

Featuring: First Nations – Alcohol-Related Health and Social Problems

## SECTION 1: WHAT'S NEW?

**Registration for School Health Annual Conference -showcasing Canadian School Health Innovations now open see:**

[http://www.cash-aces.ca/conference\\_2008/](http://www.cash-aces.ca/conference_2008/)

### Resources:

**CDC and the National, Heart, Lung and Blood Institute** have developed "Managing Asthma in Schools: What Have We Learned?", that provides updated information on developing, implementing, and evaluating school-based asthma programs. This special issue of the American School Health Association's *Journal of School Health* features more than 25 research articles, brief reports, and case studies that cover a range of activities, such as asthma education programs for students and staff members, asthma-related health services, and policy changes. It includes an up-to-date list of resources for school-based asthma programs. For a link to a free copy of the special issue, go to [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/asthma/josh](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/asthma/josh)

**CDC Updated Its Alcohol and Drug Use Webpages** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) recently updated its **Alcohol and Drug Use webpages**. The webpages now include new resources, links and CDC podcasts.

### **NASBE Publication Relays State Strategies to Support Local Wellness Policies**

An Issue Brief released by the **National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)** in October 2007 showcases promising state-level strategies that could strengthen local school wellness policies. The brief's goal is to provide education policymakers with a broad overview of wellness policy strategies that have been implemented in several states across the country, and with that, strengthen the capacity of local school districts in developing their own wellness policies.

## RESEARCH, REPORTS & SCHOOL HEALTH KNOWLEDGE

### Research Roundup

**CDC Launches New Student Health and Academic Achievement Webpage** - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) has started a new webpage that focuses on the link between health and academic achievement as well as the relationship between educational success and life-long healthy behaviors.

**Coordinated School Health Programs and Academic Achievement: A Systematic Review of the Literature** [pdf 279K] Paper by Murray, Low, Cross, Davis, Hollis, Adetunji (*Journal of School Health*, November 2007). This report examines how school health program interventions that fit within the eight Coordinated School Health Program (CSHP) components improve academic success among students. The authors conclude that school health programs hold promise for improving academic outcomes for students.

**Body Mass Index Measurements in Schools**, *Journal of School Health*, Volume 77, Number 10, December 2007 See: [http://www.ashaweb.org/pdfs/joshfinal\\_249\\_07nov27.pdf](http://www.ashaweb.org/pdfs/joshfinal_249_07nov27.pdf)

**A CDC Review of School Laws and Policies Concerning Child and Adolescent Health** - Using the **Coordinated School Health Program** (CSHP) model as a framework, the report gives educators and public health professionals new access to information on laws and policies important to the health of children and adolescents in schools. It is intended to help practitioners and policymakers in public health and education at the federal, state, and local levels enhance their knowledge of relevant laws and policies. The full report was published in the February 2008 issue of the American School Health Association's *Journal of School Health*. To access the full report, see "**A CDC Review of School Laws and Policies Concerning Child and Adolescent Health**."

## FEATURE ARTICLE

### First Nations – Alcohol-Related Health and Social Problems

One of the most deeply ingrained stereotypes about American Indian life is that all Native Americans are alcoholics. Old western films often showed an American Indian, drunk to foolishness, next to a bar begging for beer. There are stories about chiefs giving up miles of land for a taste of "fire water". Injun' Joe in *Tom Sawyer* was rarely described as being sober. In modern culture, cops regularly stop American Indian owned cars to check to see if the driver is drunk, even if the driver is showing no apparent driving difficulties. While the stereotype of the drunk Indian is both unjust and dangerous, it does have some basis in social reality and scientific facts. For a long time it was believed that American Indian problems with drinking, both on the reservations and off, were based solely in social dilemmas.

One of the problems with discussing American Indian Alcoholism is that different tribes have different biological problems with alcoholism. Therefore there are no problems that can be universally dealt with among tribes.

[http://www.guilford.edu/original/Academic/chemistry/current\\_courses/chem110/ringwalt.html](http://www.guilford.edu/original/Academic/chemistry/current_courses/chem110/ringwalt.html)

In Canada, there are certain segments of the population that are more vulnerable to acute and chronic alcohol-related health and social problems. In addition to youth, these segments include: offenders, the homeless, the elderly, pregnant women, young adults, First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

#### Reducing Alcohol-Related Harm in Canada: Toward a Culture of Moderation

Sask. reserve where 2 sisters died tried to ban alcohol

A Saskatchewan First Nation reeling from the deaths of a baby and her three-year-old sister, who were left outside in the bitter cold, was trying to declare itself a dry community, the reserve's chief said Thursday.

