

## Area Substance Abuse Council



Helping individuals, families, workplaces  
and communities be healthy and drug free.

## ASAC's October 2015 Newsletter

### Message from the Executive Director



Barb Gay

On September 10<sup>th</sup> ASAC held one of four United Way of East Central Iowa campaign kickoffs. Besides announcing the 2015 United Way campaign goal of \$10,300,000, ASAC's own United Way campaign results were revealed. The Area Substance Abuse Council was the first United Way partner agency to serve as a Pacesetter Company.

I am pleased to announce that ASAC employees raised \$33,060 for United Way. This is a 27% increase from the prior year!

We have a wonderful staff at ASAC who know first-hand how United Way helps those in need and showed that through their generous giving.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barb Gay".

# October is National Substance Abuse Prevention Month

*By Jeffrey Meyers, Prevention Specialist*

October marks the second annual National Substance Abuse Prevention Month, an initiative first started via White House proclamation last year. This serves as both a humbling reminder of the toll substance abuse has on our families and communities, as well as a celebration of what accomplishments have already taken place. It's a month for reflection, a month for action, and ultimately a month for optimism.

On a National level, there is no questioning the impact of substance abuse. The 2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that 20.6 million Americans aged 12 and older have addictions to alcohol or drugs, including the non-medical use of prescription drugs. Such abuse is linked to a litany of costs associated with crime, health care, and otherwise lost productivity, to the tune of an estimated \$416 billion dollars. That staggering figure is more than the GDP of many countries, including Israel, Thailand, and South Africa.

One can also not underscore enough the impact substance abuse has on youth especially. This is true regardless of the substance in question. Prescription drugs are the second most abused drug among teens, second only to alcohol. American youth aged between 12 and 20 account for 11% of the nation's monthly alcohol consumption, a troubling amount in light of the 21 year old legal drinking age. Illicit drugs also represent a tremendous health and safety risk, with an estimated 23 million people over 12 years of age using some sort of illicit drug in 2010 alone.

Issues, however, are meant to be addressed and prevention efforts continue to be strong nationwide. Strategies aimed at promoting resiliency skills, especially to those exposed to substance abuse at home, have shown to be effective at reducing later use. Community-based efforts that utilize parents, officials, youth, educators, and otherwise concerned citizens can be a powerful tool in combating substance abuse. Locally, eastern Iowa is home to a number of county-wide coalitions aimed specifically at reducing substance abuse. These groups work to empower localities to take action in the form of advocacy groups for youth, county and city ordinances, as well as a wide array of educational efforts.

Iowa, as a whole, can be proud of the strides the state has made. The Iowa Youth Survey, a confidential survey completed by 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders across the state gives an effective measuring tool for how students view substances as well as their rates of usage. The latest 2014 survey demonstrated that, as a whole, substance abuse remained stable and in many cases decreased from 2012. Drinking rates, for example, dropped from 19% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders within the past 30 days to 14%. This marks just one sign post that, in many ways, awareness of substance abuse issues has risen, and there is very real reason for optimism.

For some of us, the reality of substance abuse has already taken hold, rather in our own lives or in the lives of those we care about. In such instances, let October be a month where we seek to educate and support others so as to ensure they avoid the pitfalls of substance abuse and instead embrace all life has to offer by making healthy decisions.

Sources:

[http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov/images/2014\\_State/IYS\\_2014\\_State\\_Report.pdf](http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov/images/2014_State/IYS_2014_State_Report.pdf)

[http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov/images/2012\\_State/IYS\\_State\\_Report\\_2012.pdf](http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov/images/2012_State/IYS_State_Report_2012.pdf)

<http://knoema.com/nwnfkne/world-gdp-ranking-2015-data-and-charts>

<https://ncadd.org/for-the-media/press-releases-a-news-articles/487-october-is-national-substance-abuse-prevention-month>

## ASAC Receives Grant from Variety, the Children's Charity

ASAC was awarded a Variety grant to replace flooring in the Heart of Iowa apartments.



