

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

- **WELCOME** to the inaugural issue of Southshire Prevention Works! This new quarterly publication is designed to help promote the work of the Coalition.
- As part of our **EACH REACH 2** initiative we ask that you share this newsletter with at 2 people unfamiliar with our work.

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Southshire Prevention Works!

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

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Sticker Shock Launched in Bennington

What's shocking?? Why Sticker Shock of course!! On November 18th the Southshire Coalition partnered with the Center for Restorative Justice's Community Service Club, the Bennington County Sheriff Department, the Bennington Police Department, the Vermont State Troopers and local alcohol retailers to bring the first-ever Sticker Shock Campaign to Bennington. The campaign's goal: raise awareness around the legal penalties of giving alcohol to youth.

Some might ask why is the "shock" necessary? Here's why: 36% of students consumed at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during the past 30 days (YRBS 2009). Giving alcohol to minors is illegal but people still do it, thus providing social ac-

cess. 30% of students reported they "gave someone money to buy it for me" and 46% reported that "someone gave it to me" (YRBS 2009). Clearly, those



CRJ Community Service Club, Law enforcement and BBO staff participate!

giving alcohol to minors are missing some key information!

The goal of the Sticker Shock Campaign was simple: provide that key information, in this case

the legal penalties for furnishing, to those of-age individuals who are facilitating that social access. Hopefully, someone with intentions of furnishing would think twice about doing so after reading that they could be fined up to \$2,000 or be sentenced to up to 2 years in jail!

Sticker Shock Campaign was a great success! Teens, law enforcement officers, and Coalition staff placed over 2,500 stickers on alcohol packaging in 5 local stores. The event received front-page coverage in the Bennington Banner, and stickers ran in ad space in the Bennington Banner and Banner Extra.

Two more Sticker Shock Campaigns will take place between now and June! Come help us out!

Organizational Retreat Planned for February 4

In place of our regularly scheduled February coalition meeting we will be conducting an organizational retreat on Thursday, February 4, from 8:00 am—12:30 pm at the First Congregational Church's Barn located on Monument Circle.

The retreat is being designed to facilitate a dialogue on the organization's vision and goals for the new year. We also hope to discuss current committee structure with an eye toward creating a structure which better meets the interests of our members and the needs of the community.

Both current and prospective members are encouraged to attend and help the organization get focused for the new year.

Lunch will be provided and the informal setting of the "Barn" will hopefully facilitate some good discussion and bonding.



Example of Vermont Social Norms Campaign ad in 2008

“For every dollar spent on prevention between \$2 and \$20 are returned in benefits”

**Southwest Prevention Center, University of Oklahoma*



Social Norms Effort Underway at Southern Vermont College

An exciting social norms campaign initiative is gaining traction at Southern Vermont College. Before we get ahead of ourselves though, let's clear the air. Just what the heck is a social norm? How is one even formed? And how does a social norms campaign work?

A social norm is a belief held by a social group. Social norms are formed from social interactions and cultural media, and sadly both of these can be informed from ignorance and

false assumptions. A social norm affects behavior; depending upon the belief informing the norm, the resulting behavior could be positive or negative. The most interesting part about a social norm that produces a negative behavior, is that the norm is created from experiences rooted in ignorance and false assumptions. They are false because the majority of the social group are actually doing a positive behavior!

The purpose of a social norms campaign is to decrease negative and increase positive behavior. A campaign does this by highlighting the actual positive group behavior which discounts the false social norm that results in the negative behavior. The negative norm becomes a positive one; and a positive social norm results in positive behavior!

Let's look at this accurate, yet totally fictitious example: 60% of Transylvania Tech (go to p.3)

Community Website Planned

In an effort to “meet people where they live” we will be developing a community website designed to not only provide prevention information but also to serve as a clearing house for all kinds of community information for parents, youth and young adults. The concept is to replace our current underutilized site with one that provides people with

information that they may struggle to easily find elsewhere. The plan is to create a “one stop shop” for all Bennington area information.

The site will feature information on after-school activities, scholarships, community service opportunities, parenting tips and prevention resource information.

Prevention messages will be

woven throughout the site to stimulate interest and increase the communities knowledge base.

Community volunteers are now being sought to help develop the site. Some of the tasks before this new subcommittee include choosing a name for the site and selecting content. To volunteer contact Glen @ 442-5491 ext. 254

Wit's End Parent Support Group Forming

Under the leadership of SSAC Chair, Kristyn Harrington of Mount Anthony High School the Coalition is spearheading an effort to create a support group for parents concerned about or dealing with children abusing alcohol and drugs. The group called *Wit's End* was founded by two parents griev-

ing over the loss of a daughter to drug addiction. Chapters have recently been formed in several Vermont towns and the response has been positive. The program provides a support group for parents with a licensed alcohol and drug counselor on hand to provide counsel and advice. The group

itself is however driven and directed by the parent participants. Parents interested in helping form a Steering Committee for this new group should contact Kristyn Harrington at 447-7511.

