



Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

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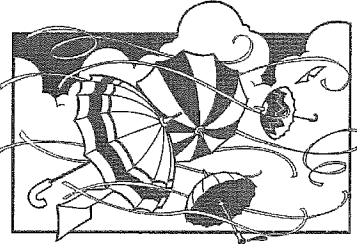
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April Is Alcohol Awareness Month



In the United States approximately 36 percent of adults do not drink any alcohol, and another 14 percent are infrequent drinkers.

It is not recommended that anyone begin drinking or drink more frequently on the basis of potential health benefits, because moderate alcohol intake also is associated with increased risk of breast cancer, violence, drowning, and injuries from falls and motor vehicle crashes, according to the new Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010.

The new Dietary Guidelines define binge drinking as the consumption within two hours of 4 or more drinks for women and 5 or more drinks for men. Heavy or high-risk drinking is defined as the consumption of more than 3 drinks on any day or more than 7 per week for women and more than 4 drinks on any day or more than 14 per week for men.

Excessive drinking (i.e., heavy, high-risk, or binge) drinking increases the risk of cirrhosis of the liver, hypertension, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer of the upper gastrointestinal track and colon, injury, and violence. Excessive drinking over time is associated with increased body weight and can impair short- and long-term cognitive function.

Excessive alcohol consumption is responsible for an average of 79,000 deaths in the United States each year. More than half of these deaths are due to binge drinking. Binge drinking also is associated with a wide range of other health and social problems, including sexually transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancy, and violent crime.

There are many circumstances in which people should not drink alcohol:

- Individuals who cannot restrict their drinking to moderate levels—1 drink per day for women and up to 2 drinks per day for men.
- Anyone younger than the legal drinking age (21). Besides being illegal, alcohol consumption increases the risk of drowning, car accidents, and traumatic injury, which are common causes of death in children and adolescents.
- Women who are pregnant or who may be pregnant. Drinking during pregnancy, especially in the first few months of pregnancy, may result in negative behavioral or neurological consequences in the offspring. No safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy has been established.
- Individuals taking prescription or over-the-counter medications that can interact with alcohol.
- Individuals with certain specific medical conditions (e.g., liver disease, pancreatitis).
- Individuals who plan to drive, operate machinery, or take part in other activities that require attention, skill, or coordination or in situations where impaired judgment could cause injury or death (e.g., swimming).

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010, Chapter Three, p. 30-32

**ILCAAAP represents you in the fight
against addictions. We appreciate your support.**



Legislative Highlights



SB50 & HB 1327 Ban Alcohol Energy Drinks

Three federal agencies acted together on November 17, 2010 to shut down the manufacturing, marketing and shipment of caffeinated alcoholic beverages, popularly dubbed "blackout in a can" and linked to numerous injuries and fatalities, according to Join Together. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has stated that consuming alcohol mixed with caffeinated energy drinks increases an individual's risk of binge drinking threefold.

Several college students, many of whom are underage, have been hospitalized after consuming alcohol energy drinks. The FDA said analysts have raised concerns that the caffeine in the drinks masks a person's feelings of intoxication, leading to risky behavior, according to the Associated Press.

Action has been taken in 25 states toward banning or limiting the availability of alcohol energy drinks. Ten states have banned or placed a moratorium on sales, according to The Marin Institute.

Illinois legislators are considering two bills—Senate Bill 50 and House Bill 1327—that ban the production, manufacturing, distribution, or sale of alcohol liquor that combines alcohol with caffeine, guarana, or other similar substances commonly referred to as "caffeinated alcohol beverages." Contact your state legislators (217-782-2000 Capitol switchboard) to voice your support.

Legislation to Legalize Marijuana

HB 30 legalizes marijuana for medical conditions. Individuals who are issued a registry identification cards, could possess 6 cannabis plants and 2 ounces of dried usable marijuana. The legislation is very broad and is not written only for people with terminal illnesses.

