

HOLIDAY  
2008

## Peer Leadership 2008 Teen Institute Conference



Prevention Network has been making CNY a healthier community since 1949 by providing proven and measurable programs to prevent addictions and address other problem behaviors

PREVENTION PERSPECTIVE

Teen Institute is a comprehensive prevention education program designed to train, mobilize and empower youth to prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and self-destructive behaviors in themselves and their peers. The program, which emphasizes peer leadership and positive life skills development, has been in existence in Onondaga County since 1986 and nationally since 1965.

Our 22nd annual Heart of New York Teen Institute Conference was held November 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> 2008 at Camp Long Point Retreat Center in Penn Yan. The conference was a tremendous success! Attendees participated in multiple interactive workshops, exciting social activities, live skits that addressed high risk behavior prevention, including alcohol and other drug use, and listened to dynamic presentations by several keynote speakers.

The conference was well attended, with 85 participants representing 11 local high schools: Baker High School, Bishop Grimes High School, Bishop Ludden High School, Cicero-North Syracuse High School/ Canteen, Fabius Pompey High School, LaFayette High School, Liverpool High School/Liverpool Art Center, Marcellus High School, Skaneateles High School, Tully High School, and Westhill High School.

The youth whose lives and leadership abilities were enriched by the Teen Institute experience are out in our community proactively advocating, educating, and role modeling a positive substance-free lifestyle. Through the Heart of New York Teen Institute program, Prevention Network seeks empowerment for our youth to...

**“Be the change we want to see in the world.”**

—Ghandi

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To obtain a copy of our new parenting video, *You Can't Afford to be Clueless*, contact Prevention Network at (315) 471-1359. Staff members are available to help facilitate a discussion following presentation of the dvd.

## Holiday Gift Appeal

As you and other friends of Prevention Network know, our agency fills a unique niche in Central New York. We provide proven programs and services to prevent addictions and address other problem behaviors. Our mission has never been clearer, or more critical, especially in these stressful times.

I reach out to you during this holiday season to give your gift where it can have the greatest impact—on our youth, our families, and throughout our community—through a donation to Prevention Network to continue its important work. How can your holiday gift have the greatest impact?

Your gift will strengthen our youth initiatives. It will allow another teen or team of high school students to attend the annual Underage Drinking Prevention Summit, Teen Institute Retreat, or anti-tobacco youth conference. Your gift will enable us to continue our parenting programs, support our efforts to build local coalitions through the new Prevention Resource Center, and expand our educational programs for professionals pursuing careers in the prevention field. Your gift will allow us to purchase new, updated materials for our community lending library.

Your gift will give back to you and your family. You can make a donation in the name or memory of a loved one. This is the year to show our children that there is always an avenue to be charitable, few are immune from the negative impacts of addictions.

Please consider making a holiday gift to Prevention Network this year. By doing so, you will strengthen your community, your neighborhood, your child's school, and your family.

Thank you for helping us to build a healthier community through your tax deductible donation. A gift reply envelope is enclosed in this newsletter for your convenience.

Sincerely,

**Bradley E. Finn**

Executive Director

Prevention Network extends a special *Thank You!* to the **2008 Summit Sponsors:**

OASAS    The Legend Group

Syracuse University Counseling Center

Northland Communications

Branch's Driving School, Inc.

Conifer Park/Liberty Management

Syracuse/Onondaga Drug & Alcohol Abuse Comm.

## Reports of prescription drug abuse among local teens



Recent news headlines reveal that a growing number of teens are using prescription drugs in Onondaga County schools. Alarming, the ages reported reflect these youth to be between the ages of 12 and 15 years of age. Doesn't it seem that a few short years ago our concerns about underage youth meant 16 to 17 years old? As adults, in our own longing for a simpler time we like to believe and fantasize that youth lead a "carefree, problem free life." Yet, more and more young people are unable to contain their secret fears, choices and manners of coping with life stress.

Headlines reflect a number of young people making choices to misuse/ abuse (consume prescription medication not prescribed for you and/or take medication in amounts other than prescribed) and/or deal prescription drugs (sell personal prescribed medication for gain) appears to be growing.

The most common prescription drugs youth are using are found in their home medicine cabinets. Prescription narcotic pain medications such as Hydrocodone, Vicadin, Oxycontin and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder medications such as Strattera, and Ritalin, to name a few, are increasingly used by vulnerable youth. Many of these drugs are being used in combination with alcohol.

