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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***April is Alcohol Awareness Month***

**Human Services encourages community members to participate in changing the alcohol culture in the state**

BISMARCK, N.D. - April is Alcohol Awareness Month. The N.D. Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services encourages North Dakotans to consider the role they can play in changing how people think about alcohol use and abuse.

The department's Prevention Resource and Media Center created a video using a montage of news stories and headlines that shows the effects alcohol misuse can have on families and communities. This four-minute video is online at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQdsvlav6WA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQdsvlav6WA). Individuals are invited to share the video to help lead change in their communities.

The Prevention Resource and Media Center has other resources available that illustrate the impact of substance abuse in our state and what communities can do to reduce and prevent binge drinking and drinking and driving. These educational materials are free to North Dakota residents and can be shipped at no cost. To order online, go to [www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention/seow.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention/seow.html).

"Alcohol abuse impacts us all," said Pamela Sagness, the department's prevention administrator. "Local communities are creating environments that encourage positive change and the department has resources available to continue these efforts."

North Dakota's alcohol issues extend beyond underage drinking. Adults age 21 or older are the majority (93 percent) of impaired drivers in N.D. fatal crashes and 44 percent of all adult arrests in the state are alcohol-related (DOT 2011; Crime in North Dakota, 2011). North Dakotans purchase higher volumes of alcohol per person (NIAA, 2000-2009) and adult binge drinking rates in the state are among the highest.

For more information on Alcohol Awareness Month, contact the N.D. Department of Human Services' Prevention Resource and Media Center at 701-329-8919, toll-free 1-800-642-6744, ND Relay TTY 1-800-366-6888 or visit [www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/prevention).

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