

**John R. Kasich**, Governor  
**Mary Taylor**, Lieutenant Governor  
**Orman Hall**, Director

## April is Alcohol Awareness Month in Ohio

(COLUMBUS, OH – March 30, 2012) One in every 13 adults suffers from alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence. Millions more drink in ways that can place themselves or others at risk. To help people recognize the signs of an alcohol problem and, in turn, seek help, the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) is calling upon Ohioans to join with it in observing April as “Alcohol Awareness Month.”

“Alcohol Awareness Month was created to raise overall awareness and increase knowledge about alcohol abuse and alcoholism; a serious, yet treatable disease; especially for those under age 21,” said ODADAS Director Orman Hall. “Underage drinking and alcoholism exact a devastating toll on Ohio families and communities. The good news is help is available, and we know that treatment works, and people recover every day to live productive lives in the community.”

While the state’s opiate epidemic has dominated headlines, alcohol remains one of the state’s most serious public health issues. In fact, alcohol ranks as the most commonly abused drug among adults and youth in Ohio. In 2011, 30 percent of all clients in publicly-funded treatment programs listed alcohol as their primary drug of abuse.

For healthy adults, the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA) uses the following guidelines to identify "at-risk" or "heavy" drinking:

- **Men:** More than 4 drinks on any day, or 14 per week
- **Women:** More than 3 drinks on any day, or 7 per week

About 1 in 4 people who exceed these limits already has alcoholism or alcohol abuse, and the rest are at greater risk for developing these and other problems, according to NIAAA. Individual risks vary, and people can have problems drinking less than these amounts, particularly if they drink too quickly.

If you are worried that alcohol may be harming your health or that your drinking patterns are putting you at risk, help is available. [Alcoholscreening.org](http://Alcoholscreening.org) offers a free online screening tool and treatment locator to help visitors find help in their community. Ohio residents can also get help or more information by calling ODADAS’ toll-free helpline: 1-800-788-7254 or contacting their county Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS)/Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ADAS) Board.

Meanwhile, with prom and graduation season just around the corner, prevention experts agree there is no better time than now for parents to continue having conversations with their children around the risks and consequences of underage drinking. Seventy-six (76) percent of Ohio

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students in grades 9-12 have consumed alcohol at least once, according to the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, a leading national alcohol policy and research organization. Moreover, underage drinking accounts for 21 percent of all alcohol consumption in the state. These facts underscore the need for frequent, open conversations, Hall explained.

“Kids who learn a lot about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs at home are 50 percent less likely to ever try them in the first place,” said Hall. “It is illegal, unsafe and unhealthy for anyone under 21 to drink alcohol. That’s why we urge parents to start talking, before children start using.”

For more information about Alcohol Awareness Month, alcoholism and alcohol abuse, visit: The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. web site <http://www.ncadd.org/>, NIAAA [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)., portal of federal underage drinking resources: [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov) and [www.drugfreeactionalliance.org](http://www.drugfreeactionalliance.org).

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***NOTE TO EDITORS: For county-specific prevalence data, visit the State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) section of the ODADAS web site:***  
***<http://www.ada.ohio.gov/seow/Counties.aspx>***

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