Why would our teens choose to use these drugs? According to youth, they use to relieve the stress of everyday pressures in dealing with school, family, and friends. Some may use just for the fun of it, but that is rare.

Where are they getting these drugs? Youth gather drugs in the homes of their parents, grandparents and other family and friends. *(continued on page 5)*

## Prevention Resource Center

October was a very busy month as the new Prevention Resource Center (PRC) began operating in full on its mission to help create healthy, drug free communities. One of the major challenges was to begin collecting data for a Central Region data base that will list all of the OASAS prevention providers, alcohol, tobacco and other drug focused coalitions and any Drug Free Community grantees in our 13 county region. All of the PRC specialists and the coordinator have worked hard to identify these key players.

On October 27 and 28, Prevention Network and the PRC were hosts of an OASAS sponsored Central Region training. On the 27<sup>th</sup> we focused on creating a vision statement encompassing our central region. The PRC is divided in to four quadrants: **North:** Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties; **South:** Chenango, Delaware and Otsego counties; **East:** Herkimer, Madison, Oneida counties; and **West:** Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga, Cortland counties. Representatives from all four quadrants were present and participated in an afternoon "visioning" session facilitated by Faith Mary Gault. It is hoped that a formal vision statement will be adopted by December 1, 2008. In addition, on Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> OASAS sponsored a CADCA training for all OASAS prevention providers, county local governmental unit representatives and coalition members throughout the region. This session was very well attended and participants from as far as St. Lawrence County traveled to take part. The enthusiasm in the room was palpable!

PRC coordinator Karen Hoffman will travel to the northern and southern quadrants to meet with key community and coalition members where she and the PRC specialists are planning to host some "meet and greet" functions to introduce the PRC.

This is a very exciting time and an extremely important prevention project. If you or your community has any questions, please contact Karen at Prevention Network at (315) 471-1359 or [khoffman@preventionnetwork.info](mailto:khoffman@preventionnetwork.info) to schedule a training or collaborative effort.

## Prevention Network Staff

Bradley E. Finn, Executive Director

Faith Mary Gault, Director of  
Community Services

Beth Hurny, Director of Youth and  
Parenting Services

David Sturgeon, Business Manager

Denise Baranello, Program Coordinator,  
Training and DDP

Lori Blum, Support Staff

Maura Bowman,  
Communications Specialist

Karen Darling, Program Coordinator, Re-  
ality Check, Cayuga County

Ron Garcia, DSS TANF Assessment  
and Referral Team Leader

Mary Harrington, Support Staff

Karen Hoffman, Prevention Resource  
Center Coordinator

Audrey Hopkins,  
Assessment & Referral Specialist

Philip Rose, Program Coordinator,  
Underage Drinking Initiative

Winston Skerritt,  
Assessment & Referral Specialist

Nicole Smith, Program Coordinator,  
Teen Institute

Elizabeth Toomey, Program Coordinator,  
Reality Check, Onondaga County



## Staff Recognition...*CONGRATULATIONS*

Denise Baranello, coordinator of Prevention Network's training and Drinking Driver Program was recently awarded a New York State OASAS Prevention Professional Credential after successfully completing an examination in September. In addition, we extend our congratulations to Denise for her recent appointment to the Governor's Traffic Safety Board Task Force Subcommittee on Impaired Drivers. The subcommittee is charged with addressing areas such as program curriculum, evaluation, and treatment issues related to impaired drivers.

# CNY Underage Drinking Prevention Summit—October 23, 2008



Lt. John Corbett of the Syracuse Police Department presented on the topic of illegal drug paraphernalia



Youth attendees participated in several interactive workshops including this one on goal setting and team building.

## 2008—2009 Board of Directors

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Geoff Wright  
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### Mission Statement

To implement and support strategies promoting healthy choices that prevent addictions and address related concerns.

## Welcome New Board Members

Prevention Network extends a warm welcome to our new board members: Dave Daly, Jim Follette, Trisha Kirsch, and Todd Ruetsch.

Dave Daly is the founder and president of Daly Communications Group. The Manlius firm offers services including website development and design, technical writing and marketing communications to a diverse group of business clients. He is a member of the Society for Technical Communicators and sits on the board of directors of the Entrepreneurial Society of Central New York. Dave is a resident of Manlius.