HB 30 allows unlimited number of medical marijuana organizations (dispensaries) to an unlimited number of qualifying patients. The only restriction is not locating medical cannabis organizations within 500 feet of the property line of schools. The dispensaries could locate near churches, hospitals, strip malls, and residential neighborhoods statewide.

HB 100 allows individuals to possess 28.35 grams of cannabis. Possession over that amount is considered a petty offense with fines of \$500 for a first offense, \$750 for a second offense, and \$1,000 for a third offense.

Marijuana is the most widely used illicit drug in the United States. The U. S. Supreme Court ruled that the federal Controlled Substances Act prevents the cultivation and possession of marijuana, even by people for personal "medical" use.

Alcohol Pricing

People drink more when prices go down, and the reverse is that when the prices of beer, wine, and liquor go up, people tend to drink less.

That is the conclusion of Alexander Wagenaar, a researcher at the University of Florida and published in the journal *Addiction*, adding that using taxes to raise the price of alcohol may be the most effective deterrent to excessive drinking, better than law enforcement, media campaigns or educational programs.

The study, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, also determined that increased taxes or prices also affect the broad population of drinkers, including not only heavy drinkers, but light drinkers as well, and has an impact on underage drinking by teenagers.

Reprinted with permission from Monday Morning Report, Volume 34, Number 20, October 25, 2010

Courts Rules Casino Tax to Help Horse Racing Is Constitutional

An Illinois appellate court upheld the constitutionality of a state casino tax to benefit horse racing. Casinos in Aurora, Elgin and Joliet sued the state on the grounds that the law creating the tax did not uniformly apply to all casinos in Illinois. The 3% levy applies only to casinos with annual adjusted gross receipts of \$200 million or more, according to *Crain's Chicago Business*. Five Illinois casinos are exempt from the tax—Alton, East Peoria, East St. Louis, Metropolis, and Rock Island.

The law is set to expire on Dec. 15 or the date when any horse track gets slots or video gambling or when the state's 10th casino in Des Plaines begins operating, according to *The Daily Herald*.

Court Rules Funding Bill for Capital Construction Unconstitutional

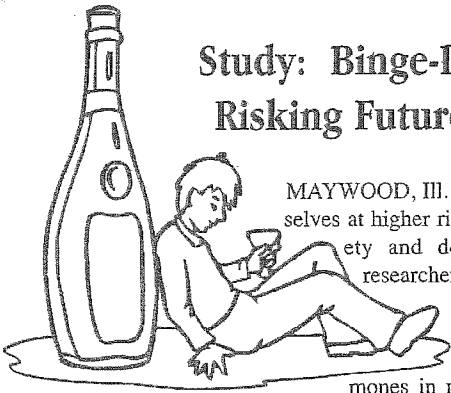
Revenue sources to fund capital construction projects included video gambling, private management of the Lottery, Internet Lottery, taxes on alcohol, candy, soda, and higher fees for license plates. Instead of passing separate bills to address these issues, they were all lumped together in one bill (HB 255), which was introduced and passed in both the Senate and the House in a little over 24 hours in 2009.

On January 26, 2011, an Illinois appeals court ruled this was unconstitutional. Local officials in 80 jurisdictions—76 communities and 4 counties—have passed ordinances to ban video gambling machines. The *State Journal-Register* editorial board wrote, "With so many communities in Illinois so vocally against it, we don't see how this will pass on its own. For that matter, with so many communities opting out, we don't see how this will raise nearly as much money as projected."

Join the Action Alert Network

The House and Senate have each introduced over 1,000 bills for the legislative session that began on January 12, 2011. Many of these are technical or "shell" bills that will be amended and changed later in the session. ILCAAAP monitors all legislation pertaining to alcohol, other drugs, and gambling. To receive Action Alerts and Legislative Updates by e-mail, sign up on our web site www.ilcaap.org, e-mail ilcaap@sbcglobal.net or call 866-940-6871.

Study: Binge-Drinking Teens May Be Risking Future Anxiety, Depression



MAYWOOD, Ill. - Binge-drinking teenagers may be putting themselves at higher risk in adulthood for mood disorders such as anxiety and depression, Loyola University Health System researchers report.

