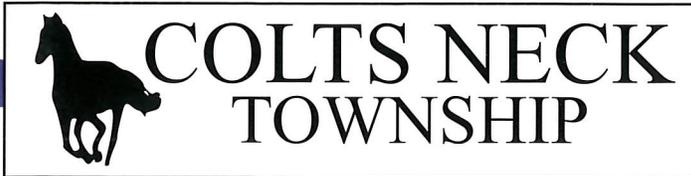


PREVENTION PRESS

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The Colts Neck Municipal Alliance's mission is to reduce the incidence, prevalence, and impact of alcoholism and drug abuse in the local community through planning for and purchasing services, projects, and programs that provide prevention and education.



IN THE NEWS

Colts Neck Alliance's Message Against Alcohol-Impaired & Distracted Driving

The Colts Neck Municipal Alliance has stressed the importance of sober and safe driving through several billboard messages on Route 34, positioned just north of the Route 33-Route 34 intersection and south of Naval Weapons Station Earle on the northbound side of the highway.

Since June, 2016, three simple yet effective messages against drunk and distracted driving have captured the attention of motorists along the two-lane highway that meets with highly-traveled Routes 18, 33, and 537 nearby. Traffic reports estimate that 20,000 drivers travel Route 34 daily, giving the billboard's messages high visibility for commuters and local and long-distance drivers, as well as their passengers.

"If we can get one person to remember the billboard's message, it is worth it. I put a lot of effort into making each message short yet effective because it has to deliver a memorable impact in seconds. That is all the time someone passing by has to view it," shared Anita Dedalis,



acting coordinator of the Colts Neck Alliance. "I have received positive feedback about the billboard, so I know people are noticing it."

Alcohol-Impaired Driving

Drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 grams/deciliter or higher are considered alcohol-impaired, also referred to as drunk driving, driving under the influence (DUI), driving while intoxicated (DWI), or operating under the influence (OUI). For drivers under the age of 21, the zero-tolerance policy makes it illegal to have any alcohol present in the system while behind the wheel.

- 10,497 deaths occurred in the U.S. due to alcohol-impaired driving (2016)
- Approximately 29 people die every day in the U.S. from alcohol-impaired vehicle crashes, the equivalent of one person every 50 minutes (2016)
- 214 children died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes (2016)
- 86% of fatal crashes involving alcohol-impaired drivers occurred on non-interstate roads (2016)

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On November 29th, a Mayor's Proclamation declared

December, 2017 as "National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month in Colts Neck."

The Proclamation calls for Colts Neck citizens, businesses, schools, institutions, and organizations to promote awareness of the dangers of impaired driving, support safer and healthier behaviors regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs, and participate in the "You Drink and Drive, You Lose" campaign.

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Colts Neck Alliance's Message Against Alcohol-Impaired & Distracted Driving

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Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ybqocp5x>, the source for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics above, for more information.

Driving While Distracted

Driving while distracted involves anything that takes a driver's attention away from the road. This includes visual and manual distractions, as well as cognitive distractions that interrupt the mind's focus on driving. Examples are texting, talking on a cell phone, eating, adjusting music, paying attention to passengers, and using a navigation system while operating a motor vehicle.

- 3,477 deaths and 391,000 injuries resulted from distracted driving (2015)
- Drivers under the age of 20 have the most fatal distraction-related crashes

- 42% of high-school students who drove in the past 30 days admitted to texting or emailing while driving (2015)
- 551 non-occupant deaths occurred because of distraction-affected crashes, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and others (2015)

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/hbued5t>, the source for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics above, for more information.

The billboard is funded by the Colts Neck Alliance through Colts Neck Township and the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (GCADA). GCADA's prevention, education, awareness, and treatment initiatives are supported by the Drug Education Demand Reduction (DEDR) fund that collects fines from drug offense convictions.

Adolescent Dangers of Vaping and Juuling

A Juul is a slim, sleek, and inconspicuous electronic cigarette oftentimes mistaken for a pen or USB drive due to its innocuous appearance, giving teen-agers an easily disguisable way to vape in school and other public places, as well as at home. Rechargeable or battery-operated e-cigarettes (e-cigs) heat liquids into vapors that users vape, or inhale.

E-cigs are filled with smoking solutions housed in pods or tanks; the solutions, or juices, range from flavored liquids with teen-attracting names to nicotine and THC, the main chemical compound in marijuana that delivers the "high." Vaping eliminates the tell-tale smoke smells of traditional cigarettes and marijuana joints or blunts, adding to their concealability. Vaping is also often marketed and viewed as safer, cleaner, more acceptable, and more stylish than smoking cigarettes.

According to the 2016 *Monitoring the Future* survey, an annual drug-trends survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), vaping has a higher use among teens than traditional cigarettes. This past November, the smoking age in New Jersey increased from 19 to 21 years old—including e-cigarettes—to prevent teen nicotine addiction.

Under the new law, fines will be enforced on anyone selling, giving, or offering tobacco products to a person under age 21, which includes people legally buying e-cigarette tobacco products and then selling them to underage users at a profit.

Juuling has become a problem in many high schools, with students vaping in bathrooms and hallways and on school grounds; school administrators are responding with disciplinary action. Recent studies, including a USC Children's Health Study (<https://tinyurl.com/ybe8qald>) suggest that at least some teens who vape would not have tried cigarettes, increasing teen exposure to nicotine and its potential for addiction and lasting damage to the teen brain.

