



MERCER COUNCIL
ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION

*Serving the community
for over 30 years...*

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Newsletter May 2012

Regional Coalition Update



**PREVENTION COALITION
OF MERCER COUNTY**

For the past few months, the Prevention Coalition of Mercer County has been working on a county-wide needs assessment in order to focus on the priority substance abuse issues facing the county. Key informant interviews and focus groups are being conducted by Barbara Sprechman, Prevention Coalition Coordinator to ascertain the local conditions and intervening variables particular to each community. A Data Workgroup has been established within the Coalition with the expertise to collect, review and analyze community-level data on substance abuse related to core data areas. Additional data on substance abuse consequences and consumption patterns will be analyzed in order to prioritize community needs. The needs assessment results will be used to specify a target geographic area and/or population.

The Coalition is growing in members each month as we continue to increase capacity and infrastructure. An Outreach/Membership Workgroup is working on continuing to reach out to new partners to insure cultural diversity and competency. A PR/Communications Workgroup is working on the Coalition's Vision and Mission statements and communication outlets to the greater community.

Pharmacist Dinner/Workshop

On May 16th, Mercer County pharmacists and technicians are invited to attend a complimentary dinner workshop on "Addressing the Issues of Prescription Drug Abuse" co-sponsored by Mercer Council's Prevention Coalition and Reckitt Benckiser. Dr. Michael Shore, Medical Director at Elm Lifelines in Medford New Jersey will present information on the epidemic of prescription drug misuse and New Jersey's new Prescription Drug Monitoring Program. For more information or to register, call 609-396-5874 ext. 205.

Meet our Staff: Arabia Laramore, Community Educator



Arabia has been with Mercer Council since 2010. Initially hired as the REBEL anti-tobacco youth coordinator for the agency (Reaching Everyone By Exposing Lies), she assisted school youth groups to plan and promote activities to fight against Big Tobacco.

Currently, Arabia develops and conducts prevention presentations in schools throughout Mercer County to inform our youth, parents, and the community about new and existing drugs trends. She is currently pursuing her Certified Prevention Specialist certification.

Mercer Council is a private non-profit organization established in 1978, providing health and prevention programs combating alcohol, drug abuse and related problems.

Metro Employee Assistance Service

Are you an employer looking for a way to support your employees through these challenging times?

You can provide short-term confidential counseling for your employees and their family members for a very reasonable fee.

Consultations for managers dealing with difficult workplace situations are included in this service.

Our staff consists of licensed professionals who will be happy to discuss with you how Metro Employee Assistance Service can make your job easier and your workplace more pleasant.

Call (609) 396-5877 ext. 206 and ask for Nora Kashinsky, LPC. You'll be glad you did!



Fatal Vision Goggles Loan Bank Available



Mercer Council has three sets of fatal vision goggles available for loan through a federal grant from the OJJDP and the New Jersey Division of Alcohol and Beverage Control. Fatal Vision Goggles are specially designed and manufactured goggles that simulate the visual impairment caused by alcohol or other drugs. Viewing through the goggles, the wearer experiences a loss of equilibrium, one of the effects of intoxication. The underlying principle is to demonstrate how quickly impairment can turn fun into devastating consequences. The wearer and observers are shown that such impairment makes certain activities (such as driving) dangerous. The goggles activity is an excellent tool to use in schools and youth groups to educate young people on the risks associated with drinking and driving.

A free training program and technical assistance is offered to assist facilitators in implementing the program. For more information, call Barbara Sprechman at 609-396-5874 ext 205.

Children in the Middle

The Council is offering the **CIM Program FREE**, developed by the Center For Divorce Education in Athens, Ohio. The program is designed to help minimize the harmful effects divorce can have on caregivers (parents, grandparents etc.) and children. The program is about parenting skills, NOT therapy or counseling. Goals include: helping parents

recognize the effect their behavior has on children caught in the middle of parental problems and conflicts, helping parents learn new skills and applying them to their own situations, and providing opportunity for parents to learn how to reduce the main stressors of divorce and separation on children. Call 609-396-5874. ext. 202 to bring this program to your location.



The Council offers the **WISE program FREE** to any Mercer County resident 60 years or older. WISE is a free, 6-week program designed to celebrate healthy aging and educate older adults so they are less likely to experience problems associated with medications and more likely to make positive lifestyle choices as they age. The program covers a wide range of fun, interactive topics: Understanding the Changes Associated with Age, Aging Sensitivity, Valuing Cultural and Generational Diversity, Medication and the Older Adult, Addiction and Older Adults, and An Enhanced Quality of Life. For more information, call Chip Meara at 609-396-5874 ext. 202.