

Alert

Metropolitan Drug Commission

Strengthens Families. Protects Lives.

The Metropolitan Drug Commission announces 2008-2009 Youth Action Council

Twenty-six students from 15 Knox County schools will serve on the Metropolitan Drug Commission's Youth Action Council for the 2008-2009 term. Charged with representing the ideas and concerns of local teens, the YAC works to provide opportunities for youth to engage in government and community service.

Each spring, students are selected from among all schools in Knox County, both public and private, for this special honor. In addition to providing a youth perspective to numerous organizations such as the Knoxville Area Chamber Partnership and Cornerstone Foundation of Knoxville throughout the year, the YAC is responsible for planning the Knoxville Youth Summit, engaging over 200 teens annually. Since its inception in 2004, the Youth Action Council has mobilized over 1,100 teens in more than 3,000 hours of service to the community.

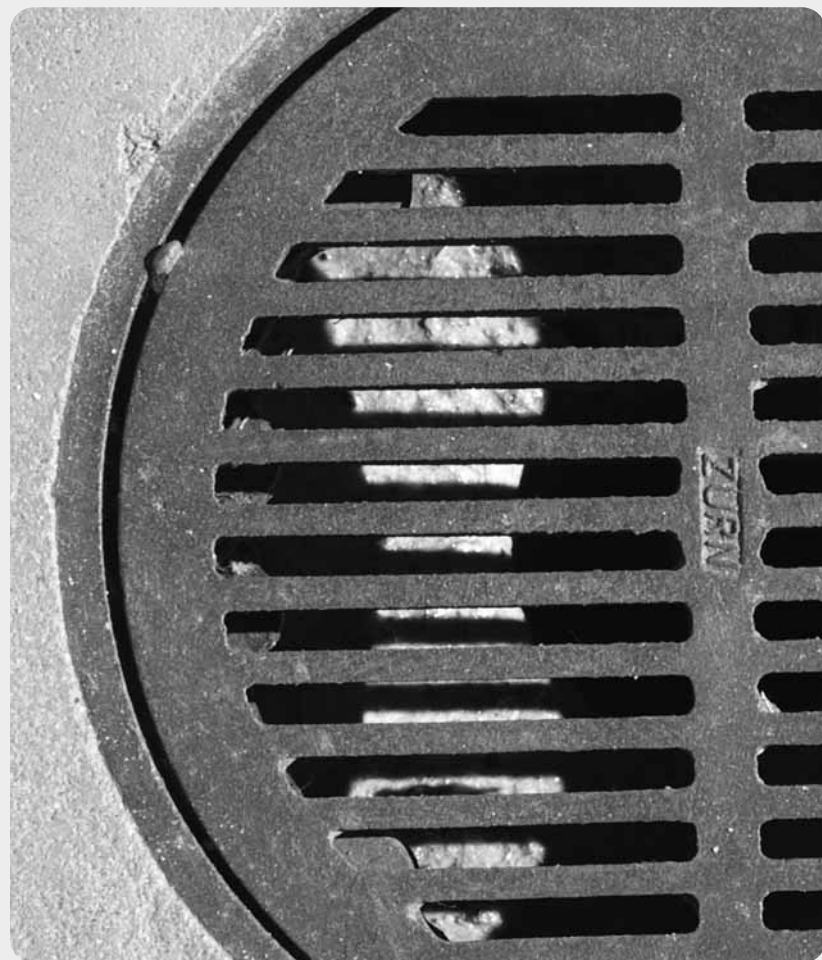
The YAC is unique in that priorities for the council are determined by the young people involved and all projects are completely coordinated by youth, for youth. The class of 2009 hopes to continue efforts to engage youth to take responsibility for a better future by (1) hosting a Youth Summit focused on improving schools; (2) establishing a system by which students can evaluate and make suggestions regarding class offerings and; (3) recognizing teens and businesses for outstanding community involvement, youth outreach and workforce development.

Special thanks to Cornerstone Foundation for their support of the 2008-2009 Youth Action Council!



