

NEWS from the N.D. Department of Human Services  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Department of Human Services Encourages ND Communities to Raise Awareness of Alcohol Abuse**

Bismarck, N.D. – April is Alcohol Awareness Month. The Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services encourages North Dakotans to take this time to educate themselves and others about the dangers of alcohol abuse.

"Alcohol Awareness Month is an opportunity to raise awareness, educate the public, and energize co-workers and communities to promote healthy behaviors," said JoAnne Hoesel, director of the division. "Raising awareness of alcohol abuse prevention is the first step in initiating local level change."

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration offers these ideas to communities to raise awareness about alcohol abuse prevention. Create a partnership between a high school and youth organization to hold a supervised event with music and other fun activities. An alcohol-free community block party could be organized with support from businesses. Communities can partner with their local police departments to host a Family Night with free information on alcohol prevention including a demonstration of drinking goggles which simulate impairment.

Other ways to take action include posting information on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, the library and post office, supporting enforcement efforts of laws and policies related to underage drinking, setting a no-use policy for all youth activities, and modeling positive behavior.

The division is a resource for substance abuse information and prevention efforts in the state. It operates the North Dakota Prevention Resource and Media Center (PRMC), which has clearinghouse materials and media center items that can be checked out to further enhance local prevention efforts. Materials from the PRMC are free to the public and can be shipped to you directly for no additional cost.

For more information on Alcohol Awareness Month or to receive related materials, contact the Prevention Resource and Media Center at 701-328-8918, TTY: 701-857-8666, toll-free 1-800-642-6744 or visit our Web site [www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention).

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