



BC Council on Substance Abuse Building Better Workplaces

Autumn Newsletter
www.workdrugfreebc.com
2009

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COUNCIL NEWS

The BC Council on Substance Abuse is pleased to welcome two new members to its Board of Directors – Cathy McConaghy and Randy Brown. We are also pleased that former Director, Frank Talarico, of Northern Health has agreed to be a member-at-large. We thank Frank for his work as a valued director and appreciate Frank's continued efforts on behalf of the Council to Build Better Workplaces.

Cathy McConaghy brings to the Council her valued perspective on Health and Wellness issues. Her experience and expertise as Human Resources Advisor for Prince George Regional Hospital is a welcome addition to our team.

Staff Sergeant Randy Brown is a returning Director and was a Founding Member of the Council back in 1991. Randy has retired from the RCMP after 31 years of service which included a decade as Federal Drug Awareness Coordinator, North District Drug Section, and is now a Manager of Community Policing and Safety Programs for the City of Penticton. Randy is also an experienced and dynamic facilitator who brings extensive experience and expertise around the issue of drug use and abuse to his presentations.

SYNTHETIC DRUG INITIATIVE FIGHTS CRIME

August 2009 the RCMP launched their Synthetic Drug Initiative. This RCMP-led program is the first Canadian drug strategy to focus on a single class of drugs. The strategy is designed to eliminate the production and distribution of illegal synthetic drugs in Canada. Special attention will be paid to reducing the influence of Organized Crime on drug trafficking in Canada. As Canada has been identified as one of the major sources of illegal synthetic drugs, the Synthetic Drug Initiative will target three facets of the illicit synthetic drug industry; enforcement, deterrence and prevention. These three facets are particularly important as many synthetic drugs, like Ecstasy and Methamphetamine have become increasingly popular among youth.

Continues on Page 2 – Dangers of Synthetic Drugs

MANAGERS - THIS COURSE IS FOR YOU!!

SUPERVISING THE DRUG FREE WORKPLACE (On-Line)

Monday November 30, 2009 7am to 12 noon

Registration Deadline: November 23, 2009

Tuesday, December 8, 2009 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. &

Thursday, December 10, 2009 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Registration Deadline: December 1, 2009

This 4 hour interactive on-line course is a great opportunity for HR & OHS Managers to become acquainted with pro-active training that provides concrete steps and tools for your supervisory team to employ in your workplace.

Content:

- Examining attitudes & De-mystifying the issues
- Recognizing signs & symptoms of substance abuse
- Preparing for action
- Effective documentation & Interviewing Techniques
- Due diligence

SPECIAL RATE \$115.00 per participant. *Some Restrictions apply.

For more information please contact:

Janet Tomayer, Executive Director

Bus 250-649-4000

Fax 250-649-4003

janet@workdrugfreebc.com

*Online course requirements – high speed internet & telephone.
Course manual and reference materials included.



BC COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

On-Site Supervisor Training (Full Day) \$195.00

- Examining attitudes
- De-mystifying the issues
- Preparing for action
- Understanding enabling and intervention
- Effective documentation
- Due diligence
- Indicators of abuse

On-Line Supervisor Training (4 hrs) \$155.00

- Condensed Training with some homework

Employee Training (2 hrs) \$60.00

- Exploring our attitudes
- Responsibility – legal & company policy issues
- Health & safety aspects
- Enabling

Symptomology Course (2-4 hrs) \$90.00-\$155.00

- Category & drug identification
- Examples of paraphernalia
- Physical & Psychological dependency differences
- Indicators of abuse

DANGERS OF SYNTHETIC DRUGS

In addition to the popularity of synthetic drugs among Canadian youth, there are also the increased dangers associated with the illegal production of synthetic drugs and the severe negative health effects due to use. As a part of the National Anti-Drug Strategy, the Synthetic Drug Initiative will work to reduce the supply and demand of illicit drugs as well as get those who make them or deal them off the streets.

The RCMP have recognized the importance of this Initiative by committing funding received through the National Anti-Drug Strategy and re-allocating existing resources to fight the presence of illegal synthetic drugs in our communities. This increased funding has allowed for new and improved awareness programs, the hiring of new personnel and improved training. For more information visit: www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca

*Source Note 1

METHAMPHETAMINE USE IN THE WORKPLACE

Methamphetamine use in the workplace has been associated with white, male blue-collar workers between the ages of 20 and 30. In today's society where increased productivity, double shifts and long work hours are the norm, many workers may turn to methamphetamine in an attempt to become more productive. Users may be tricked into believing that using meth will reduce their stress and increase their performance, concentration and productivity by giving them increased energy. In fact when an individual first uses this substance they may become a 'super' worker, but quickly the user will realize they can never again reach that kind of productivity due to the nature of the drug.

According to recent reports the use of Methamphetamine is actually on the decline in the workplace due to drug testing.

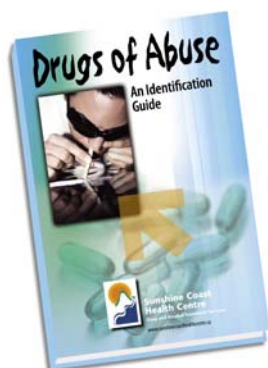
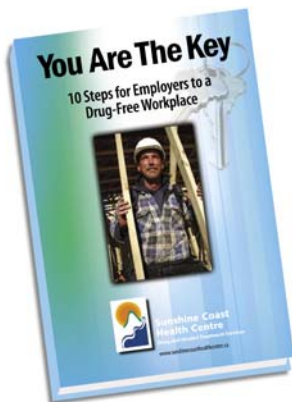
Continues on page 3 – Can Addicts be 'Super' Workers?



