

Many resources available to help those with alcohol addiction problems

Alcoholism has touched nearly every family. There are some 14 million Americans currently battling alcohol addiction, which can lead to breakdown of the family, job loss, stress, anger, depression and life-threatening illness.

Alcoholism is a disease that, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, includes four symptoms: craving, loss of control, physical dependence and tolerance. Alcoholics are compelled to drink. They are unable to limit their drinking on any given occasion, and when not drinking they suffer from withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, sweating, shakiness and anxiety.

Alcoholics need to drink continually greater amounts of alcohol in order to get high.

Although some people are able to recover from alcoholism without help, the majority of alcoholics need assistance. With treatment and support, many individuals are able to stop drinking and rebuild their lives.

What are the signs of alcoholism?

According to the NIAAA, the questions that an alcoholic must answer are:

Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?

Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?

Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?

Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning (as an "eye opener") to steady your nerves or

get rid of a hangover?

Answering just one "yes" suggests a possible alcohol problem. Anyone who answered "yes" to more than one question is highly likely to be suffering from alcoholism.

The NIAAA suggests that in either case, the person should see a doctor or other health care provider right away to discuss the answers to these questions. The doctor can help determine whether someone has a drinking problem and, if so, recommend the best course of action.

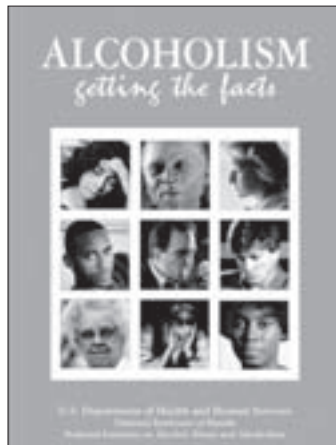
What resources are available in our area?

The state Department of Mental Health Retardation and Hospitals lists several agencies that can help people with alcohol and other addiction issues.

For detoxification, the MHRH lists SSTAR in North Kingstown as a 30-bed residential facility that provides rehabilitation services. The number is 294-0419 or 1-800-RI-SOBER.

For outpatient counseling, the MHRH lists CODAC III in Newport at 846-4150, Child and Family Services of Newport County at 849-2300, Newport County Community Mental Health Center at 846-1213, and Meadows Edge Recovery Center in North Kingstown at 294-7240. For a complete list of services, visit the Web site at http://www.mhrh.state.ri.us/bh_sa_agencylist.htm.

Alcoholics Anonymous has meetings virtually every day in Jamestown and area communities.



In Jamestown, AA meets on Sundays at St. Matthew's church at 4:30 p.m., Tuesdays at St. Matthew's at 5:15 p.m.; Wednesdays, at the PAC, 7 a.m.; Thursdays at St. Matthew's at 5:30 p.m.; and Fridays at St. Matthew's at 5 p.m.

Alanon, for family and friends of people with drinking problems, meets Mondays at the PAC at 6 p.m.

What are the consequences when alcoholism is left untreated?

Alcohol related illnesses can be life threatening. Heavy drinking can increase the risk for cancers, especially of the throat, larynx, esophagus and liver. Alcoholism can also cause cirrhosis of the liver, immune system disorders, brain damage and damage to the fetus during pregnancy.

Deaths related to automobile crashes, on-the-job injuries and recreational injuries are greatly increased during heavy drinking, according to the NIAAA.

The NIAAA has published a 14-page booklet called "Alcoholism: Getting the Facts," which is available to download free from its Web site at www.niaaa.nih.gov/.



Bluenose II

Tall ships committee nears attendance goals

Organizers announced this week that more exciting ships have committed to Tall Ships Rhode Island 2007, which is shaping up to be the largest contingent of tall ships in Newport since 1976. The additional 13 ships brings the total of tall ships participating in the summer 2007 festival to 17, well within reach of the organization's goal of 25.

The newest participants include: Bowdoin, from Castine, Maine; Fair Jeanne, from Canada; Friendship from Salem, Mass.; Godspeed, from Jamestown, Va.; Picton Castle, from New Zealand; Harvey Gamage, from Watch Hill, and Providence, from the state capital. Also scheduled to participate are Royaliste, from San Francisco; Sorlandet, from Norway; Spirit of Bermuda, from Bermuda, Spirit of Boston, from Boston; Virginia, from Norfolk, Va.; Urania, from the Netherlands; Bluenose II from Canada; Cisne Branco, from Brazil; Gorch Fock II, from Germany; and Taragini, from India.

In an international celebration of sail training and sea education, the tall ships will arrive in Newport the week before the Fourth of July holiday on June 27, 2007 and remain until July 1, 2007 at several locations along Newport Harbor. The extensive festivities are expected to attract more than 200,000 visitors to Newport during the five-day festival. The event will be capped by a majestic Parade of Sail, which is expected to draw more than 250,000 people throughout Narragansett Bay and the coastline.



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