Wanda Mokrey Sellers, Director of Heart of Iowa, and Melanie Steffens, Chair of the Heart of Iowa Advisory Council, attended the September 30, 2015 Variety Heart Luncheon held at the Cedar Rapids Marriott where they accepted, on behalf of the agency, the \$11,900 check.

We are thankful for the financial support provided by Variety, the Children's Charity.

## "The Anonymous People"



In recognition of September being Recovery Month, ASAC sponsored free showings of the documentary, *The Anonymous People*. After the film, ASAC staff led the audience in a discussion of the film.

The documentary generated a lot of discussion and people found the movie to be very powerful.

We were pleased to be able to sponsor the showing of this film throughout our five county service area. If you are interested in having the film shown at your church, school, organization, or workplace, please email [info@asac.us](mailto:info@asac.us).

## Make My Non-Profit Run Better Contest

The Area Substance Abuse Council (ASAC) participated in the *Make My Non-Profit Run Better* contest by RK Dixon and Premier for a chance to receive a \$15,000 office technology makeover. **Thanks to your overwhelming support, we made it to the second round of the contest and won a \$1,000 printer.**



We congratulate the winner of the \$15,000 makeover, Special Olympics Iowa.

## Upcoming ASAC Sponsored Professional Trainings

### Supporting a Nicotine Quit Attempt

November 6, 2015, 9:00 – 12:15 pm  
ASAC Clinton, 250 20<sup>th</sup> Ave N, Clinton

OR

November 9, 2015, 1:30 – 4:45 pm  
ASAC Prevention Services, 3536 18<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Cedar Rapids

Who Should Attend: Healthcare providers, social workers, substance abuse counselors & prevention staff

Facilitator: Jennifer Gerdes, ASAC Prevention Specialist

#### Objectives:

- Understand the Ask, Advise, Refer System
- Learn ways to effectively support an individual quitting nicotine
- Identify proper uses and dosing for Nicotine Replacement Therapy
- Learn other medication support options for increasing success



CEUs: The Iowa Board of Certification has approved this training for 3 hours of ATOD specific CEUs.

Cost: \$30 per person; \$15 for current ASAC staff and interns.

#### Registration:

Clinton [online registration](#) is limited to 20 participants. Please register by November 1, 2015.

Cedar Rapids [online registration](#) is limited to 30 participants. Please register by November 1, 2015.

## ASAC Receives Gazette Business 380 Excellence Award



On September 3rd The Gazette honored area businesses for excellence in ten categories. The Area Substance Abuse Council was selected for the 2015 Business 380 Excellence Award for Not-for-Profits. Emily Logan, ASAC Board Member, nominated ASAC for this award. It is great to be recognized for the good work that we do!

(Pictured left to right, Stephanie Boesenberg, ASAC IT Manager, Melissa Walker, ASAC Deputy Director of Prevention Services, and Emily Logan)

## ASAC Awarded Grant for Transitional Housing

The Area Substance Abuse Council received \$107,000 for our four transitional housing programs; Adult Halfway House and Heart of Iowa Halfway House in Cedar Rapids and Hightower Place and King House in Clinton. ASAC's Adult Halfway House serves adult men and women, Heart of Iowa and Hightower Place both serve pregnant women or women with children, and King House serves single men.

Our transitional housing programs are critical for our clients who are homeless or who do not have a suitable place to live after completing substance abuse treatment. The Emergency Solutions Grant funding will help ASAC to provide individuals early in recovery with the housing and support services needed for them to transition back into society.

## Donation of Dining Room Chairs and Tables

We thank Unity Point/St. Luke's Hospital for the donation of tables and chairs for our main campus and Heart of Iowa dining rooms. Our main campus dining room serves 32 adult residential clients and 22 youth clients three meals a day; seven days a week. The Heart of Iowa program provides week-day and evening meals for twenty six families. This generous in-kind donation gives our dining rooms a professional cafeteria look. Thank you Unity Point!



