Dr. Malinda Lamb  
Thomas Levi  
Brent Oleson  
James Randall  
Al Rathje  
Dave Romont  
Jason Sanders  
Mark Zaiger

John Garringer  
Executive Director



Visit our web site at  
[www.asac.us](http://www.asac.us)

## Hall-Perrine Foundation Provides Lead Gift for Heart of Iowa Elevator Project

The Area Substance Abuse Council's fund drive to add an elevator to the Heart of Iowa program building received a major boost with the announcement of a \$71,534 matching grant from the Hall-Perrine Foundation. This gift represents 1/3 of the project's cost. The Foundation will give one-dollar for every two-dollars donated to the Heart of Iowa Elevator Project. We are very thankful for this generous gift.

The addition of an elevator will improve Heart of Iowa's treatment programming and help safeguard the health and safety of the families we serve. Please send donations for the Heart of Iowa Elevator Project to:

**Area Substance Abuse Council**  
3601 16th Avenue SW  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404



## Youth Residential Clients Improve Academically

Besides helping adolescents learn to live a life without drugs and alcohol, ASAC's Youth Residential (CD+) program is helping young clients achieve academic success.

CD+, which serves male and female adolescents age 13-18, receives Title 1 funding which pays for two tutors and educational materials and supplies. Many of the youth clients we serve are behind in their schooling so we maintain year-round educational programming. Each weekday morning the clients either study for their GED or work to obtain school credits.

During the 2008-2009 school year, ASAC's Youth Residential program provided educational programming to 109 youth clients. Fifty of these students earned high school credits, 18 were enrolled in a GED program, and 7 earned their GED. In addition, two clients obtained their high school diploma while at ASAC and one became enrolled in post-secondary education.

We conduct pre and post tests of our clients at entry and prior to discharge. Those clients who stay 90 days or more we measure changes in these test scores. In the 2008-2009 school year, 44 youth stayed in the program for 90 days or longer. Of these long-term clients, 73% showed improvement in reading and 77% showed improvement in math. Of these 44 students, 48% improved more than one full grade level in reading and 36% improved more than one full grade level in math.

We are very proud of the academic accomplishments of the clients in ASAC's CD+ program. It is one of many positive changes the youth are making in their lives during their stay in ASAC's Youth Residential treatment program.

## Linn County Parents Needed!

If you are a parent in Linn County and like to take short quizzes, we have just the thing for you! This year the Linn County Underage Drinking Coalition will be conducting a campaign educating parents on the basics of alcohol. Students in the area receive information on alcohol several times throughout the school year, but how much parents know is unknown. In order to begin this campaign, we need to identify what information parents need. Please take a few minutes and take the short Alcohol 101 Quiz. Please go to <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/159562/alcohol-101>. Look for this parent education campaign to begin in the fall. For more information, contact Erin Gavin, ASAC Prevention Specialist, (319) 390-1884 ext. 208



## The “Highs” and Lows of Marijuana Use Today

Lindsey Pospisil, ASAC Prevention Specialist

Let's face it; there is a lot of stress in our everyday lives. Some might claim that they are emotional eaters, some may crack open a beer when they get home from work, or others may light up a cigarette. Some may even smoke some marijuana to feel “relaxed” after a stressful day, but before lighting up here are a few things you should know. Creating a habit of using marijuana can lead to mental addiction, the feeling that the body needs the drug in order to feel normal.

Marijuana is 300% stronger today than it was in the 60s and 70s. The higher the potency of the drug, the easier it is to become dependent upon it. The body gets used to the chemicals from the drug and just like alcohol or other drugs it will build a tolerance to marijuana. It will take more of the drug to produce the same “high” that it once got, increasing tolerance. It becomes a bigger problem because the “high” is what marijuana users seek and they will develop strong cravings for the drug. Those who usually experience these symptoms will develop withdrawal from marijuana when they do not use the drug for a period of time. Common withdrawal symptoms include irritability, anxiety, disrupted sleeping patterns, and aggression. There is also a physical addiction. Physical addiction happens when your body doesn't know how to react without the drug. Any addiction is hard to overcome because it becomes part of your life. After frequent using you will begin to seek the drug no matter the problems it might cause with your school, work, or friends and family.

