Manatee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition
Upcoming Schedule of Events - June & July 2015

Wednesday, June 3 - MCSAC Board Meeting
2:00pm, 1112 Manatee Ave W, Bradenton

Wednesday, June 10 - MCSAC Meeting
3:00pm, 1701 Tamiami Trail, Bradenton

Thursday, June 11 - Alcohol Task Force Meeting
9:00am, 1112 Manatee Ave W, 3rd Floor Conference Room

Tuesday, June 16 - Rx Drugs and Emerging Trends Task Force Meeting
1:30pm, 379 6th Ave W, Bradenton

Thursday, June 18 - Marijuana Task Force Meeting
11:00am, 379 6th Ave W, Bradenton

Thursday, June 18 - VetCorps (MCVCC)
10:00am, 1112 Manatee Avenue W. Osprey Conference Room

July 8 MCSAC Meeting; 3:00pm

July 9 Alcohol Task Force; 9:00am

July 16 Marijuana Task Force; 11:00am

July 21 Rx Drugs and Emerging Trends; 1:30pm

August 4 FADAA Prevention Conference, Orlando

August 5 Board of Trustees

August 12 MCSAC Meeting

August 13 Alcohol Task Force

August 18 Rx Drugs Task Force

August 20 Marijuana Task Force
Manatee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition was awarded the Prevention Partnership Grant (PPG) worth $150,000 per year for three years. Titled Healthy Communities/Safe Kids, the PPG will provide environmental strategies that create safety and health in Manatee.

Strategies include: Promoting Retailers Education Program (PREP) training for retailers; Safe Festival Training and ID scanners for community festivals; Know the Law for middle school and high school students; Parents Who Host Lose the Most to inform parents that it is illegal to host parties that serve alcohol to underage; Town Halls and Community Forums to engage community members in creating a healthy, safe Manatee.

Additionally, Coalition’s treatment partners - Manatee Glens and Hanley Center Foundation - were awarded the PPG (each $150,000 yearly) which means that over the next three years an additional $1,349,197 will flow into Manatee from block grant funds to prevent and reduce substance abuse. Manatee Glens’ application, Safe Kids/Healthy Communities, was written in collaboration with the Coalition; we are sharing a staff person to implement strategies. Go Team!!!

The Contradiction of the "Medicinal" Value of Smoked Marijuana
by Nestor Levesque

The debate about legalizing marijuana in the state of Florida has been temporarily suspended but a new round of arguments will soon begin. An effort is already underway to once again propose an amendment to the Florida constitution that would legalize marijuana for medical purposes. While the medicinal value of marijuana in certain forms is well known, smoking marijuana for
medicinal purposes is far more questionable.

In an article from the University of Washington titled, 'Learn About Marijuana' it is noted, "There are many studies that report on the harmful health effects of smoking tobacco, such as cancer, respiratory disease (bronchitis, emphysema and asthma) and heart disease." The article continues, "Tobacco and marijuana smoke both contain harmful chemicals which are absorbed when inhaled. This exposes the smoker's lungs to greater risks of developing major respiratory diseases and/or cancer."

The dangerous effects of tobacco use are well known and have been well known for quite some time. No one would suggest that smoking cigarettes is a healthy activity yet many would have us believe that inhaling marijuana smoke is medicinal.

The article also describes why marijuana smoke may be even more harmful than tobacco smoke. "Compared to tobacco cigarette smokers, people who smoke marijuana typically inhale more smoke (two-thirds larger puff volume); Inhale the smoke deeper into the lungs (one-third greater depth of inhalation); Hold the smoke in the lungs for longer time periods (up to four times longer)."

If inhaling cigarette smoke is a known health risk then how much more of a threat to one's health is marijuana smoke if people take it in, in larger quantities, deeper in the lungs and for longer periods of time? In order to believe that smoking marijuana is medicinal one must ignore the documented health risks of tobacco and marijuana smoke. With other less dangerous methods of delivering the true medicinal effects of marijuana, there is no reason to think smoked marijuana is a viable and healthy way to treat people with serious and debilitating illnesses.

control for assistance.

Although the numbers do not fully reflect the full prevalence of synthetic marijuana use, the data is a good marker for noting substance abuse patterns. Synthetic marijuana is dangerous and can be life threatening.

Side effects range from severe agitation and anxiety to muscle spasm and seizure. If you see someone who you suspect is suffering from synthetic marijuana complications, contact your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222.

