

# 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.*



## COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP

### IN THE NEWS

Visit NJ Cares, <https://www.njcares.gov> for real-time state/county opioid-related stats.

### Gabe Hurley Motivates Colts Neck High School Juniors with Powerful Message of Perseverance



Pictured left to right: Brittany Bocchieri, Colts Neck High School SAC; Gabe Hurley; and Shawn Currie, Colts Neck High School assistant principal

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, motivational speaker and safe driving advocate Gabe Hurley addressed Colts Neck High School juniors for their safe driving assembly. Later that day, Hurley returned to the school for an evening parent presentation.

In 2009, Hurley sustained massive head and face injuries in a life-threatening car accident at age 24, when he was directly struck by airborne parts from the car of a 17-year-old driver who

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### April Is Alcohol Awareness Month: "Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow"



"Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow" is the theme for this year's Alcohol Awareness Month, founded and sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD). Since 1987, Alcohol Awareness Month held each April has worked to reduce the stigma surrounding alcohol use disorders through awareness, communication, and understanding—reminding people that alcoholism does not discriminate.

Now known as Facing Addiction with NCADD, the organization promotes public education on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues through community, state, and national events and resources to shed light on the disease's causes, as well as viable treatment and recovery options. Facing Addiction with NCADD provides millions of

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## Gabe Hurley Motivates Colts Neck High School Juniors with Powerful Message of Perseverance

had just crashed into a bridge underpass coming from the opposite direction. Hurley was left with a disfigured face, a crushed skull, and emotional scars; what he retained was his determined spirit to move forward, despite losing both eyes and parts or all of 4 of his 5 senses. Hurley endured 3 weeks of a medically-induced coma, 12 facial restructuring surgeries, and months of rehabilitation.

Today, Hurley educates audiences about the life-changing outcomes and devastation that can arise from distracted driving. He also reminds his listeners how life can change in a split second, just as it did for him that night when he drove from his home in Piscataway, New Jersey to a 24-hour pharmacy in Edison as he decided to take a different route home. He stresses the importance of living life to the fullest—without being held back—despite life-changing obstacles and struggles.

“We chose Gabe as a presenter because we heard what an impactful and positive presentation he delivered at Freehold Township High School while conveying a serious message that resonated with students long after they saw him,” comments Brittany Bocchieri, Colts Neck High School student assistance counselor (SAC) and anti-bullying specialist (ABS). “After experiencing Gabe myself, I loved his ability to relate to his audience of teenagers and connect them to who he is. This created a more meaningful experience for both students and parents while Gabe delivered his safe driving message.”

While the accident left Hurley blind and physically changed, it did not take away his musical talent of guitar playing. Through his experience, Hurley gained a passion for inspiring others to keep going through adversities while promoting the life-saving message of safe driving.

## April Is Alcohol Awareness Month: “Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow”

people with access to education, prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery support services through an extensive system of local community partnerships.

“Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow” focuses on the far-reaching impact alcohol use disorders and alcoholism have on young people and their families, peers, and communities while offering hope through education, assistance, and recovery resources. It also aims to reduce the stigmas surrounding alcoholism so people feel comfortable seeking help.

Alcohol Awareness Month alerts parents to their important role in preventing underage drinking. Facing Addiction with NCADD reminds young people that fun times need not revolve around alcohol, that they should avoid peer pressure that encourages underage or excessive drinking, that they have a responsibility to intervene if a peer has had too much to drink, that binge drinking can be deadly, and that alcohol consumption can put their or their friends’ lives at risk.

For more information, here is a list of resources by Facing Addiction with NCADD:

Facing Addiction with NCADD:  
<https://www.facingaddiction.org/>

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):  
<http://www.aa.org/>

Al-Anon Family Groups: <https://al-anon.org/>

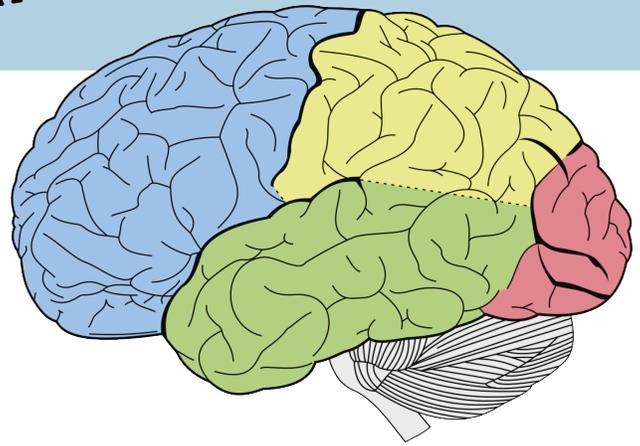
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA): <https://niaaa.nih.gov/>

College Drinking: Changing the Culture (NIAAA):  
<https://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/>

Stop Underage Drinking: Portal of Federal Resources: <https://stopalcoholabuse.gov/>

# Know, Protect & Respect Your Brain

The human brain is composed of five different regions that control the entire body and almost all its functions, in coordination with the nervous system. Because of this, it is important to know and respect your brain, as well as to protect it with a healthy lifestyle free from alcohol and substance abuse.