Front Row (L to R): Sean Zhong, Hardin Valley Academy; **Tyler Simmons**, Austin-East Magnet High School; **Michaelan Moore**, Webb School of Knoxville; **Devin Harvey**, Powell High School; **Kristyn Kelly**, Webb School of Knoxville; **Charlise Holland**, Austin-East Magnet High School; **Christie Estes**, Gibbs High School; **Eliza Rowcliffe**, Hardin Valley Academy; **Back Row (L to R): Chris Holloway**, Carter High School; **Patrick Graham**, Farragut High School; **Zach Saunders**, Farragut High School; **Carrie Cox**, West High School; **Jer'Mykeal McCoy**, Bearden High School; **Evangeline Mee**, West High School; **Max Waibel**, Farragut High School; **Truman Melton**, South Doyle High School; **Sam Goddard**, Central High School; **Dashena "Pinky" Ford**, Austin-East Magnet High School; **Jay Jay Johnson**, Fulton High School; **Amber Miller**, Fulton High School; **Will Kronick**, West High School; **Chris Hickman**, South Doyle High School; **Not pictured: Mackenzie Hocke**, Karns High School; **Caroline Neal**, Karns High School; **Carol Ann Routh**, Central High School; **Amy Yoder**, Catholic High School.

SEWAGE: The next-generation drug test?



"Scientists are now using wastewater to drug-test entire cities, and the results are sobering." In a recent article in *Popular Science* (March 2008), Jorg Rieckermann, an environmental engineer, introduces the world to his pioneering new field of sewer epidemiology.

While controversial, Rieckermann's goal is to provide truly objective estimates of illegal-drug consumption at the city level. He is developing a mathematical model of community drug use based on levels of drug by-products detected in sewage. *One teaspoon of sewage is enough to drug test an entire city.*

What do the data tell us?

If a community set out on a campaign to reduce use of a particular drug, inexpensive tests could gauge levels of that drug in wastewater at two different points in time to see if the campaign is making a difference in use in the community. If Law Enforcement wanted to see if increased enforcement was reducing consumption, a couple quick tests could provide evidence immediately.

Conducting a urinalysis on an entire city could be much less expensive and time-consuming than conducting prevalence surveys and would provide "real-time" data. Tests conducted at different times throughout the week show constant levels of drugs like methamphetamine that are highly addictive. Tests also show more dynamic levels of drugs which are used recreationally (however, still have a risk of dependency), indicated by spikes on the weekends.

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Metropolitan Drug Commission launches new website



The Metropolitan Drug Commission is thrilled to announce its newly re-designed website www.metrodrug.org. Content areas with valuable resources include:

Find Treatment

A comprehensive listing of local and regional treatment services.

Alcohol and Drug Screening

Offers individuals the ability to confidentially assess their own alcohol and/or drug consumption patterns.

Drug Information

Fast facts about various substances that include street names, usage, long-term effects and warning signs.

Local Statistics

The *Community Statsbook* offers facts, figures and other data regarding alcohol and other drugs in the Knoxville area.

Drug-Free Workplace

Information on establishing or maintaining a Drug-Free workplace, as well as employer/employee trainings.

Youth Initiatives

Highlights include information on the Youth Action Council, PRIDE Teams, alternative school outreach and KnoxTeenSource.com.

Parents Page

Printable conversation cards, fun family activities and warning signs of teen alcohol and other drug abuse.

Prevention Curricula

Hands-on tools and resources for teachers, businesses and members of the faith community.

Visit www.metrodrug.org today!

METROPOLITAN DRUG COMMISSION
COMMITTED TO REDUCING YOUTH USE AND ADULT ABUSE OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Stengthens Families. Protects Lives.

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Many thanks to the following supporters of our membership campaign:

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“SEWAGE: The next-generation drug test?” *cont from page 1*

What is the catch?

No city wants to be touted as the “cocaine capital of the world,” and likely, many would argue the test is an invasion of privacy; however, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) spends roughly \$40 million per year on the National Survey of Drug Use and Health—a survey subjective to the honesty of the respondents.

