



Catalyst for positive community
change in Johnson County, Kansas



Executive Summary - Substance Abuse Planning Report Drug and Alcoholism Council of Johnson County

The Drug and Alcoholism Council of Johnson County's (DAC) substance abuse research report and priorities for action emerged from a planning process committed to addressing substance abuse needs in Johnson County. The DAC, a program of United Community Services of Johnson County (UCS), is a team of representatives from the jurisdictions served and other qualified and interested volunteers who are committed to reducing alcohol and other drug problems by promoting, supporting, and advocating for the full continuum of care – prevention, education, intervention, treatment and recovery – for residents of Johnson County. Its primary activity is making recommendations to cities and County government on the allocations of local Alcohol Tax Fund for substance abuse prevention and treatment programs.

In 2009, data was collected from local, state and national sources regarding substance abuse among youth and adults in Johnson County. Additionally, the perspectives of youth, adults, prevention professionals, treatment providers, and other human service providers was sought and compiled. Staff from UCS and DAC subcommittee members worked together to create the priorities for the Council.

Key facts emerging from this report:

1. Nationally, **only 17 percent of the 23.1 million people age 12 and over with an illicit drug or alcohol problem received treatment in 2008.** Ten percent of those received treatment in a specialty facility focused on substance abuse and seven percent through a non-specialty course of treatment.
2. **Two thirds of the people entering substance abuse treatment programs also have a co-occurring mental health problem.** Attention deficit and conduct disorders were most common for youth, anxiety and depression in adults.
3. **In 2005 Kansas spent \$1.2 billion on substance abuse and related issues which is 17 percent of the state's total budget,** but only 1.5 percent went towards treatment, prevention and research. Most of these costs reflected spending in the justice, education, health, and child welfare systems.
4. The Communities That Care survey found that in 2009 **one out of three high school seniors in the county reported having binged (consuming over 5 alcoholic drinks in a single sitting) in the past two weeks prior to the survey.** This level has been relatively stable since 1995.
5. **Only five percent (2 out of 37) of substance abuse treatment facilities in Johnson County provide treatment services in Spanish** which is very limited service to a population that grew 81 percent from 2000 to 2008.
6. National studies on substance abuse tell us that **there is \$7 of benefits for every \$1 of care and \$10 of benefits for every \$1 spent on prevention – both are cost effective investments.**

Responding with Future Priorities and Actions:

Future DAC recommendations for Alcohol Tax Funding will prioritize programs and services that are evidence-based and show clear efficacy with their targeted populations. Prevention programs and treatment services that are likely to receive favorable consideration include:

1. Interventions targeting youth that impact positive social skills and enhance interpersonal relationships, promote healthy beliefs and **clear standards for self and choices related to substance abuse.**
2. Interventions targeting schools that **promote students' academic success and commitment to school,** and reinforce students' positive contributions and efforts in school and school-sponsored settings.
3. Interventions **targeting parents/families that impact attitudes** toward substance abuse and problem behaviors, their own history with substances, and conflict and communication.
4. Interventions targeting law enforcement and the broader community that **impact the availability of alcohol and other substances in the community,** affect community norms related to substance abuse and its impact, establish common protocols for handling substance abuse related violations, reinforce and recognize positive contributions by youth.
5. Treatment interventions that **are evidence-based and clearly implement principles and practices that enhance the intervention's effectiveness and the client's ability to stop using and avoid relapse.** Treatment must be readily accessible, adequate and appropriate.

Priorities for system improvement to reduce current and future substance abuse include:

1. The **increased capacity for substance abuse treatment to be delivered in Johnson County by bilingual/ bicultural service providers.** Future DAC recommendations may reflect this priority to serve a growing population, although current budget restrictions make it unlikely in 2011.
2. The **increased capacity to provide integrated treatment in Johnson County to those with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health issues.** This would require the expansion of a workforce with both mental health and substance abuse credentials. Again, future DAC recommendations may reflect this priority to serve a growing population, although current budget restrictions make it unlikely in 2011.
3. The **implementation of evidence-based community-wide policies and practices shown to reduce alcohol consumption and misuse** among youth and adults, examples of which are increasing alcohol taxes, regulating the density of alcohol outlets, and enhancing enforcement of laws prohibiting sales to minors.

In the future, requests for Alcohol Tax Funding proposals, grant review, scoring and ranking criteria will reflect the priorities identified above. **Additionally,** the DAC will consider taking specific actions consistent with identified priorities to promote, support, and advocate for the full continuum of care – prevention, education, intervention, treatment and recovery - for all Johnson County residents.

The full report is available for you to download free of charge at ucsjoco.org. You may direct any questions or comments to Valorie Carson, Community Planning Director, at valoriec@ucsjoco.org.

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