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/saskatchewan/story/2008/01/31/toddlers-deaths.html?ref=rss>

On Thursday night, the Innu First Nation in Newfoundland voted 76-74 to ban the sale, distribution or possession of alcohol in an attempt to stop the bootlegging business that has been blamed for the poverty and social problems of the small community on Canada's Atlantic coast.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080201/wl\\_canada\\_nm/canada\\_natives\\_co](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080201/wl_canada_nm/canada_natives_co)

The following describes some of the alcohol abuse facts and issues among native Indians:

Alcohol and drug abuse are community and family problems among Indians. This abuse harms all tribal members, including the abuser and his/her family, friends, and associates.

The negative consequences of alcohol and substance abuse in Indian communities are mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional.

In Indian communities, alcoholism is a multi-generational phenomenon. Currently, alcohol dependence is negatively affecting three or four generations and will affect most certainly affect future generations. Alcoholism in Indian communities is the tip of an iceberg. That is, alcohol dependence sits on top of a huge mass of other underlying problems.

Alcohol dependency frequently co-exists in Indian communities with other problems such as stress-related acting out, cultural shame, depression, and self-hate.

[http://www.alcohol-abuse-details.com/Alcohol Abuse in Native Communities.html](http://www.alcohol-abuse-details.com/Alcohol%20Abuse%20in%20Native%20Communities.html)

The relationship between Native American youth and alcohol is a leading health and educational problem. An interpretive perspective shaped by critical hermeneutics recognizes and accepts the challenge to come up with solutions. To shift from a deficit-based model of cure that is emphasized in Western medicine to a perspective of care and hope may aid in better understanding Native American adolescents.

<http://indigenoussuestoday.blogspot.com/2007/07/native-american-youth-and-alcohol.html>

As an experienced youth worker it is safe to say that Canada's Aboriginal youth face more barriers than that of the average youth in Canada. Racism, discrimination, stereotype are factors that the Aboriginal youth face in both public and private sectors in their everyday lives.

There are feelings of helplessness, loss of hope, and low self-esteem, which perpetuate drug and alcohol abuse. Hence, resulting in criminal and rebellious activities. Most youths who have attempted suicide are products of dysfunctional families. This along with loss of spirituality of their culture, which personally is of great significance, is a major influence for suicide.

<http://www.ayn.ca/ViewNews.aspx?id=134>

## ALCOHOL PROBLEMS IN NATIVE AMERICA: THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE RESISTANCE AND RECOVERY—THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LIE

Coyhis, an American Indian sobriety advocate and White, an academician, set an ambitious goal: to weave published reports and personal experiences 'into a meaningful whole' regarding Native American alcohol problems. Thoroughly deconstructing the 'drunken Indian' stereotype, the authors have rewritten the history of American Indian alcoholism from an American Indian point of view. Their volume is steeped in the historical and scientific literature and on chronicles regarding Native sobriety movements.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/action/showPdf?submitPDF=Full+Text+PDF+%2834+KB%29&doi=10.1111%2Fj.1360-0443.2007.01724.x>

Reserve communities are associated with higher than average rates of family violence, child abuse and neglect, suicide, arrest and incarceration. Despite official assumptions, most problem drinkers on reserves are not alcoholics and the rate of abstinence among First Canadians is higher than the Canadian average. The incidence of high-risk drinking is linked to gender, education and employment: women, those with more schooling and those in the workforce are less likely to be affected. The most visible form of problem drinking, group or binge drinking, meets with two responses: tolerance, due to the forgiving nature of reserve communities, or disease concept treatment (DCT) programs based on abstinence, referral to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and a standardized rehabilitation regime. Although DCT programs have adopted some culturally-appropriate aspects, such as sweat lodges, sweet grass ceremonies and the involvement of elders, Thatcher views these as "politically correct" add-ons to a flawed model.

[http://historyofalcoholanddrugs.typepad.com/alcohol\\_and\\_drugs\\_history/2006/08/alcohol\\_and\\_fir.html](http://historyofalcoholanddrugs.typepad.com/alcohol_and_drugs_history/2006/08/alcohol_and_fir.html)

Alcohol and pornography will be banned in indigenous communities in the Northern Territory as part of a dramatic response to widespread child abuse, which was today labelled a "national emergency".

<http://www.antar.org.au/content/view/486/1/>

On this reservation with about 10,600 residents, it's rare to get a call that doesn't involve drunks, he said.

"In fact, it scares me to go out on a call that isn't alcohol-related because I don't know what to expect," he said.

<http://www.gannett.com/go/difference/greatfalls/pages/part8/crime.html>

"Almost every reservation I know of, there are high incidences of drinking," Colonnese said. "It's almost as if the prohibition had an opposite effect. It didn't change any of the problems."