According to the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 936,000 individuals reported that they received treatment for a marijuana addiction. Over half of teens who are in treatment have a marijuana addiction as their main diagnosis. Marijuana is now number two on the list of most sought out drug to get treatment for, after alcohol. It is the most commonly abused illegal drug in the United States.

### NEWS UPDATE . . .

**The Alliant Energy Foundation** has awarded ASAC a \$3,000 grant. The funds will help purchase a new commercial refrigerator or a commercial freezer for ASAC's main campus.

**The Heart of Iowa Advisory Council** had four new members join the Council in July: **Jody Weigel - Kirkwood Community College**, **Carlos Vega - Iowa Workforce Development**, **Star Holmes - Waypoint**, and **Fran Kapler - Alliant Energy**. Two members also have retired from the Council. We wish to thank **Dave Gosch - Rockwell Collins** and **Scott Siebert - City of Cedar Rapids Housing Services** for their time and commitment to Heart of Iowa.

## **FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME**

*by Maudi Walton, Prevention Specialist II*

According to a March of Dimes quick reference fact sheet entitled "Drinking during Pregnancy" Fetal Alcohol syndrome (FAS) is the most common known cause of mental retardation. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest that between 1000 and 6000 babies are born in the United States each year with FAS.

Babies with FAS are abnormally small at birth and usually do not catch up on growth as they get older. Their facial features include small eyes, a very thin upper lip and smooth skin where there should be grooves between the nose and upper lip. Their organs especially the heart may not form properly. Many babies with FAS also have a brain that is small and abnormally formed. Most have some degree of mental instability. Many have short attention spans, emotional behavior problems and poor coordination.

A 2001 study found that 6-7 year olds were more than 3 times likely to have behavior problems such as aggressive and delinquent behaviors if their moms drank any alcohol during pregnancy.

A 2007 study suggested that female children of moms who drank more than one drink a week were more likely to have behavioral and emotional problems at 4 - 8 years of age.

Other studies report behavioral and learning problems in children exposed to even moderate drinking during pregnancy. Other problems include hyperactivity, impulsivity, poor social and communication skills.

Although the occasional drink a woman takes before she realizes she is pregnant is unlikely to harm her baby all women who are considering becoming pregnant should stop drinking alcohol. There are no cures for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders, but children experiencing a stable, nurturing environment and an early diagnosis can improve long-term outlooks. Because no amount of alcohol has been proven to be safe during pregnancy and there is no way to predict which babies will be damaged by alcohol, a woman should stop drinking immediately if she even suspects that she is pregnant. In fact, the safest course is not to drink alcohol at all during pregnancy and to avoid heavy drinking during childbearing years.

If you are pregnant and drinking and find it difficult to stop you can get help. Please contact your local ASAC prevention office or call ASAC's Prevention Services main campus at (319) 390-4381.

### **TOBACCO PREVENTION PROGRAMMING IN CLINTON COUNTY**

- \* YEL Chapter has just completed a very busy year by relaxing with a cosmic bowling/pizza party at the Plaza Bowling Alley. 35 members and their friends attended. A great time was had by all.
- \* 13 high school students attended this year's JEL Summit in Grinnell, Iowa. Four of our Clinton students are members of the JEL Executive Committee. "Way to Go" Clinton County!
- \* On April 29<sup>th</sup> the Clinton/Jackson JEL/YEL Chapter facilitated a family fun night at the YM/YW Center in Clinton. The idea for the carnival originated and was planned by the students. Approximately 160 students and their parents attended this fun filled event. The YEL/JEL members facilitated 11 carnival games and did two street marketing events. Hot dogs, drinks and popcorn were served. They did a fantastic job and great fun was had by all.
- \* Our Breathe Easy Chapter in Clinton is also planning our annual X Treme Leadership Conference targeting our middle school students. The conference is planned for October. Last year 88 students attended representing 6 Clinton County middle schools. This year we are partnering with Ashford University to have our conference on their campus. This will be a win-win collaboration. The students will be able to experience the atmosphere of a college setting, maybe inspiring some to attend college, and Ashford is providing the space free of charge which is very good for our budget.