## The Brain's 5 Parts:

Cerebrum: 85% of the brain; has two halves, the left (analytical) and right (creative); controls thinking and voluntary (purposeful) movement; houses our short- and long-term memory and reasoning abilities.

Cerebellum: 12% of the size of the cerebrum; controls balance, movement, and muscle coordination.

Brain stem: connects the brain to the spinal cord; controls all involuntary (automatic) bodily functions that sustain life, such as breathing, circulating blood, and digesting food; oversees communication between body parts, such as the heart, lungs, stomach, and other organs.

Pituitary gland: the size of a pea; produces and releases hormones for growth, development, metabolism, and other bodily functions.

Hypothalamus: maintains the body's temperature.

## Alcohol and Substance Abuse Harm the Brain

Alcohol and substance abuse throw off the brain's chemicals, producing negative immediate side effects such as impaired thinking, learning, and decision-making; delayed responses; slurred speech; risky behavior; and diminished motor coordination. Permanent damage to the brain can also occur, particularly the still-forming adolescent brain.

Substances like alcohol, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamines, LSD, and ecstasy disrupt the brain's usual links of communication—how the nerves receive, process, and send information. These mind-altering substances also change the brain's normal emotional states to cause extreme feelings of happiness, relaxation, alertness, euphoria, confidence, paranoia, anxiety, and more. The brain is smart, and it craves more and more of the abused substance to further magnify these feelings, leading to tolerance, increased usage, addiction, withdrawals, and even death.

It is very important to take care of your brain in light of all it does for you. To protect your brain, eat a healthy diet, get adequate sleep, exercise, wear a helmet while riding a bike or motorcycle or engaging in contact sports, and refrain from alcohol and substance abuse.

For more information, visit the following websites that were referenced in this article:

“Understanding the Effects of Long-Term Drug Use on the Brain”

<https://tinyurl.com/yb3zxo2d>

“Drug Abuse and Addiction”

<https://tinyurl.com/ybkeprfb>

## 2NDFLOOR Youth Helpline of NJ

**Call or Text: 888-222-2228**

**<https://www.2ndfloor.org/>**

2NDFLOOR is a free, confidential, and anonymous youth helpline available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year via phone call or text to 888-222-2228.

People between the ages of 10 and 24 living in NJ can contact 2NDFLOOR's live, trained counselors for struggles with familial and social relationships, peer pressure, bullying, child abuse, violence, substance abuse, depression, anxiety, self-harm, sex, sexuality, living with a disability, and other stressful situations.

2NDFLOOR's professional staff offer support, guidance, and resources to help youth find flexible, effective solutions to the everyday and serious problems they face at home, in school, and in social settings. Through nonjudgmental, compassionate discussion, 2NDFLOOR's counselors help youth make decisions that promote safety and well-being.

At <https://www.2ndfloor.org>, youth can find information on the above topics. There is also an anonymous online message board for sharing. From 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. 7 days a week, 2NDFLOOR offers Spanish-speaking services.

When the school year ends, 2NDFLOOR sees a rise in help requests. In general, 2NDFLOOR receives about 10,000 calls per month, with an up to 30% increase during the summer months. The struggles youth face do not go away during summer break, when students don't have easy access to school staff and have more free time on their hands to think about what is going on and seek help.

**For a life-threatening, dangerous, or crisis situation, always call 911.**



**Empty your medicine cabinet and save a life! Drop unwanted prescriptions in the Project Medicine Drop box at the Howell Police Department. Anonymous and available 24-7.**

[www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop/](http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop/)

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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](http://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.

### **Assistance & Support Resources:**

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
800-273-TALK (8255) (bilingual, 24/7)

SAMHSA's National Helpline/  
Treatment Referral Routing Service:  
800-662-HELP (4357)  
(bilingual, 24/7, mental and/or substance use disorders)

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Youth Helpline: 888-222-2228 (text or call)

Crisis Text Line: Text "HOME" to 741741

NJ Connect for Recovery: 855-652-3737

Partnership for Drug-Free Kids Parent Helpline:  
855-378-4373

Monmouth ResourceNet (support resources):  
[www.monmouthresourcenet.org](http://www.monmouthresourcenet.org)

Alcohol and Drug Prevention/Treatment/  
Recovery Services in Monmouth County:  
<https://tinyurl.com/vbhxbqw>

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!

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