<http://alcoholism.about.com/library/weekly/aa003028b.htm>

Local aboriginal leaders believe a booze ban in First Nations communities will not put a cap on alcohol abuse. "Even if we put a ban on alcohol, people would find another source," said Dakota Plains First Nation Chief Orville Smoke, who was in a meeting with band councillors yesterday to discuss ways to reduce alcoholism in the community.

<http://www.portagedailygraphic.com/Top%20Stories/373791.html>

Local alcohol prohibition, police presence and serious injury in isolated Alaska Native villages

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2006.01347.x?cookieSet=1&journalCode=add>

SUBSTANCE ABUSE ISSUES AND PUBLIC POLICY IN CANADA: III. WHAT, WHEN, WHO AND WHY?

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/library/PRBpubs/prb0611-e.html#why>

## **National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program**

The National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) is an example of a Health Canada program now largely controlled by First Nations communities and organizations. Since its origins in the 1970s, the program's goal has been to help First Nations and Inuit communities set up and operate programs aimed at reducing high levels of alcohol, drug, and solvent abuse among on-reserve populations.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnih-spni/substan/ads/nnadap-pnlaada\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnih-spni/substan/ads/nnadap-pnlaada_e.html)

First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) welcomes you to the 7th edition of the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) Treatment Centre Directory. It was developed in order to provide a document that summarizes basic information on all native In-patient treatment centres funded by NNADAP.

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnih-spni/substan/ads/nnadap-pnlaada\\_dir-rep\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnih-spni/substan/ads/nnadap-pnlaada_dir-rep_e.html)

Native North America was powerless to resist the alcohol they encountered at the time of European contact. Like moths to a flame, Indians succumbed to alcohol out of some cultural or racial vulnerability. Everybody knows that's true, right? Wrong!

[http://www.whitebison.org/2007pdf/WOCreview\\_alcohol.pdf](http://www.whitebison.org/2007pdf/WOCreview_alcohol.pdf)

## **Native American Adolescent Motivation to Change Alcohol and Illicit Drug Use**

This study compared the motivational structures of readiness to change alcohol use versus illicit drug use among Native American adolescents presenting for residential substance abuse treatment.

<http://casaa.unm.edu/posters/Native%20American%20Adolescent%20Motivation%20to%20Change%20Alcohol%20and%20Illicit%20Drug%20Use.pdf>

Native youth can easily be caught in a no-man's land of confusion and fuzzy self-image. Besides coping with the normal challenges of adolescence, Native youth must also deal with their identity as Indians. In

this effort they face a microcosm of all the problems with which their culture struggles. Of course, cultural conflict--as a long-term social and economic process--is also related to risks associated with low socio-economic status (see, for example, Hafner, Ingels, Schneider, & Stevenson, 1990).

<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9221/indian.htm>

Native Americans have some of the highest rates of alcohol abuse and dependence, yet potential biological risk factors associated with the problem drinking seen in some tribes remain relatively unknown. The amplitude of the P3 component of the event-related potential (ERP) is perhaps the most studied electrophysiological "marker" of potential vulnerability to alcohol dependence, yet it has not been investigated in Native Americans. Forty-seven, non-alcohol-dependent Native American Mission Indian men between the ages of 18 and 25 years participated in the study. ERPs were collected at 60 minutes following both alcohol (0.56 g/kg) and placebo intake. No relationship was found between P3 amplitude and degree of Native-American heritage (NAH), or family history (FH) of alcohol dependence. The results of this study did, however, replicate previous findings that the P3 component of the ERP is sensitive to the effects of alcohol. A reduction in the P3a component across the scalp was found in these Native American men following alcohol when compared with placebo ingestion. P3 response to alcohol, although not influenced by a subject's NAH or FH, was influenced by the presence of a polymorphism in the alcohol metabolizing enzyme alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH). Men with an ADH23 allele had significantly higher amplitude P3 components at placebo and also demonstrated more alcohol-induced reductions in P3 amplitude than men with ADH21 alleles only. In addition, individuals with low P3 amplitude in the placebo condition had less of a reduction or an actual increase in P3a and P3b amplitudes following alcohol intake. Given that a less intense response to alcohol has been associated with greater risk for the development of alcohol-related problems, these data suggest the presence of certain biological variables within this Native American population that may confer both risk and protection for the future development of alcohol dependence.

<http://www.nature.com/npp/journal/v18/n4/abs/1395141a.html>

Alcohol abuse exacts a terrible toll among several Native American communities, making it important to understand factors that might influence alcohol abuse among the population, according to the researchers.

<http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/abuse/a/blcah030917.htm>