

Substance Abuse Action Council of Central Connecticut
(A Division of Community Mental Health Affiliates, Inc.)
Advocating for Substance Abuse Prevention, Treatment and Recovery
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAAC/CMHA Sponsoring Free, Positive Parenting Series in Southington

SOUTHINGTON - A series of positive parenting workshops will begin March 12 in Southington. The free, four-part series is sponsored by the Substance Abuse Action Council of Central Connecticut (SAAC), a division of Community Mental Health Affiliates, Inc. (CMHA), in collaboration with the Southington YMCA and Southington Youth Services.

“Children and adolescents face more challenges today than ever,” said SAAC Director Joseph L. LaRosa. “That means parents face a tougher time as well. This series is aimed at increasing parents’ awareness of some recent findings as well as outlining approaches parents can implement to spur positive development of their children. While the series will address substance abuse issues, other mental health and addiction related topics will also be addressed,” Mr. LaRosa added.

A collaborative effort, the workshops will be held at the Southington YMCA. “We are pleased to provide a venue for this series,” said John Myers, Southington YMCA Director. “We understand how much more difficult parenting is today and we hope that Southington parents will take advantage of this opportunity,” Mr. Myers added.

“We are very grateful that SAAC and CMHA are bringing this series to our community,” said Susan Saucier, Southington Director of Youth Services. “This is a wonderful opportunity for parents in our community,” Ms. Saucier added.

The Southington YMCA and CMHA have been collaborating on a Life Skills program at the Southington Y for several months. “We are pleased to play a role in this series,” said Debora Kustron, Ph.D., CMHA Vice President of Child & Family Services.

WORKSHOPS AND FEATURED SPEAKERS

- **March 12: “High-Risk Behaviors in a Development Perspective: Barriers and Opportunities for Interventions”** (Dr. Yifrah Kaminer, University of Connecticut Health Center). Dr. Kaminer is a professor of psychiatry and is co-director of research at the UConn Health Center’s Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Dr. Kaminer’s main interest has been clinical research of assessment and treatment of high-risk behaviors particularly substance abuse, gambling behavior, and suicidal behavior in youth. He has written more than 120 articles on the subject and is the author of several books.
- **March 19: “How Drugs Hurt Your Kids and What are Parents’ Influences Over Their Child’s Decisions”** (CMHA clinician Sue Doyon and LMFT and Prevention Specialist John Daviau, MACP).
- **March 26: “Increasing Protective Factors with a Focus on Technology”** (Ms. Doyon and Mr. Daviau).
- **April 2: “The Roles of Parents and the Community in Deterring Risky Behavior Among Youth”** (Dave Borzellino, LMFT, CMHA’s Substance Abuse Treatment Services, and Mr. Daviau).

A Drug Free Community grant recipient, SAAC reaches out to various sectors of the community throughout its 14-town region with a variety of prevention-oriented information. “We are very fortunate to assemble this extremely knowledgeable group of speakers,” said Mr. LaRosa. “We hope parents will take advantage of this opportunity to increase their awareness of Dr. Kaminer’s findings as well as the variety of issues that will be covered in the series.

The series is free, however those planning to attend are asked to register at 860-589-4520.

Formed in 1989, SAAC is a partnership of community members from 14 municipalities, Barkhamsted, Berlin, Bristol, Burlington, Colebrook, Harwinton, New Britain, New Hartford, Norfolk, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington, Torrington, and Winchester. With the goal of eliminating substance abuse in central Connecticut, SAAC advocates on behalf of substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery. In 2007, SAAC merged with Community Mental Health Affiliates, Inc. (CMHA). For more information about SAAC, log onto www.saacct.org.

Community Mental Health Affiliates, Inc., (CMHA) is a private non-profit provider of mental health and substance abuse treatment. CMHA is headquartered in New Britain, with 24 locations in 13 cities and towns throughout northwest and central Connecticut. CMHA provides treatment for more than 6,000 children, adolescents and adults each year.