



The Science of the Positive

“The Positive is the spirit of hope and community that we all share in the knowledge that, irrespective of our temporary conditions, we can better ourselves, our cultures and the world.” Jeff Linkenbach, Ed.D., Director of [“Most of Us”](#)

The staff of 21 Reasons and the Casco Bay CAN Coalition recently attended Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration’s (SAMHSA) Drug Free Communities New Grantee conference, and heard a presentation by Jeff Linkenbach, who coined the concept of “the Science of the Positive” and has created an effective social marketing campaign in Montana aimed at underage drinking and driving, tobacco use, and seatbelt wearing. In his keynote, Dr. Lickenbach provided **Seven Core Actions** that can help us embody his message:

- Be positive
- Be present
- Be perceptive
- Be purposeful
- Be perfected
- Be proactive
- Be passionate

When talking about underage drinking, or any other social/public health issue, how often do we focus our statistics on the negative? 30% of 12th graders report drinking in the past 30 days 41% of high school students admit to lying to the parents on occasion about where they are going. What difference might it make to reframe these statements in the positive? 70% of 12th graders did not drink alcohol in the past 30 days or 59% of high school students are honest with their parents? The fact is that often we believe that others are engaging in dangerous or unhealthy behaviors at a much higher rate than they actually are. Teenagers are no exception, overestimating the number and percentage of their peers who are using alcohol, drugs, or tobacco. And since we’re more likely to engage in a behavior if we think “everyone else is doing it”, these misperceptions can be harmful.

Let’s take full advantage of the peer pressure that is such a part of our young people’s lives and let them know that MOST of their peers are choosing not to drink or smoke!

Positively yours,

Linda, Jo, Carol, Sarah, and Erica

Legislative Breakfast Postponed

In order to allow for maximum participation in this event, we are postponing our Policy Maker's Breakfast (originally scheduled for January 14th) to a future date. Our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause. We will be considering alternative dates and sending new invitations within the next few weeks. For more information, contact [Jo Morrissey](#).

We look forward to celebrating with you soon.

2009-10 Community Assessment Released

In October, 21 Reasons Coalition released its [Assessment of the Portland Community Needs and Resources for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention, 2009](#). This assessment gives a snapshot of the current youth substance abuse trends, as well as community strengths, resources and readiness in Portland. The assessment was used as the cornerstone for our 2015 Strategic Plan.

The assessment relied on both quantitative and qualitative data, including the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Survey 2004-08, parent phone surveys in 2006 and 2008, law enforcement statistics, and interviews of key informants and young adults. Strengths and gaps were identified in several areas, including individual and peer domains, family and community domains (including parental monitoring, law enforcement and access), and Coalition capacity and readiness for change. Root causes are identified under these areas, and were used to guide the development of strategic plan.

On a positive note, the assessment shows underage drinking rates declining as well as parental monitoring increasing. While we still have much work to do, we have much to celebrate as well.

Staff Changes

21 Reasons has had several staff changes in the past month and is excited about building its new team!



First, a fond "*see you 'round.*" . . .After more than six years as director of 21 Reasons, **Erica Schmitz** is moving into a new position at our parent organization, Medical Care Development. Her role will include developing new projects within the Division of Health Improvement. Erica will still be based out of our Portland office, and will also remain involved as lead trainer and consultant for MESAP (Maine's Environmental Substance Abuse Prevention Center). We owe much to

Erica's dedication, talent, and foresight in building 21 Reasons and MESAP to what it is today. Congratulations and good luck in your new role, Erica!

Linda Williams will assume team leadership for the 21 Reasons and Mentoring projects. Linda is the Program Director for Behavioral and Mental Health at MCD. She brings her experience as an Education Specialist and then Prevention Team Manager at the Maine Office of Substance Abuse to her work with 21 Reasons. She also has expertise in the fields of suicide prevention and child abuse prevention.



Carol Swicker joined the team in December as the Project Manager for the STOP Grant, working to reduce youth access to alcohol in Portland, and the Mentor Grant, working with the Gray New Gloucester community to provide support as they build their capacity to apply for their own Drug Free Communities grant. Originally from Portland, Carol spent the last 15 years in Austin, Texas, focusing on developing and managing shelter and housing programs for chronically homeless adults.

Project Assistant **Kelsie Johnston** has left 21 Reasons in December to pursue other opportunities which more closely matched her career goals and dreams. Kelsie contributed both creatively and in organization and systems management, and has been greatly missed. We wish her well in her new endeavors!

However, we are excited to welcome **Sarah Kinsler** to the team as the new Project Assistant. Sarah graduated from Brandeis University with a degree in Health: Science, Society and Policy, and has recently worked for the Census Bureau and Farm & Wilderness Foundation. Sarah will be supporting the work in Portland as well as in Gray-New Gloucester.



