

Celebrating an Addictions Free Lifestyle

During the 3rd week of November (November 16-22, 2008) people all across Canada take time to celebrate their addictions free lifestyle and raise awareness about the impact addictions can have on individuals, families and whole communities. So if you've ever found yourself complaining about crime, violence, impaired driving, work colleagues not pulling their weight on the job due to their addiction, here's a chance to be a part of the solution rather than the problem.

Use *National Addictions Awareness Week (NAAW)* to celebrate your healthy choices. For example, congratulate yourself for following the labels that say do not mix prescription drugs with alcohol. Stick to your plan as an adult or youth to never drink alcohol and drive, regardless of how short a distance you have to go or how unlikely it is that you will be caught. Remind yourself to set a limit on the amount of money you will take to the casino if you choose to gamble. Youth and adults continue to encourage your family or friends who use illegal drugs to quit, and

continue to welcome them to drug-free activities.

Raising awareness is the other purpose of *National Addictions Awareness Week*. There are many helpful websites, resources and organizations that provide information, prevention and treatment services. For example there is Parents Empowering Parents, Bosco Homes, AADAC, Alanon, Alateen, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Problem Gambling Resource Network and many others providing service to our community.

So what special activities are happening during NAAW week?

The Sherwood Park AADAC Office will be sponsoring the following community presentation: *A Daughter's Story: Addiction in the Family*. This is a candid, inside view of a girl's life experience living with an alcoholic Father. This presentation provides information on the impact of alcoholism on the entire family. The presentation will conclude with a discussion on enhancing family resiliency and creating hope. It will

take place on Thursday November 20th from 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM. For more information or to register call Martie at (780 417-7221)

As well some youth from our community have entered the Addictions Free Commercial Contest which closed on



October 31, 2008. Everyone from Alberta who has entered the contest or is interested in viewing the commercials is invited to the *NAAWscars* being hosted at Edmonton's City Hall on Friday November 21st, 2008 (7:00 p.m.). It is free and open to the general public so come out and view the creative and varied ways youth and adults celebrate an addictions free lifestyle and raise addictions awareness. You can be part of the solution.

This article is one of a series by the Strathcona County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Committee addressing information about drug and alcohol issues. In the next article: **Family Stress.**

For a complete listing of resources available, pick up the Drug/Alcohol Resource Directory at the Strathcona County Health Centre located at 2 Brower Drive or at Strathcona County Family and Community Services located at 2755 Broadmoor Boulevard (2nd Floor) in Sherwood Park. The directory is also available on line at . Residents with questions about the strategy can call Strathcona County Family and Community Services at 780-464-4044.