

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

When many people think of alcohol abusers, they picture teenagers sneaking drinks before high school football games or at unsupervised parties. However, alcohol abuse is prevalent within many demographic groups in the United States. People who abuse alcohol can be:

- College students who binge drink at local bars.
- Pregnant women who drink and put their babies at risk for fetal alcohol syndrome.
- Professionals who drink after a long day of work.
- Senior citizens who drink out of loneliness.

In 2003, almost 23 percent (54 million) of Americans participated in binge drinking within 30 days prior to taking SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) . That same year, approximately 21.6 million adults abused alcohol or were alcohol dependent.

To recognize the serious problem of alcohol abuse, April is designated "Alcohol Awareness Month." April 8 marks the annual observance of National Alcohol Screening Day (NASD) . At locations across the United States, people can be screened—anonynously—to see if their drinking habits may be risky.

Participants who come into a screening site on April 8 will have the opportunity to view an educational presentation and pick up educational materials, such as a questionnaire that screens for risky drinking and dependence. People can also meet one-on-one with a health professional to discuss any concerns. The screenings are free and anonymous.

Last year, more than 203,000 people participated in NASD activities at more than 5,400 screening sites nationwide—the largest NASD yet!

If you suspect that you might have a drinking problem, or you know someone who abuses alcohol, please contact SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI) at 1-800-729-6686 or find a screening site located near you.

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?

Source: How to Cut Down on Your Drinking

April 7th is National Alcohol Screening Day, find a screening site near you