



Uniting the communities of Southeastern Connecticut in order to reduce the impact of substance abuse and other addictive behaviors.

- Serving*
 Bozrah
 Colchester
 East Lyme
 Franklin
 Griswold
 Groton
 Ledyard
 Lisbon
 Lyme
 Montville
 New London
 North Stonington
 Norwich
 Old Lyme
 Preston
 Salem
 Sprague
 Stonington
 Voluntown
 Waterford

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Take Action

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Media Literacy

Mass media has a profound influence in our lives and the lives of our children. Television, movies, video games, magazines, and popular music all play a role in shaping our attitudes and values about what kind of behavior is not only acceptable but the norm in our society. Media messages influence the kinds of food we eat, how much and what kind of exercise we get, whether we decide to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol or use other drugs and how we choose to manage anger.

Surveys indicate that parents are concerned about the influence of media on their children. Data suggests that these fears are well founded. One survey by the Kaiser Foundation found that more than one third of youth between the ages of 10 and 12 said that their peers learn “a lot” about issues like alcohol, drugs, sex and violence from TV, movies, and other media sources. Among 13 –15 year olds, the number was 61%. Dr. Peter De-Benedittis, an expert on media education and prevention, asserts that commercial media is designed to exploit our children and teaches them “...to live addictive, destructive lifestyles”.

In our effort to help youth make healthy choices, it is not enough to simply provide them with true and accurate information about risky behaviors. In order to combat negative media messages we must also give them the knowledge and skills necessary to critically evaluate and filter the many messages they receive from the media everyday. *Media literacy* refers to this ability to ask questions about and evaluate the media messages that we see. It is a critical skill for everyone, especially youth, to have in this media driven world.

A media literacy approach to prevention can help youth to make healthy choices by teaching them to 1) recognize how media messages influence them and their decisions and 2) develop critical thinking skills necessary to analyze the media, and decide whether to accept or reject those messages.

Source: <http://medialiteracy.net>

Alcohol Awareness Month

The purpose of the month long observance sponsored by the SAMHSA National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information is to recognize the serious problem of alcohol abuse.

According to the 2007 National Survey on Drug Use and Health:

- 1) 23% of individuals 12 and older reported having participated in binge drinking in the past 30 days.
- 2) 28% of individuals between the ages of 12 and 20 reported recent alcohol use, 19% reported participating in binge drinking and 6% were considered heavy drinkers.
- 3) The rate of recent alcohol use among individuals 12 and older was highest in the Northeast (56%)

To learn more about the signs and consequences of alcohol use you can visit:

ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/aprilalcohol/ or
www.sectrac.org

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

Think you or someone you love might have a problem with alcohol?

If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, you may have a problem with alcohol use.

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?

If you would like to get help, you can call Infoline sponsored by the United Way at 2-1-1

Source: <http://ncadi.samhsa.gov/seasonal/aprilalcohol/>

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You Should Know?

Youth surveys conducted throughout Southeastern Connecticut show that that alcohol is the drug of choice among local youth. The data also show that youth use alcohol are more likely to use other substances like tobacco, marijuana and other illicit drugs.

Parents are the most powerful influence in the lives of their children. In fact, kids whose parents talk to them about the risks of drug and alcohol use are up to 50% less likely to use. Talk to your kids. Make sure they know how you feel about their use of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs.

To learn more about talking to kids about drug and alcohol use visit: www.timetotalk.org

Coming Soon...Second Annual Youth Forum

SERAC will be hosting its Second Annual Youth Forum
on Thursday April 30 from 8:15 am—1 pm.

The purpose of this free event is to unite youth in southeastern CT in order to help them be more successful in making healthy decisions. The day's agenda will include a keynote address about the importance of healthy relationships followed by the student's choice of a morning and afternoon workshop. Workshop topics include the following:

- 1) The Importance of Respect and Positive Communication,
- 2) Dealing with Adults: Communication Across Generations and
- 3) Understanding Yourself: Self-Image and Identity.



The event is open to youth in grades 6-8 from Southeastern Connecticut. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. For more information about participation and registration please call the SERAC office at (860) 848-2800.

Can You Identify These Products?

Can you identify the following products from just these pieces of their logos?

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| 1) | 2) | 3) | 4) | 5) |
|  |  |  |  |  |

1) Pez candy 2) All laundry detergent 3) Monster Energy Drink 4) Pepsi cola 5) Jif peanut butter

What is Happening?

April

- 1-30 Alcohol Awareness Month
- 9 National Alcohol Screening Day
- 24 Training: Suicide Prevention and Intervention (SERAC office, 9-noon)
- 30 SERAC Youth Forum

May

- 1-31 Mental Health Month
- 6-12 National Mental Health Counseling Week
- 10-16 National Alcohol and Other Drug Related Birth Defects Week
- 31 World No Tobacco Day

June



We're on the web!
www.sectrac.org

620 Norwich New London Turnpike
Uncasville, CT 06382
Phone: (860) 848-2800
Fax: (860) 848-2801
Email: ct.task.force@sbcglobal.net