Poison Control centers are open 24/7 to help you decide if someone can be treated at home or if that person needs emergency medical treatment. If someone stops breathing, collapse or has a seizure, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Game Changer
by Sadie Palmer, Co-Chair

The coalition was asked by the health department to provide drug information presentations to Bayshore and Braden River High Schools. I joined Dr. Jessica Spencer and Wendy Nebrija to help educate 510 HOPE class students over four days at these two schools.

Jessica provided information about alcohol, marijuana, and e-cigarette with a PowerPoint
For more information [http://adai.washington.edu/marijuana/factsheets/factsheets.htm](http://adai.washington.edu/marijuana/factsheets/factsheets.htm)

**Men and Women Who Served Their Country Are One of Manatee's Greatest Civic Assets**  
*by Patti Durham*

Manatee County VetCorps and its partners are working on an exciting project with state and local government entities to initiate a Manatee County Veterans Treatment Court. Veterans Court is an alternative to incarceration and offers treatment, accountability and structure to ensure veterans have the opportunity of recovery with a 98% rate of success (TakePart, 2015).

Manatee County Veterans Service Officer Lee Washington, VetCorps Prevention Coordinator Patti Durham, VA Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator Patrick Diggs, MCSAC Board Members Wendy Nebrija, Jane Roseboro and Javier Cordova

More than half of the 2.6 million veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan returned home with mental health conditions related to their service.

**Fast Fact #1:** Currently, more than 700,000 veterans are currently in the criminal justice system. Many of these criminal charges are related to trauma, addiction or mental illness.

Presentation. Wendy discussed prescription drugs and heroin with a video clip and discussion, and I wrapped up each class with an interactive game. Contestants, team names, and team captains vied for the most points in a multiple choice / true or false competition covering drug use, abuse, and lifestyle application.

**Event: Increases in Heroin Use & Overdose Prevention**

On May 19th MCSAC and Suncoast Behavioral Health Centers/Palmcoast hosted a presentation entitled 'Increases in Heroin Use & Overdose Prevention' by Dr. Sharon S. Kelley. Dr. Kelly is the Chief Executive Officer, Associates in Emergency Medical Education, Inc.

**Fast Fact #2:** Currently, more than 700,000 veterans are currently in the criminal justice system. Many of these criminal charges are related to trauma, addiction or mental illness.

**Quiz Question:**

What % of new heroin users started with Rx pain relievers?  
A. 30%  
B. 50%  
C. 80%

**Answer:** C - 80%

The bonus question was a team effort by the students to brainstorm safer choices. Team captains then shared their ideas of sports, fishing, competitive gaming, bird watching and even bee keeping, for extra bonus points which often settled a close tie for the overall winner. Jessica, Wendy, and I helped create a safer and healthier community with our presentations to these schools.
**Fast Fact #2:** 11,000 veterans, who would otherwise have been incarcerated this year, received life-saving assistance instead through a Veterans Treatment Court.

The packed room of nearly 100 participants had the distinct opportunity to hear about the growing epidemic of heroin abuse and all sides of the reversal drug Naloxone. After hearing from many participants the response was overwhelmingly positive. We look forward to offering other educational opportunities in the future. What are you interested in learning about?

Contact [Sharon Kramer](mailto:pdurham@drugfreemanatee.org) for suggestions.

---

**Summer Safety**

*by Jennifer Venuto, LCSW*

With summer quickly approaching and the school year coming to a long awaited end, it's important to keep the conversation going about underage drinking and keeping our youth, and others, safe. Additionally, the joys of living in Florida, beaches, swimming, and boating, also bring added dangers, often deadly, of combining alcohol with water activities.

This article from WomensForum.com, is worth reading and sharing.

[Alcohol Facts and Figures](#)

---

**Fire Donation**

Manatee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition wishes to thank the Manatee County Fire Commissioners’ Association for their generous donation of $500. This contribution will allow for a greater distribution of Your Life Matters cards to individuals who experience an overdose in Manatee County.

The card was developed by local Firefighter Michael Dunn of the Cedar Hammock Fire District and lists local resources to assist those struggling with substance abuse. When individuals care enough to go above and beyond, it fosters community engagement. This in turn creates partnerships that ultimately lead to the changes we want to see in our community.

We are so thankful for this donation and hope it helps to save even just one life in our beautiful
Summer is supposed to be a fun, care-free season. Summer holiday parties are often a highlight of the season. Whether we’re grilling brats with the neighbors or frying chicken for a family feast before heading out to see the fireworks, summer seems to be made for celebrations. Often, alcohol is a part of our summer holidays, and, when used responsibly, can add to the relaxed atmosphere of the event. However, the laid-back vibe of summer should never extend to alcohol abuse or drunk driving. These alcohol facts and fiction are a sobering reminder of what alcohol can do when it is abused.

