



Neponset Health Center
A division of Harbor Health Services, Inc.

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Dorchester, MA

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April is Alcohol Awareness Month

“IT’S YOUR HEALTH, IT’S YOUR LIFE” 1st Annual “Treatment Options Forum” on Alcohol

In an effort to raise awareness and empower the community in taking action against the serious problem of Alcohol Abuse, the Dorchester Substance Abuse Coalition (DSAC) is hosting its first annual *“Treatment Options Forum” on Alcohol*.

The forum is geared towards adults of all ages. It will take place on April 24, 2008 from 6:00pm-8:00pm at Caritas Carney Hospital- Lower Level Cafeteria. State Representative Martin Walsh and Mrs. Marilyn G. Belmont, Drug Abuse Recognition for Communities/ Burlington Drug & Alcohol Task Force will be the panelists and will discuss alcohol, its effect to the community and access to community based treatment options. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions, engage into a dialogue and pick up educational materials about Alcohol, Risk Prevention, Intervention and access to Community Resources.

The event is part of Alcohol Awareness Month (AAM), an annual observance that encourages local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues. AAM began as a way to inform the American public that alcoholism is a treatable disease, not a moral weakness, and that people who are addicted to alcohol can and do recover. Since 1987, AAM has been sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, an organization dedicated to fighting the stigma and disease of alcoholism and other drug addictions. Each year, alcohol kills 100,000 Americans, making it the nation's third leading cause of preventable death. Alcoholism and alcohol-related problems can be prevented and treated.

Based on a recent 2006 national survey on Drug Use contacted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

Slightly more than half of Americans aged 12 or older reported being current drinkers of alcohol (50.9 percent). This translates to an estimated 125 million people, which is similar to the 2005 estimate of 126 million people (51.8 percent).

More than one fifth (23.0 percent) of persons aged 12 or older participated in binge drinking (having five or more drinks on the same occasion on at least 1 day in the 30 days prior to the survey) in 2006. This translates to about 57 million people, similar to the estimate in 2005.

In 2006, heavy drinking was reported by 6.9 percent of the population aged 12 or older, or 17 million people. This rate is similar to the rate of heavy drinking in 2005 (6.6 percent). Heavy drinking is defined as binge drinking on at least 5 days in the past 30 days.

In 2006, among young adults aged 18 to 25, the rate of binge drinking was 42.2 percent, and the rate of heavy drinking was 15.6 percent. These rates are similar to the rates in 2005.

Among pregnant women aged 15 to 44, binge drinking in the first trimester dropped from 10.6 percent in 2003-2004 combined data to 4.6 percent in 2005-2006 combined data.

In 2006, an estimated 12.4 percent of persons aged 12 or older drove under the influence of alcohol at least once in the past year. This percentage has decreased since 2002, when it was 14.2 percent. The 2006 estimate corresponds to 30.5 million persons.

The Dorchester Substance Abuse Coalition (DSAC) is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). For more information about DSAC and/or the “*Treatment Options Forum*” on Alcohol contact: **Adélia C. Rocha, Coalition Coordinator/Community Organizer at 617-282-3200 ext 210.**