Community-wide urinalysis tests would provide immediate, reliable results at a fraction of the cost. While the idea seems ingenious, it is not without bias. Assumptions would have to be made to constitute the average dose; how often people urinate; and who, other than community residents, are contributing to the sample.

Drugs have far-reaching effects

Based on field research from 2005 in Italy, when testing for benzoylecgonine (the main by-product of cocaine), researchers surmised cocaine use was actually double the official estimates reported in drug surveys. Often, habitual users of high-risk drugs are suspected to underreport use.

Community drug use, as we know, has ramifications, but perhaps more so than we thought before. According to Christian Daughton, chief of environmental chemistry at the Environmental Protection Agency, “chemicals are chemicals, and whether they come from bug spray or dime bags, they affect the environment.”

The life of a drug persists long after it is ingested by humans. Environmentalists share a concern that these drugs and drug by-products end up with marine life and in drinking water.

What is in a drop of sewage?

- *Water*
Accounts for 95% of sewage
- *Germs*
Feces contain bacteria and viruses such as *E. coli*, strep, and hepatitis.
- *Prescription Drugs*
Hospitals, pharmacies, physicians, and patients dispose of medications down the drain.
- *Illegal Drugs*
Scientists can test for about 20 illicit substances in sewage.
- *Pesticides*
Agricultural runoff and improper disposal send pesticides into sewage.
- *Industrial Waste*
Toxic waste from factories, like paper mills add to the mix. Paper pulp alone contains between 250 and 300 chemicals.
- *Toiletries*
Chemical residue from the products we use everyday.
- *Solid Waste*
Needles, condoms, diapers, dead animals, and a host of other contaminants appear in sewage.

Regardless of how we test for drug use, the answer is clear: America has a serious drug problem. In 2006, according to SAMHSA, there were 20.4 million Americans (aged 12 or older) who were illicit drug users.

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Baby boomers continue recreational drug use in senior years

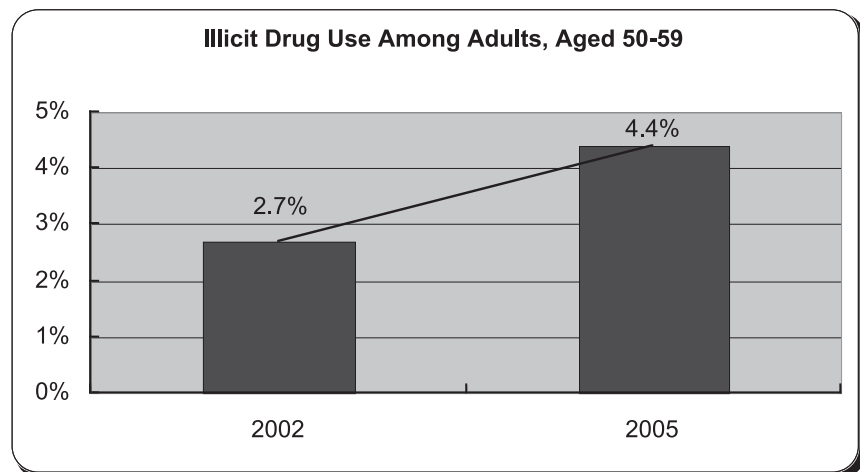
One-third of the U.S. population was born during the Baby Boom — the years 1946 to 1964 — and many Boomers grew up using drugs and may be continuing to do so, *Scientific American* reported in May.

Researchers from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) cast doubt on the theory that these lifelong recreational drug users will “age out” of use of marijuana or other substances as they get older. For example, hospitals reported that cocaine mentions at emergency rooms rose 240 percent among people ages 55 and older between 1995 and 2002, while heroin mentions rose 160 percent, marijuana mentions rose 467 percent, and amphetamine mentions rose 700 percent.

Moreover, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that illicit drug use among people ages 50-59 rose from 2.7 percent in 2002 to 4.4 percent in 2005.

Experts say that the trends may be related to the fact that people are living longer but also holding on to the drug-use habits of their youth. They worry, however, that drug use could have serious effects on brain function among older Americans and that drug users could face other health consequences as their metabolism slows with age. Interaction with prescription drugs also is a hazard.

