



PRESS RELEASE

April 8, 2008

ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and it is time again for its annual observance. The aim is to inform the public about alcoholism by generating awareness on the dangers associated with its use and abuse.

The National Drug Council's drug use survey, which has been conducted in schools since 1998, revealed that Alcohol is the drug most frequently used by middle and high school students (approximately 46%), and its use is increasing. The average age of first use of alcohol for youth in the Cayman Islands is 11 years old. The prevalence of heavy drinking episode among our youth has increased significantly from 12.6% in 2002 to 15.2% in 2006.

The NDC's effort this month includes distribution of posters that highlights the problem of underage drinking. We have also partnered with Cayman Against Substance Abuse (CASA) to offer a special brochure which serves as a guide for parents discussing these issues. In addition, we will issue a youth focused brochure titled "The Truth About Alcohol". The NDC will be expanding its public education seminars to promote this issue and will be conducting a number of drug education talks aimed towards alcohol usage.

The board of the National Drug Council has also taken action toward alcohol awareness. In an effort to amend the current Liquor License Law, the NDC's Board of Directors in conjunction with the Liquor Licensing Board is engaged in a process towards amending the current Liquor Licensing Law to include a section on the responsible disposal of alcohol. It is hoped that this will bring forth the implementation of a specified training programme by which vendors can become qualified for the purpose of compliance with the legislation. Moreover, there will be a number of alcohol related ads to be aired on local TV stations during the month of April.

It is our hope that parents, schools, businesses and faith-based organisations incorporate Alcohol Awareness Month information, messages, and themes into youth and adult group discussions.

We encourage everyone to unite with the NDC and partner agencies to bring awareness to our youth about underage alcohol use. Contact the National Drug Council at 949-9000 or write to us at info.ndc.ky for resources and ways to commemorate Alcohol Awareness Month.

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