

## Underage Drinking Awareness

by Delina John, Prevention Coordinator

I have chosen this month's article to focus on binge drinking. It's important that we as parents have all the facts about what is happening in our communities so if we see signs of underage drinking, we can help.

Let's all be a part of the solution and let our children know what they could be facing if they choose to drink. If you want more information on underage drinking or have questions, please call 1-800-600-5599 or 541-444-8267.

### Binge Drinking Linked to 4,000 Deaths Annually

Binge drinking, defined as drinking too much alcohol too fast, has been linked to as many as 4,000 deaths every year from alcohol overdose.

Until recently, deaths by alcohol poisoning were largely unreported in the media. Now that college campuses are required by law to publish all student deaths, people are learning more about the tragic effects of binge drinking.

Around the country, reports from victims' families and county medical examiners confirm that alcohol can be a lethal drug. And it's particularly true for teenagers.

Of the first eight cases ever reported as alcohol poisoning, half were 16 years old or younger. At least half were first-time drinkers and had never been drunk before.

Five of them were put to bed by friends or their own parents to "sleep it off," only to be found dead in the morning.

Tragically, what these friends and parents didn't know is that if a person drinks too much alcohol too quickly before falling asleep, the alcohol will shut down breathing and heart functions, killing a person within hours. That's because of the physiological effects of alcohol, which suppresses nerves that control involuntary actions like breathing, heartbeat, and the gag reflex.

Even after a person stops drinking, alcohol in the stomach continues to enter the bloodstream and circulate throughout the body. That's why binge drinking is especially dangerous, because many victims ingest a lethal dose of alcohol before losing consciousness.

By the time they do lose consciousness, and even if friends and family rush them to a hospital, it may be too late. Even if caught in time and the victim survives, alcohol poisoning often results in permanent brain damage.

Here's what can happen when a person drinks too much alcohol too fast:

- **Choking:** The victim chokes on his or her own vomit.
- **Breathing stops:** The victim's breathing becomes irregular and slows to a stop.
- **Heartbeat stops:** The victim's heartbeat becomes irregular or stops.
- **Hypothermia:** The victim's body temperature decreases, leading to cardiac arrest.
- **Hypoglycemia:** The victim's blood sugar level plummets and causes seizures.

Here are the critical warning signs of alcohol poisoning:

- **Mental confusion:** The victim is in a stupor, a coma, or cannot be roused.
- **No response:** The victim does not respond or cannot feel pinching of his/her skin.
- Vomiting while sleeping
- Seizures
- **Slow breathing:** Breathing is less than eight breaths per minute.
- **Irregular breathing:** There are 10 or more seconds between breaths.
- **Hypothermia:** Low body temperature, victim is pale or has bluish skin color.

If you suspect that someone may have ingested a fatal dose of alcohol, call for emergency medical help immediately:

- Call 9-1-1.
- Stay with the victim.
- Keep the victim from choking on vomit by placing them on their side.
- Tell the emergency medical technicians exactly how much alcohol the victim drank – don't guess or minimize the amount!

Prompt medical attention is the only way to save a person's life if he/she has consumed too much alcohol. It can be deadly to try to reverse the effects of alcohol by drinking coffee, taking a cold bath or shower, sleeping, or walking it off.

So once again the message is clear – **talk to your child/children!** The more information you as the parent can give your child/children on the consequences of underage drinking, the better. It will give them the power to stay above the influence!

## Protect Children's Health During and After School

### New Statewide School Policy Protects Kids from Health Risks of Tobacco, Helps Reduce Number of New Youth Smokers

A new mandatory policy that took effect Jan. 1, 2006, prohibits students, staff, and visitors from using any tobacco product **at any time** on school property in Oregon.

"Any time" means during after-school programming, weekend sports events, and evening programming in or around school property.

Public health officials in the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) said the new policy marks an important step toward protecting Oregon kids from the health risks of tobacco.

"Every day in Oregon, 20 kids start smoking. One-third of them will eventually die of a tobacco-related disease," said Mel Kohn, M.D., state epidemiologist in DHS. "Most adult smokers started using tobacco before they turned 18, which underscores the significance of this new policy."

Kohn estimates that about 6,700 Oregon children under age 18 become new smokers each year. Research conducted in the state shows that 17 percent of 11<sup>th</sup>-graders and 10 percent of eighth-graders have smoked in the past 30 days.

"With this new policy, all of us – school staff, visitors, and parents – are

helping build a healthier environment for Oregon's youth," said Nikki Squire, chair of the Oregon Board of Education, which passed a rule in May 2004 that requires schools to be tobacco-free. "This puts what students are learning about tobacco in the classroom into practice."

Kohn said that tobacco-free school policies are an important tool in keeping kids away from tobacco and the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

"The idea that tobacco use is normal and that it is socially acceptable because respected adults and others do it encourages kids to pick up the habit," said Kohn. "Tobacco-free school policies are helping change the perception that smoking and chew are okay."

Kohn said that the next step for each district in Oregon is to adopt the policy set by the State Board of Education.

"In fact, many school districts are working to adopt policies that go beyond the statewide rule, such as implementing curriculum on avoiding tobacco use, banning all tobacco advertising, tobacco-related clothing, gear, and paraphernalia in school buildings," he said.

The Oregon DHS can provide free metal all-weather signs for your school. You can make a difference now, however, by talking to school boards to change policy, including statements in school-use contracts signed by groups, and provide free training and education for individuals and/or groups that use school grounds.

If you have questions about your school's policy, contact DeAnna Pearl, TPEP coordinator, at 1-800-648-0449, ext. 1659, or 541-444-9659.

### OAR 581-021-0110 Tobacco-Free Schools

- 1.) For the purposes of this rule, "tobacco" is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, in any form.
- 2.) No student, staff member, or school visitor is permitted to smoke, inhale, dip or chew, or sell tobacco at any time, including non-school hours:
  - a. In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented, or chartered by the school district, school, or public charter school; or
  - b. On school grounds, athletic grounds, or parking lots.
- 3.) No student is permitted to possess a tobacco product:
  - a. In any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented, or chartered by the school district, school, or public charter school; or
  - b. On school grounds, athletic grounds, or parking lots.
- 4.) By Jan. 1, 2006, school districts must establish policies and procedures to implement and enforce this rule for students, staff, and visitors.

## Memorial Day Ceremony

May 29, 2006 – 11 a.m.  
Government Hill  
Siletz, Oregon

Procession to Veterans Memorial

Opening

Invocation

The Lord's Prayer

Welcome

Memorial Day Address

Presentation of Flowers

Salute to Veterans

Closing

Lunch – Noon at the  
Siletz Tribal Community Center

### CTSI Employment

Job Line

541-444-8296 or

1-800-922-1399, ext. 1296

Visit our Web site at

www.ctsi.nsn.us

### CTSI Jobs

Note: "Open Until Filled" vacancies may close at any time. The tribe's Indian Preference policy will apply. Tribal government will not discriminate in selection because of race, creed, age, sex, color, national origin, physical handicap, marital status, politics, membership or non-membership in an employee organization.