

# In The Know

A monthly newsletter to keep you current and In The Know on topics related to the Prevention of Substance Abuse

## Legislation passes banning alcoholic energy drinks

Four Loko was one of the popular brands stripped from the shelves due to the dangerous mix of caffeine and alcohol in November of 2010; the reason: the high amounts of alcohol in a drink marketed to teens. One 23.5 ounce can contained the same amount of alcohol as a bottle of wine. It was dubbed "black out in a can."

The combination of a stimulant and depressant can be harmful. It prevents the person from realizing how much they have consumed and may encourage them to keep drinking because their body does not recognize all of the warning symptoms.

Energy drinks such as Red

Bull, Monster, Rockstar, Full Throttle and Amp contain caffeine, sugar and empty calories. Our nation is battling obesity; empty calorie drinks do not help our crisis. Lack of sleep is another result of these highly caffeinated beverages.

Energy drink consumption can also cause nausea, headaches, abdominal discomfort, sleep disturbances, abnormal heart beats, and trips to the emergency room. Anxiety, dehydration, decreased concentration and less overall



function are also attributed to caffeine overdose.

Kids are starting to drink energy drinks at a younger age. Energy drinks are not meant for children. However, there are no age requirements to purchase and/or consume energy drinks.

Without any laws to protect our youth, we are sending the wrong messages. Most youth do not think there is a risk associated with consumption of highly caffeinated beverages. They can walk into a convenient store or grocery store to purchase energy drinks freely.

According to an article published in the New York Times, about a third of 12-to-24-year-olds report they consume energy drinks regularly. This equates to more than \$3 billion in annual sales in the United States. Parents play an important role in monitoring what their children consume.

An important aspect to pay attention to is that young people who are consuming high energy drinks are taking a risk. There is a correlation between energy drink use and experimentation with alcohol and/or other drugs. Energy drinks may be considered a gateway substance for drug abuse.

## What is all the hype about energy drinks?

The teen craze of energy drinks is growing with leaps and bounds as more and more companies are taking their turn at introducing the "newest" version of an energy drink.

The website Medical News Today states this about energy drinks: "The [energy] drinks typically contain sugar, caffeine (often 80 mg per can, about the same as a cup of coffee), and taurine, a sulfur-containing amino acid. Some countries have

raised concerns about the amount of caffeine in the drinks and the uncertain health effects of taurine. Energy drinks are different from sports drinks, which tend not to have caffeine or taurine and are lower in carbohydrates."

These issues are being raised here in the US but with hi-flying motorcycle stunt athletes running around in commercials touting the praises of these drinks, it is hard for people,

especially teens to pass up.

Every celebrity has their "favorite" and teens and children are bombarded with the faces of energy drink users that are telling them how concentration is better, there is "no crash" or you can do anything you want with this drink. Who would pass that up?

As adults we need to educate ourselves on the numerous dangers associated with energy drinks such as

addiction, obesity, sleep and mental disturbance and more as the chemicals and high amounts of additives in these drinks can be dangerous to an ever developing teen body and brain.

Limit the number of these drinks your teens are allowed to have. It is also wise for schools to begin limiting these drinks, as it is assumed you will see a difference in behavior and performance.

**Do you or someone you care about need help because of Drugs, Alcohol or Gambling call:**

**1-877-8HOPENY (1-877-846-7369)**

**24 hours a day, 7 days a week \* Free & confidential information and referrals.**

# In The Know and By The Numbers

A brief look at current statistics and figures relating to the issues of energy drinks and alcohol.

- 31% of 12- to 17- year-olds consume energy drinks on a regular basis according to the Centers for Disease Control.
- The CDC also states that drinkers who consume alcohol mixed with energy drinks are 3 times more likely to binge drink than drinkers who do not report mixing alcohol with energy drinks. (www.cdc.gov)
- According to NPR, when people combine alcohol with energy drinks, they are four times more likely to want to drive home. (www.npr.org)



- The Washington Regional Threat and Analysis Center reports that there are approximately 30 students across the nation hospitalized due to alcohol poisoning which has been linked to the consumption of alcoholic energy drinks. (www.publicintelligence.net)
- According to the University of New Hampshire Health Services reports that over 500 new energy drinks were launched worldwide in 2006.
- UNHHS also states that the Food & Drug Administration does not regulate energy drinks, therefore the message is buyer beware.

(www.unh.edu/health-services)

- 5.7 billion dollars is what the energy drink industry brings in.
- \$2-3 dollars- The amount it costs for a 23.5 ounce can of an energy drink containing 12 percent alcohol.

## Steuben Underage Party Tip Line

Anyone with information about anything related to underage drinking - such as parties or underage sales - in Steuben County are urged to call the toll-free line at (877) 862-4847. The tip line will be monitored seven days a week, 24 hours a day. All calls remain anonymous.

**1-877-862-484**

## Steuben Council SCA on Addictions

*Information, Assessments & Referrals*

**8 East Morris Street  
Bath, NY 14810**

**Phone: (607) 776-6441**

**Fax: (607) 776-6664**

*Prevention Director: Jim Bassage*

*Prevention Educators:*

Barb McCollum, Tess McKinley,  
Stacey O'Dell & Andrea Smith

*Administrative Assistant &  
DDP Coordinator: Diana McIntosh*

*Drug Free Communities Coordinator:  
Norm McCumiskey*

*Clerical Assistant: Peggy Wurzer*

Catholic Charities  
Steuben County

## The Council Corner

**A look Steuben Council on Addictions and the projects they are working on**

Steuben Council on Addictions is pleased to announce it has received an extension of the EUDL - Enforcement of Underage Drinking Laws grant for another six months. This grant will provide the council with \$9,976 to assist in the providing of information, awareness and education to parents and youth of the Underage Drinking issues in our county. This will be done through newspaper ads, radio PSAs/ interviews, TV interviews and school activities. SCA is collaborating with Steuben Sheriff's Office on this grant.

Bath Area Hope For Youth Prevention Coun-

selling services is announcing it will be offering a new evidence based program as a part of their Prevention Counseling services at Hammondsport and Bath Central Schools. Teen Intervene is an early intervention program targeting youth ages 12-19 who display the early stages of alcohol or drug use problems. The goal of the program is to provide teens with information and awareness of the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs with hopes they will change their behavior.

Steuben Council on Addictions is pleased to announce that Norman

McCumiskey, Drug Free Communities Coordinator, and Jim Bassage, SCA Prevention Director, will graduate from the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) National Leadership Academy at a ceremony in Washington, DC on February 12, 2011. The leadership academy took place over the last year and consisted of three weeks of training with coalitions from across New York State and will assist them in their efforts to develop a Drug Free Community Coalition in Steuben County.

**HAPPY  
VALENTINE'S  
DAY**

*Steuben Council on Addictions is a division of Catholic Charities Steuben. In The Know is a regular monthly update about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to help in the prevention of substance use and abuse. For more information on In The Know contact Stacey O'Dell, Prevention Educator at (607) 776-6441, x. 205 or sodell@dor.org.*