A new Loyola study has found that exposing adolescent rats to binge amounts of alcohol permanently altered the system that produces hormones in response to stress. This disruption in stress hormones "might lead to behavioral and/or mood disorders in adulthood," researchers reported.

Senior author Toni R. Pak, PhD, and colleagues reported their findings Nov. 15 at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in San Diego.

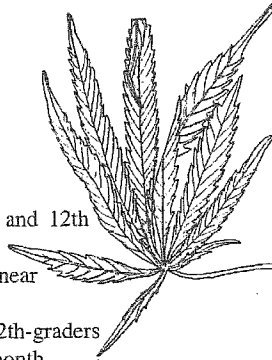
Though results from animal studies don't directly translate to people, the findings do suggest a mechanism by which teenage binge drinking could cause mental health problems in adulthood, Pak said.

"Exposing young people to alcohol could permanently disrupt normal connections in the brain that need to be made to ensure healthy adult brain function," Pak said.

Binge drinking is defined as a woman having at least four drinks or a man having at least five drinks on one occasion. Heavy binge drinkers can consume 10 to 15 drinks. Binge drinking typically begins around age 13 and peaks between 18 and 22, before gradually decreasing. Thirty-six percent of youths ages 18 to 20 reported at least one binge-drinking episode during the last 30 days, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Loyola Medicine News Release, November 16, 2010

Daily Marijuana Use in Teens



Daily marijuana use increased significantly among 8th, 10th and 12th graders, according to the latest government survey.

About one in 16 high school seniors uses marijuana daily or near daily, the annual Monitoring the Future Survey found.

The survey also found that for the second year in a row, more 12th-graders said they used marijuana than smoked cigarettes in the previous month.

Teens in all three grades showed more favorable attitudes toward the drug, according to the national survey of more than 46,000 teens.

The survey's lead investigator, the director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the White House "drug czar" blamed the rising use among teens in the past three years on publicity surrounding medical marijuana.

"Young people are increasingly seeing marijuana as not dangerous," said lead investigator Lloyd Johnston of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. When the proportion of teens who view marijuana as risky declines, Johnston says, use usually increases.

Teens' marijuana use fell from 2002 to 2007, says Nora Volkow, director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, which funds the survey. But today's eighth-graders "have been exposed to a very different perspective on marijuana." More than a dozen states and the District of Columbia have legalized medical marijuana, so teens might tend to view the drug as beneficial, not risky, Volkow said.

Marijuana interferes with memory and learning, she said, which is a particular concern in teens, whose brains aren't fully developed. Volkow said her institute plans to fund research into whether U.S. students' grades and test scores fell as marijuana use rose.

"I don't have any hesitation telling you that I think the legitimizing of marijuana and calling it medicine is absolutely the wrong message," White House drug czar Gil Kerlikowske said.

Reprinted with permission from Monday Morning Report, Volume 35 Number 1, January 10, 2011

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Walgreens Launches Own Brand of Cheap Beer



First, Walgreens pharmacy chain lifted its 15-year self-imposed ban on alcohol sales in their stores. Then, after Walgreens bought the Duane Read chain, it decided that the best way to beat local businesses' loyalty in Brooklyn was to add a beer bar and tasting service.

Now they've raised the danger bar to yet another level—launching their own line of cheap beer, priced to fly off the shelves. At just 50 cents a can or \$2.99 a six pack, the Walgreens' "Big Flats 101" brand is already available at more than half of its almost 8,000 stores.

According to Zoe Fox at *Time*, Walgreens' unspoken agenda is to "redefine the cheap in 'cheap drunk.'" This should not be the behavior of "The Pharmacy America Trusts."

Marin Institute Newsletter, February 9, 2011

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Working For A Drug-Free Society

New Resources Available From Churches In Action Lending Library

Booklet

Drugs: Shatter The Myths
by NIDA National Institute on Drug Abuse

Pamphlet

Parents Teaching Children About Gambling
by Illinois Church Action on Alcohol
and Addiction Problems