The NIDA research appears in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology*.



National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Illicit Drug Use Among Adults Ages 50-59.

Test your Alcohol I.Q.



As a strategy to combat alcohol problems among teenagers in the United States, there are some who believe the legal drinking age should be lowered from 21 to 16, or even younger. They argue that European nations have fewer problems with a younger drinking age when kids can learn to drink at home under parental supervision. How do underage drinking problems in Europe compare with this in America?

- (A) There are fewer problems in European nations.
- (B) The problems in Europe are about the same as in America.
- (C) Europeans have more teenage drinking problems that in America.

It is a myth that European kids are more moderate, and responsible in consuming alcohol than are their American counterparts. A recent survey of youths ages 15-16 from 35 European nations showed that every nation except Turkey had a higher rate of binge drinking for teens than that of the United States. *The correct response is (c).*

One-to-one mentoring reduces use of drugs among at-risk children

One hundred and eighty children stand on the precipice. Children who have asked for a positive adult role model and friend – a Big Brother – to help them navigate the rocky waters of youth. But they are waiting. They are waiting on a list at Big Brothers Big Sisters of East Tennessee in Knoxville because more male volunteers are needed to come forward and serve as one-to-one mentors. Not heroes, not saints, but everyday guys with real life experience willing to let one child know they care.

It is simple—play basketball, read a book, wash the car, play a video game, grab a pizza—but it is also profound and the results are very real. Through sharing fun, every day activities, a trust is built that gives at-risk children an extra edge—the knowledge that someone who doesn’t have to care does; the knowledge that they have somewhere to turn besides drugs, alcohol or the streets. A child with a Big Brother or Big sister is:

- 52% less likely to skip school
- 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- 33% less likely to be violent
- 27% less likely to begin using alcohol as a minor

All it takes is a few hours several times a month. To get started you will need to attend a one-hour orientation session. Sessions are held weekly at the Big Brothers Big Sisters office - morning, noon and night to fit your schedule. Call (865) 523-2179 x17 or info@bbbsetn.org. Once you have attended orientation and decided this is the program for you, there will be an interview, reference checks and a background check.

Membership Drive Update

Many thanks to the following businesses for their support of the membership campaign:

Knoxville News Sentinel
Home Federal Bank
Haslam Family Foundation
Denark Construction
21st Century Mortgage
Goody's
Weigel's
B & T Distributing
Holrob Commercial Realty
Cherokee Health Systems

To make a tax deductible donation to support our youth initiatives, call (865) 588-0963.

Thank You!

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE for information about starting or maintaining a Drug-free Workplace Program; parent resources; treatment options; general drug descriptions, including warning signs and effects; and local and national research about drug use.

www.metrodrug.org

This project is funded under an agreement with TCCY



Announcements

The **Symposium for the Advancement of Family Therapy** will present NEUROBIOLOGY and the FAMILY, presented by Marcia Stern, PsyD, on October 13-14, 2008 at the Airport Hilton. Twelve credit hours will be given and the cost is \$195/\$210. For more information, please call Margaret Fuqua at (865) 688-0163.

Canvas Can Do Miracles

The grand opening for a new art studio aimed at helping those who suffer from substance abuse took place last month at the Literacy Imperative. The "Canvas Can Do Miracles Studio" is an outreach ministry of the Literacy Imperative, a faith-based not-for-profit entity that promotes literacy in economically disadvantaged communities.

The studio offers individuals entangled in a life of substance abuse a motivating atmosphere to create art work free of charge. The studio specializes in assisting individuals in redirecting their focus and encouraging them to change their desires from unhealthy habits to sharpening the talents they already have. Classes offered include: art training, art history and motivation.

The studio is located at the Literacy Imperative, 201 Harriet Tubman St., Knoxville, TN 37915. For more information, call (865) 673-8988.

MDC in Action

From May 1 to June 30, 2008, the MDC serviced the community by providing:

- 71 Treatment Referrals
- 208 Prevention Materials & Resources

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To submit an announcement or article to the Metropolitan Drug Commission's **ALERT**, please call (865) 588-5550.



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