
The Ontario Health, Education and Enforcement in Partnership (HEP) Network

April 2008

The HEP Network

- The Health, Education and Enforcement in Partnership (HEP) Network brings together over 30 provincial government and non-government organizations.
- **Our objective:** a comprehensive, coordinated approach to address harmful alcohol and other drug use in Ontario.

Harmful Alcohol and Drug Use in Ontario: A BIG Problem

■ Financial cost:

- In 2002, over 8 billion dollars in health, policing, corrections and lost productivity in Ontario (2007 study)

■ Human cost:

- Over 1000 deaths from injury involving alcohol (2002)
- Alcohol and other drugs involved in over 50% of all crimes in Ontario (2002)
- In 2005/06, almost 70,000 Ontarians were in treatment for substance-related problems

Harmful Alcohol & Drug Use: Widespread in Ontario

High school students (grade 7-12):

- 62% report using alcohol & 30% of those who use alcohol, drink at hazardous levels (5 or more drinks per occasion in last 4 weeks)
- 20% report driving under the influence of cannabis.
- 21% report using prescription opioid pain relievers TYLENOL[®]No. 3 and Percocet[®] for non-medical purposes; (almost 72% report obtaining the drugs from home).

Adults:

- 32% of adults report drinking alcohol at levels exceeding the low-risk drinking guidelines.

Purpose: to develop an Ontario Drug Strategy that...

- Promotes a coordinated and balanced approach to health and safety.
- Embraces a multi-sector perspective on preventing and addressing the range of harms associated with alcohol and other drugs.
- Provides a common frame-of-reference when deciding on provincial priorities.

...and is based on a “four pillar” approach that includes:

- Health promotion/prevention
- Treatment
- Harm reduction
- Enforcement

Key Elements: of an Ontario Drug Strategy

1. Building a supportive infrastructure

Examples include:

- Provincial office to coordinate implementation
- Improved access to treatment
- Collaborative research and evaluation
- Healthy public policies

Key Elements: of an Ontario Drug Strategy

2. Preventing injury, chronic and infectious diseases, addiction & crime

Examples include:

- Increased enforcement of alcohol-related legislation
- Coordinated efforts to address diversion of pharmaceutical products
- Addressing alcohol-related violence

Key Elements: of an Ontario Drug Strategy

3. Addressing the unique needs of diverse populations

Examples include:

- Addressing high rates of binge-drinking by youth and young adults
- Training addiction treatment and mental health workers on concurrent disorders

For more information, contact:

Reggie Caverson

Ontario HEP Coordinator

Senior Health Promotion Consultant,

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)

Phone: (705) 675-1195

Fax: (705) 675-9121

Email: reggie_caverson@camh.net

http://www.camh.net/Public_policy/index.html