Also, while not staff of the 21 Reasons project, we are very pleased to give a warm welcome to **Beth Blakeman-Pohl** as the recently hired Drug-Free Communities coordinator for the newly funded **Casco Bay CAN Coalition**. Mentored by 21 Reasons for the past 2 years, Casco Bay CAN applied for and received their own Drug Free Communities 5 year grant this past fall. The 21 Reasons and the CAN Coalitions continue to communicate regularly to share resources and information.

Welcome aboard, Linda, Carol, Sarah and Beth! Congratulations to all and we look forward to working on expanding the positive work we do.

Upcoming Initiatives

Type Title Here

CTN5 launches "Parenting: A Community Resource"!

What makes a good parent? In a short clip on CTN5's website, several teenagers give us their perspective:

"A good parent is basically a role model."

– Abdul Karim, Age 16

"Understanding, and just being there."

– Nyador Nguany, Age 16

"A good parent in my eyes is someone who loves, cares, gives us privileges but knows when to be disciplined. There for us when we need someone to talk to."



– Demetrius Covington, Age 16

Hosted by our very own Jo Morrissey, “Parenting: A Community Resource” offers parents tips and strategies for approaching common challenges – including connecting with kids, setting boundaries and limits, and resolving conflicts. Current episodes cover these issues and more, reporting on community based-programs which help parents develop the skills they need to succeed, and discussing familiar scenarios with local experts.

CTN partnered with Boys to Men, Center for Grieving Children, Kids’ First, Youth Alternatives/Ingraham, Real Life. Real Talk., LearningWorks, and 21 Reasons to bring this resource to our community.

You can see Jo and the CTN5 Parenting team in action, and view the clip mentioned above, at <http://www.ctn5.org/node/109280>.

To view episodes of “Parenting: A Community Resource”, check out these links:

Episode 1: <http://www.ctn5.org/node/109271>

Episode 2: <http://www.ctn5.org/node/109280>

Table Talks

“Table Talks”

Parents Connecting for Alcohol-Free Youth

We are also proud to announce our partnership with **Portland's Minority Health Program** on this initiative. A Table Talk Facilitator training was held this past Saturday, January 8th, 2011. Facilitators from the Latino and Somali community were trained by 21 Reasons here in

Portland. For additional information on hosting a Table Talk within Portland's Latino or Somali community, please contact Kolawole Bankole, MD, MS at 874-8773 or email him at bak@portlandmaine.gov.

The Table Talks program allows parents to come together to discuss underage drinking in an informal setting. The discussions, usually held in a parent's home, are led by trained facilitators who will share some of the latest research around underage drinking, and will help the parents discuss underage drinking and how to prevent it.

Parents who would like to get involved in Portland should [email Jo Morrissey](#). Parents in the Casco Bay community (Falmouth, Cumberland, Yarmouth, North Yarmouth, Freeport & Pownal) should email [Beth Blakeman-Pohl](#) of the Casco Bay Coalition.

For more info, check out the [Table Talks: Parents Connecting for Alcohol-Free Youth How-to Guide](#).

Chalk it Up Event to Prevention

The power of prevention is in all of us, as was artfully expressed on Friday, October 8th, in Monument Square. Community members, non-profit agencies, city councilors, law enforcement, coalition

members, and staff drew depictions of the many ways we all have a role to play in keeping our youth drug and alcohol free.

Mayor Nicholas Mavodones (right), begins his piece depicting the minimum legal drinking age. Jo Morrissey, Susan Steele, and Suzanne DiBella-Olson (below) ham it up for the camera.



For more images as well as media coverage, click [here](#).

Thank you to everyone who made this event a success!



Responsible Beverage Service Training

21 Reasons and the Casco Bay CAN Coalitions will once again be offering low-cost Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) trainings this spring. There are two training tracks – two for on-premise licensees and two for off-premise licensees. Each track will offer one training for Portland licensees, and one for Casco Bay area licensees.

To register for the Portland trainings, email or call [Carol Swicker](#), (207) 773-7737.

Off-premise Portland Licensees, Tuesday, March 15th, 8:00-12:30

On-premise Portland Licensees, Wednesday, May 4th, 12:30-5:00

To register for the Casco Bay trainings, email or call [Beth Blakeman-Pohl](#), (207)650-5228.

Off-premise Casco Bay region Licensees, Wednesday, April 20th, 8:00-12:30

On-premise Casco Bay region Licensees, Wednesday, May 20th, 12:30-5:00

*Casco Bay region includes Falmouth, Cumberland, Freeport, Pownal, Yarmouth, and North Yarmouth.

The cost for each session is \$5, and pre-registration is required. LOCATIONS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT A LATER DATE.

Topics include how to avoid illegally selling alcohol, State alcohol policies and law, and

how to spot a fake ID. Attendees will receive a state certification, valid for five years. The costs for these trainings is underwritten by a grant from the Healthy Maine Partnerships through the City of Portland. Trainer Frank Lyons of B.C. Consultants brings almost 30 years of experience as a law enforcement officer and Bureau of Liquor Enforcement officer.

Thank you for all of your support this year!

21 Reasons is a project of Medical Care Development, Inc.
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