Social Norms Effort Underway at SVC, Continued from p. 2



Map of Southern Vermont College

(from p. 2) students, when surveyed, reported using alcohol less than weekly. When asked, “How often do you think the average student uses alcohol once a week or more,” the perception of use

false assumption could create a pressure to drink more frequently than the average student really does!

The SVC social norms campaign will focus on the already existing assets, strengths, and positive be-

haviors and social norms of the SVC student body. This 100% from-the-positive slant should help to correct many false assumptions that students make that negatively influence their behavior.

Hopefully the purpose of a social norms campaign is making more sense now! We are very excited to be able to do this with SVC! It will be exciting to see the campaign unfold on campus and to see how SVC student behavior changes over the next two years.

“Southshire members contributed over \$158,000 in in-kind support in 2009”

Southshire Welcomes New Members

We would like to welcome the following individuals and organizations to the Coalition. Our Coalition can only be as strong as the members who make up our team. With these new additions we increase our ability to accurately represent the community.

Our thanks and appreciation goes out to the following individuals and organizations who are giving their

time and energy to the prevention effort.

Welcome aboard!

Bob Marine, Southwest Supervisory Union, After School and Summer Programs

Chad Schmidt, Bennington County Sheriff’s Dept.

Michael Harrington, New Directions Consulting

Jenni Spicer, The Dream Project

Janet Cunningham, Vermont Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation

Wendy Woods, United Way of Bennington County

Stay tuned for details on our EACH REACH 2 initiative beginning this January! Find members, win fabulous prizes!

Parent Education Program Scheduled

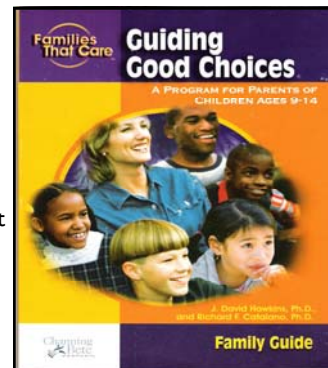
In partnership with the Interfaith Counsel and UCS the Coalition is sponsoring a parenting program entitled “Guiding Good Choices”.

The program is a series of five interactive two hour workshops designed to help parents and families better communicate in order to help youth avoid the types of peer pressure that might lead them to

use alcohol and drugs. The program will be facilitated by Debby Stanlewicz, UCS Transitional Living Program Coordinator and Hillary Batchelor.

In order to facilitate parent involvement free childcare and meals will be provided to parents for each of the sessions. Families will also receive a \$65 stipend for comple-

tion of the program. The program will run Jan 12—Feb 9 at Second Congregational Church. Eight families have registered but space is still available. Interested parents should contact Debby Stanlewicz at (802) 688-6466 to register.





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Upcoming Events

- Steering Committee Meeting, Tues, Jan 12**
- Coalition Meeting, Thurs, Jan 14**
- Guiding Good Choices, Jan 12—Feb 9**
- SPF Training, Weds, Jan 20**
- Parent Focus Group, Thurs, Jan 28**
- CADCA Conference, Feb 7-11**
- Middle School Skate II, Fri, Feb 5**
- Bowl for Kids Sake: Team Southshire, Mar 20***

We are forming a Coalition team for this event and looking for bowlers -this means you Judith Fellows!



New Staff Reflect on First Months with Southshire

As someone who has had the opportunity to work with prevention coalitions in other communities I have been amazed with the level of support and breath of our membership.

As the "new guy" I have been impressed with the numerous agency and institutional members who not only attend meetings but also assist in developing and implementing programs. I have coordinated other coalitions where this level of "buy-in" was not the case. This coalition truly has a diverse and engaged membership.

The principal place I see a need for greater community participation is in our ability to incorporate parents and youth more fully into our efforts. Both Kerri and I have been busy trying to bridge this gap and we welcome your ideas and suggestions.

Some of the things we have started to do or plan to do for parents include:

- Visit PTA groups

- Develop a Parent/Community Website
- Conduct Parent Focus Groups
- Develop a Parent Education Media Campaign

To reach out to youth we have/are:

- Working with the Middle School to Develop a Youth Prevention Group
- Working with Arlington Memorial High School to re-launch their SADD Group
- Provided Mount Anthony High School student leaders with opportunity to train with Manchester student leaders
- Funded Mount Anthony student leader retreat

- Funded Southern Vermont College students attendance at the National Bacchus AOD prevention conference.

As you see additional ways the coalition can better connect with youth and parents please send us your suggestions.



Coalition Coordinator, Glen Gross and Program Manager, Kerri MacLaury