# Linn County Sleep Out

Raise Awareness. Raise Money. Help the Homeless in Your Community



Did you know that last year nearly 5,000 individuals used emergency shelters and transitional housing programs in Linn County, and, more than half of those people were children?

The public is invited to participate in the annual Sleep Out for the Homeless event in Cedar Rapids during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. The Sleep Out isn't about giving participants "a taste" of what it is like to be homeless, although some leave with a tiny glimpse of how challenging such a situation can be. There is no way that a single night, regardless of how cold or wet, can replicate the helplessness and personal pain of truly being homeless. The event is about raising awareness of the problem and its sources. It is about raising a few dollars to help out. This is about making our community better for all of us.

## Sleep Out for the Homeless Event

To help support the efforts of local homeless shelters and transitional housing programs, the 10th Annual Sleep Out will be held on **November 7—8** on the concourse of the Veterans Memorial (Cedar Rapids Kernels) Stadium. The event will run from 3pm on Saturday to 6am on Sunday.

Participants construct makeshift shelters out of cardboard that is provided. New this year—participants are also welcome to bring a tent from home (no stakes please). Those sleeping out should dress appropriately for the weather and bring sleeping bags or blankets as needed. Unlike those actually experiencing homelessness, we will have access to indoor restrooms and warming stations. Security will be on site along with free soup, snacks and beverages.

## Agencies Benefitting from Dollars Raised from the Sleep Out

ASAC is one of the agencies benefitting from the dollars raised during the Linn County Sleep Out. ASAC's share of the donations will go to our two transitional housing programs, Adult Halfway House and Heart of Iowa Halfway House.

## How to Participate

Go to [www.sleepoutforhomeless.org](http://www.sleepoutforhomeless.org) to sign up on-line. **It costs just \$10 per participant for a night of great fun and education.** You can form a team yourself or we invite you to join ASAC's team by emailing [info@asac.us](mailto:info@asac.us).

If you cannot, or do not, want to sleep out, you can also support the event by going to the Sleep Out website and making a donation.

## New Look at the Main Campus

The agency's main campus at 3601 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Cedar Rapids is sporting a new look. The trim around the main building is now painted an "ASAC Blue" and the overgrown shrubs and trees have been trimmed or removed from in front of the property and around the buildings.

Thanks to a \$200 gift card from Culvers Garden Center and Greenhouse, we have added a few plants and bushes. We will now wait, however, until we have developed a comprehensive landscape plan before embarking on any more planting.

**If you have expertise in gardening or landscape design we could use your help.** Please email [info@asac.us](mailto:info@asac.us) and we will contact you next spring.



## Red Ribbon Week

*By Julia Furne, ASAC Prevention Specialist*

Thoughts of Red Ribbon Week take us to memories of excited elementary students passing out ribbons and coloring posters. For many kids, this is the first prevention message they will hear. Historically, Red Ribbon Week started on a much sadder note. National Red Ribbon Week celebrations began in 1988 to honor the memory of Sgt. Enrique Camarena, a DEA officer who died fighting a global war against drugs. Sgt. Camarena's family and friends wore red ribbons to remind others of his sacrifice that had been made in the war on drugs.

We continue to wear red ribbons as the battle continues in our communities, neighborhoods, families and schools. In our daily work in the substance abuse field, both prevention and treatment, it is easy to get bogged down in the daily setbacks: the relapses, the missed appointments, the generational attitudes and behaviors which perpetuate in our communities. Red Ribbon Week is a time each year to focus on the positives, the sacrifices made and the successes and progress that have been achieved. As we wear our Red Ribbons this year, we remember Sergeant Camarena and his sacrifice and the work that goes on with the hope of a renewed energy and enthusiasm for the difficult work we do.

May we find the same enthusiasm and excitement of Red Ribbon Week as our elementary students who are learning to "Respect Myself and Be Drug Free" during this year's Red Ribbon Week that will be held October 23 - 31.