**DUI Statistics, Holiday Accidents**

Drunk driving is a true epidemic around the world. According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), in the United States alone, 10,839 people will die as a result of drunk drivers. That’s one person every 50 minutes. Even more disturbing, the average person arrested for DUI has already driven drunk 87 times before being caught. If that’s not sobering enough, consider these alcohol facts.

**Drinking and Driving Facts**

- One person is injured every minute in a car crash involving alcohol.
- Over 50% of drivers convicted of DUI continue driving although their license has been suspended.
- For every American adult, drunk driving costs almost $500 per year in taxes, legal and penal fees.
- 1 in 3 people will be involved in a crash due to alcohol in their lifetime.

Clearly, drunk driving shouldn’t be taken lightly. Why is this important to remember during summer holidays? Drunk driving statistics show that car accidents involving alcohol climb 10 to 20% around a holiday. It makes sense that when more people drink, there will be more accidents.

We traditionally associate drunk driving with winter holidays like Christmas and New Years, but the fact is, summer holidays are just as likely to be dangerous as their county!

---

**Dear Ella...**

Dear Ella,

On your final day of high school don’t look back on the things you would have done, could have done, or should have done. Our hope is that you will look back on an amazing, long list of accomplishments that happened because you aimed high, took chances, and most importantly did something. We are so very proud to have had the opportunity to work with you!

Love,
Sharon, Rita, Jessica and Patti

As it is in life, some things come to an end to make way for a beautiful future. MCSAC celebrates with Ella Biggins and her family as she graduates from Braden River High School. Ella will be attending Florida State University in the fall and will be majoring in Political Science.

A few of Ella's many MCYC accomplishments include being chosen out of a large pool of applicants for the state-wide Florida Youth Commission. She held the position of MCYC chair for two years and as Teen Pregnancy Chair successfully contributed to reducing teen pregnancies in Manatee County. Additionally, Ella performed summer internships for Congressman Vern Buchanan’s office and MCSAC. How did she find the time?

Ella has expressed her desire to return to Manatee County after graduating from college to begin her career and raise a family. With this reassurance, we will not say goodbye, but rather, until we meet again!
cold-weather counterparts. Sadly, those who abuse alcohol will use any occasion as an excuse to overindulge, and these people are the ones most likely to engage in drunk driving.

Fortunately, there is some good news. Overall, reports of alcohol abuse and drunk driving are down across the nation. The one group that continues to see a rise in alcohol related injury is teens and under-age drinkers. Teen alcohol use is especially dangerous, not only to the teen in question but to those around him or her as well. Never let a teen drink, even under direct adult supervision. Allowing premature alcohol consumption can have lasting consequences on a teen's physical, mental, and emotional health.

"Those who abuse alcohol will use any occasion as an excuse to overindulge, and these people are the ones most likely to engage in drunk driving."

Let's Talk

MCSAC and the Manatee County Youth Commission (MCYC) co-sponsored the 5th iteration of the Coalition’s community forum/dialogue night, Let's Talk, on Tuesday, April 28 at Pirate City from 6:30PM to 9:00PM.

The purpose of Let's Talk is to provide an opportunity for youth and adults to sit down, enjoy a meal together and talk about what matters. Sixty-two attendees (39 students, 23 adults) shared dinner and family style discussions on difficult issues such as sex, bullying and drugs.

The entire event and discussion was youth-led, designed by teens for teens. Sozo Music's student performers provided music and energy for this amazing event and the Pirates/Marauders organization not only provided the venue but also donated signed player-signed items for a raffle!

Congrats to MCYC members Ella Biggins, Valerie Arias and Toby Chinwuba for leading a great event and to all the MCYC table captains for facilitating such rewarding conversation!

It's a busy time for MCSAC! Doing Great Work in Manatee County...

Get Social with MCSAC
Sharon Kramer, M.Ed., CPP
Executive Director/CEO
941-748-4501 x3491
skramer@drugfreemanatee.org

Rita Chamberlain, MBA
Associate Director/CFO
941-748-4501 x3477
rchamberlain@drugfreemanatee.org

Jessica Spencer, Ed.D, CPP, CAP
Project Director
941-748-4501 x3483
jspencer@drugfreemanatee.org

Patti Durham
VetCorps/MCYC
Prevention Coordinator
941-748-4501 x3490
pdurham@drugfreemanatee.org

Manatee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition
Manatee County Government Administrative Center
1112 Manatee Ave. W, Suite 303 Bradenton, FL 34209
941-749-3030
www.drugfreemanatee.org