Jim Follette is a retired anesthesiologist who practiced until recently at SUNY Upstate Medical Center. While a practicing physician, he taught medical school students, residents and colleagues about the problem of substance abuse in the field of medicine. Dr. Follette served on New York State’s Medical Society’s Committee for Physicians’ Health, the American Society of Anesthesiology’s Committee on Substance Abuse, and the New York State Health Department’s Board of Medical Conduct. He is a resident of Fayetteville.

Trisha Kirsch is an attorney at Menter, Rudin & Trivelpiece, P.C. She is a member of the firm’s banking law, commercial transactions and real estate practice groups. Last year, Trisha served as a member of Prevention Network’s annual dinner fundraising committee. Trisha resides in Camillus.

Todd Ruetsch is the owner of Printing and Promotional Solutions in Syracuse. The Armory Square area business specializes in printing services, promotional products and web design solutions. He resides in Camillus.

**We wish to thank all community volunteers  
who give so graciously of their  
*Time, Talent and Treasures.***

## What Can You Do? Tips for PREVENTING RX Abuse

- ◆ Safeguard all drugs at home. Monitor quantities and control access.
- ◆ Set clear rules for teens about all drug use, including not sharing medicine and always following the medical provider's advise and dosages; use medications as directed on the label.
- ◆ Be a good role model by following the same rules with your own medications.
- ◆ Properly conceal and dispose of old or unused medicines in the trash. For more information go to [www.oasas.state.ny.us](http://www.oasas.state.ny.us). Ask friends and family to safeguard their prescriptions drugs as well.
- ◆ Know the abuse and addiction potential of the drugs you and your family are prescribed.

**RX** (continued from p. 2)

Obtaining drugs can happen anywhere medications are intentionally or unintentionally. If they are readily available to an intended user, they are readily available to an unintended user who is welcome in our space. Whether the medication is left in a medicine cabinet, medicine drawer, purse, or on an easy-access table, it is easily accessible and often free.

Many of us recall the Public Service Announcement: *"It's eleven o'clock; do you know where your child is?"* Maybe it's time to consider: *"It's the eleventh hour; do you know what harmful drugs are in your home?"* Are you willing to ask what's in the medicine cabinet that you will be exposing your children to during this upcoming Holiday Season? Let's all make an effort to keep the lines of communication open with our children, ultimately keeping them safe and free from harm. Our advice to parents is: ***Inventory and track the prescription and over-the-counter drugs in your medicine cabinet.*** For more information on prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse among teens, contact Prevention Network at 471-1359 or visit [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com).

1949-2009

*Save the date for Prevention Network's*

**60<sup>TH</sup>**  
**ANNIVERSARY**

*Celebrating 60 years of making CNY a healthier community*

### **Annual Dinner**

**Friday, April 24, 2009**

**Hotel Syracuse**

Event Chair: Allison Stevens

Watch for additional details listed on our website soon:

[www.PreventionNetwork.info](http://www.PreventionNetwork.info)

Individual and corporate sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Maura Bowman at

[mbowman@Preventionnetwork.info](mailto:mbowman@Preventionnetwork.info)

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## Keep Your Fork... by Brad Finn

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At times, it seems like each day offers us new challenges, especially in the prevention profession. We read reports about our kids experimenting with prescription drugs, of youth drinking and driving crashes, severe budget cuts impacting jobs and the loss of needed community services. Depression could prevail; it seems to be human nature to grasp onto the negativity, to look at the glass half empty. But many choose to live in gratitude. A friend of mine is such a person and shared the following story with me:

The story starts with a young woman, dying from a terminal disease, having a conversation with her pastor and funeral director. She describes her wishes for the calling hours, her dress, background music, the time and closing. She added one very peculiar request—that she be viewed and buried holding a fork. Both the pastor and director had experiences with pre-arrangement requests but this was a new one. After the young lady explained her reasoning, the arrangements were set for that near

Sure enough, the sad day came as her young life ended. Her prearrangement requests were followed, and a buzz arose among the grieving family and friends paying their respects, “Why was she holding a fork?” At the funeral, the pastor took the podium and spoke eloquently of this young, brave woman, of her achievements and last wishes. He explained the mystery of the fork—the last gift from this wise young woman to her family and friends.

In her youth, adolescence and adult life she was always excited; when following a meal, she was told to “keep your fork.” She had explained that the phrase meant something wonderful was coming—a treat, a final reward, a delicious ending. The fork was her reminder to everyone...that regardless of the circumstances confronting each of us, including life challenges such as death, despair, hard times...remember to keep your fork because better things always come regardless of how long the meal lasts. **Have a Blessed Holiday Season!**