

## **Ideas for Coalitions to Observe National Substance Abuse Prevention Month**

***October 2012***

### **Sponsor “Above the Influence” Activities**

“Above the Influence” (ATI) is a national campaign created and implemented by the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, a program of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). ATI informs and inspires teens to reject illicit drugs via TV, print, Internet, and local radio advertising – and, most importantly, in partnership with community organizations. On October 17, coalitions are asked to participate in “ATI Day” and organize an ATI activity using the ATI toolkit available at <http://ATIPartnerships.com>.

### **Organize a Kickoff Event**

To garner community-wide attention, organize a walk or run culminating in a rally featuring presentations from community leaders on the importance of preventing drug use before it begins.

### **Engage the Business Community**

Work to educate business leaders in your community on substance abuse issues. Distribute prevention materials geared to the workplace and offer to help them sponsor a “lunch ‘n’ learn” for employees by recommending local experts able to speak about various topics including prescription drug abuse, drugged driving, marijuana use and/or underage drinking.

### **Create a Prevention Web Page**

On your website, create a special page promoting National Substance Abuse Prevention Month that includes a downloadable copy of the Presidential Proclamation and a link to ONDCP’s prevention page at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/prevention-intro>.

### **Utilize Social Media**

Post information about substance abuse and initiate discussions, media feeds, and open forums about prevention on your coalition’s Facebook page and Twitter feed.

### **Organize a Candlelight Vigil**

Host a community candlelight vigil at a public location where community members can gather to honor loved ones who have lost their lives to substance abuse. Partner with organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to help identify possible speakers at these events.

### **Convene a Community Forum**

Make the most of *National Substance Abuse Prevention Month* observance by hosting an educational event, such as a town hall meeting or community forum, about preventing prescription and over-the-counter medicine abuse. For more information, tools, and resources, visit <http://www.PreventRxAbuse.org>.

### **Create Community Public Service Announcements**

Work with community members to create a public service announcement (PSA) about substance abuse prevention, then approach local radio stations or popular websites and ask them to air the PSA.

### **Promote Alternative Activities**

Sports, art, and other healthy and fun activities such as a substance-free tailgate before a school football game or a safe homecoming after-party in a community center or gymnasium are great ways to deter youth from substance use and other risky behaviors.

### **Map Your Community's Story**

Get youth and/or adult members of your coalition to engage in a mapping activity to describe your community's biggest areas of concern. For example, map all of the alcohol outlets or stores that sell drug paraphernalia in your community, or map the local alcohol- and drug-related crime "hot spots." For more information on mapping, visit: <http://mapping.cadca.org>.

### **Target Local Newspapers and Publications**

Issue a news release about *National Substance Abuse Prevention Month* and highlight your coalition's activities planned for the month. Share the press release with local television stations and newspapers, as well as with any newsletters issued through the school district.

### **Recognize Community Leaders**

Honor law enforcement, local elected leaders, school partners, parents, youth, and business partners for their sacrifice and commitment to substance abuse prevention by issuing certificates of appreciation at local events throughout the month.

### **Engage Faith Communities**

Ask your partners in the faith community to make substance abuse prevention a topic of discussion throughout October, particularly in youth educational settings.

### **Share Information About Your Activities and Experiences**

Compile a blog about your coalition's efforts during *National Substance Abuse Prevention Month* and send to ONDCP for posting on its web site during October. Blog submissions should be addressed to Jamila Robinson at [jrobinson@ondcp.eop.gov](mailto:jrobinson@ondcp.eop.gov).