Beyond tobacco, other toxic, harmful, potentially cancer-causing chemicals have been identified in nicotine solutions. Chemicals vary from brand to brand and are not yet regulated.

Parents should go online to familiarize themselves with what Juuls, e-cigarettes, and other electronic smoking devices look like and talk to their teens about the health concerns surrounding vaping and tobacco's negative impact on the adolescent brain that is still developing.



WARNING SIGNS OF TEEN DRUG USE

Parents: Do you know the warning signs of substance abuse?

When it comes to drug use and underage drinking, parents often dismiss the first clues "hidden in plain sight," chalking them up to typical "teens will be teens" behaviors.

Parents must know what to look for when it comes to adolescent drug and alcohol problems and take immediate action when something doesn't seem right!

Parents must proactively educate themselves on what to look for when it comes to the early stages of drug and alcohol abuse, regularly check their children's bedrooms, and immediately intervene when something doesn't seem right, before addiction and negative consequences upset the entire family.

The first warning signs that your child may be experimenting with or developing an interest in drugs or alcohol can extend beyond the typical physical and behavioral indicators associated with substance abuse and involve slight, gradual differences such as changes in appearance, friends, and activities.

Power to the Parent (<http://powertotheparent.org>) is an information-packed online resource for parents, who are the first line of defense against adolescent substance abuse. The website educates parents about identifying the warning signs of drug

If you suspect your adolescent is using drugs or drinking underage, here are resources for assistance and further information:

Partnership for Drug-Free Kids Parent Helpline:

855-378-4373

<https://tinyurl.com/ycoks6ev>

SAMHSA's (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

National Helpline:

800-662-4357(HELP)

<https://www.samhsa.gov/>

NJ Connect for Recovery Call Line:

855-652-3737

<http://www.njconnectforrecovery.org/>



use and underage drinking, talking to kids about the topic, setting consequences, and empowering teens with refusal skills.

Power to the Parent also offers an interactive on-line parent activity, "Hidden in Plain Sight" (<https://tinyurl.com/yapbw5g4>), where parents can search a virtual teen's bedroom to find clues that might indicate an interest in drugs and alcohol.

Red Flags Signaling Possible Adolescent Drug or Alcohol Use:

- Drug paraphernalia
- **Interest in and references to drugs**
- Changes in weight and appearance
- **Lack of hygiene**
- Dilated or constricted pupils; red eyes; wearing sunglasses inside
- **Redness around the nose and mouth; chronic runny nose; cough**
- Odors, burns, or unusual stains on clothing
- **Confusion; disorientation**
- Moodiness
- **Edginess; restlessness**
- Lack of motivation
- **Changes in sleep patterns; nodding off**
- Withdrawal from family, friends, activities, and socializing
- **Changes in friends**
- Declining grades and school attendance
- **Disrespect for rules, consequences, and authority**

Although these warning signs do not definitely indicate the presence of a drug or drinking problem, noticing several of these signs certainly calls for further attention.

The Legalization of Marijuana Means...

With the push to legalize recreational marijuana in NJ for adults 21 and older, it is important to provide education about marijuana's short- and long-term effects on the brain and health. THC is the chemical in marijuana that produces the drug's mind-altering high, and the levels of THC in marijuana have been increasing over the past few decades, along with the risk for harmful reactions and side effects.



Risks of Marijuana Use:

- Increased risk of psychosis, hallucinations, depression, and anxiety
- Impaired concentration, decision-making, memory, and attention
- Increased heart rate and breathing problems
- Permanent neuropsychological damage on the still-forming teenage brain
- Problems with child development if used during pregnancy
- Lack of motivation
- Social and behavioral dysfunction
- Increased life dissatisfaction
- Risky behavior engagement
- Poorer educational, financial, and career outcomes
- Addiction
- Possible progression to harder drugs (cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamines)

Other possible concerns with the legalization of marijuana include increased driving under the influence (DUI) incidents, accidents, and fatalities; overdoses due to a lack of THC consistency and inaccurate labeling on marijuana products and edibles; the risk of overdose due to the delayed high from marijuana edibles; and a lowered adolescent risk perception of marijuana's harm, which can lead to acceptance and increased usage.

(Newsletter writing by Christa Riddle of All About Writing and production by Linda Coppolino of Little Hat Marketing & Design.)



For more information on the Colts Neck Alliance, community events, or how to get involved, contact Anita Dedalis, acting Alliance coordinator, at 732-308-4505.

The Colts Neck Alliance can be found online at www.colts-neck.nj.us/local/cnalliance/index.htm.

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<http://gcada.nj.gov/alliance>

Please note, the Colts Neck Municipal Alliance is not responsible for any resources referred. This publication is for informational purposes only, and we do not endorse any of the listed resources.



Empty your medicine cabinet and save a life! Drop unwanted prescriptions in the Project Medicine Drop box at the Colts Neck Police Department during regular business hours.

www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop/

Educate yourself about substance abuse on the go! Get the "Partnership for Drug-Free Kids' Drug Guide for Parents" app in your Apple or Android device!

All About Writing
"Writing help is just a call or click away!"