The BCCSA continues to partner with the Sunshine Coast Health Centre and provides two informative booklets to Employers:

***You Are the Key –
10 Steps for Employers to a
Drug-Free Workplace*** and
***Drugs of Abuse - An
Identification Guide***

Contact us to receive your
free copy
www.workdrugfreebc.com



CAN ADDICTS BE 'SUPER' WORKERS?

Additionally, it is difficult for most meth users to hold down a job long term due to the highly addictive quality of meth. Meth addicts burn out quickly and are unable to handle a job, especially when they find they are unable to reach the same level of productivity they initially reached. However, there are some industries where methamphetamine use is present and some cases where workers are more susceptible to the perceived benefits of meth use. These groups include; truck drivers, construction and mining workers, athletes, and factory workers.

For more information on the prevalence of methamphetamine in the workplace visit: www.dol.gov/asp/programs/

*Source Note 2

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

In a 2009 study of over 6,000 Canadian employees 19% believe they are in a psychologically unsafe workplace. When risk factors including; clear leadership and expectations, workload, management and organizational culture, the amount of affected employees increases to 29%. This is a significant percentage and employers and managers need to improve these workplace conditions, but how are they to do that?

Experts have identified three key elements of importance; Communication, Education and Accommodation. The need for open, frank communication is key to avoiding mentally unhealthy workplaces. Especially in times of economic instability employees don't always know what is going to happen. Therefore, managers need to meet with staff regularly to look at work priorities and brief them on what is happening within the business.

Employers need to provide their employees, especially front line managers, with training to recognize employees who may be suffering from mental health problems as well as substance abuse issues.

Finally, employers must understand that the best way to avoid disability costs and increased mental health problems in employees is prevention. This means employers must have a means to accommodate the employee's return to work following time off for mental health reasons. Employers need to be aware of the potential for mental health issues in the workplace and develop resources to help their employees.

*Source Note 3



THE COSTS OF EMPLOYEE SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The impact of employee substance abuse is felt in many businesses. Costs to businesses can be direct or indirect and may include;

- Loss of productivity
- Absenteeism, extra sick leave
- Increased injuries and accident rates
- Premature deaths, fatal accidents
- Theft
- Tardiness, sleeping on the job
- Loss of efficiency
- Higher turnover of employees
- Lowered morale of co-workers
- Need for increased supervision

Have you noticed any of these issues present in your workplace? Perhaps you haven't considered the fact that many are related to employee substance abuse issues.

*Source Note 6

PROJECT E-AWARE: THE AGONY OF ECSTASY

In September 2009 the RCMP's Drugs and Organized Crime Awareness Service launched Project E-Aware. The purpose of this new initiative is to provide factual information to Canadians on the harmful effects of Ecstasy (MDMA). The motivation behind this initiative was the death of a young lady named Erin Spanevello. At 21 years of age Erin died from cardiac and respiratory failure. This was brought on by her use of the illicit drug Ecstasy.

Through this pro-active initiative the RCMP are hoping to raise awareness about Ecstasy, commonly known as 'E', a popular synthetic drug used by many young people in Canada. In fact, according to the RCMP the use of Ecstasy has increased across Canada, especially in big cities like Ottawa. The popularity of this drug is due to its potential to produce a perceived increase in stimulation, euphoria and pleasant emotions. Additionally, the low street price of \$5.00 increases the popularity of this illicit drug.

For more information on Project E-Aware visit:

<http://www.drugawareness.bc.rcmp.gc.ca>

*Source Note 4

CANADA'S DRUGGED DRIVERS... SENIORS?

Seniors in Canada are becoming the number one category of drugged drivers. Elderly drivers are more likely to be taking several prescription medications than any other age group and this is a concern for everyone on the road.

Medications can have side effects such as;

- Drowsiness
- Impaired motor function
- Decreased concentration
- Slower decision making and
- Confusion

These side effects combined with the aging senses of seniors create dangerous drivers on Canadian roads. Impaired driving, due to prescription medications, alcohol or a combination of the two is not only dangerous and unacceptable, but it is a criminal offence.

To find tips for older drivers visit:

<http://safety-council.org/safety/public-safety/seniors/drugs-and-the-older-driver/>

*Source Note 5

Source Note 1 – Government of Canada News Release: New Program to Combat Synthetic Drugs Announced, August 25, 2009

Source Note 2 – Methamphetamine in the Workplace Setting (www.dol.gov.asp.programs/), 2006

Source Note 3 – *Tips for Life: Depression- The Human Side Effects*, Canada Benefits, July 2009

Source Note 4 – RCMP Drug and Organized Crime Awareness Service launches ecstasy awareness initiative (www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca), 2009 & *Use of drug ecstasy way up: RCMP*, CBC News, September 16, 2009

Source Note 5 – Drugs and the Older Driver (<http://safety-council.org/safety/public-safety/seniors/drugs-and-the-older-driver/>), 2009

Source Note 6 – Substance Abuse in the Workplace (www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers), 2008