

F A L L 2 0 1 3

# Prevention for Putnam

Putnam County Communities That Care Coalition

## “Fall” into Prevention with Family Dinners

Having a consistent family dinner is more important than we may realize. Teens that have infrequent family dinners are likelier to smoke, drink, and use marijuana according to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA Columbia). CASA has been surveying teens for eighteen years.

According to CASA Columbia's report The Importance of Family Dinners VII, compared to teens who have frequent family dinners (five to seven per week), those who have infrequent family dinners (fewer than three per week) are:

- Almost four times likelier to use tobacco
- More than twice as likely to use alcohol
- Two-and-a-half times likelier to use marijuana

Having frequent family dinners also encourages healthy family relationships. According to the report, teens that have dinner with their families consistently are:

- One-and-a-half times likelier to report having an excellent relationship with their mother;
- More than twice as likely to report having an excellent relationship with their father; and
- Almost twice as likely to report having an excellent relationship with their sibling(s).

“Family meals are the perfect time to have a conversation with your teen. It affords you the opportunity to spend time with your child, talk to them about their friends, interests and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Parental engagement is the key, as this study proves.” said Joseph DeMarzo, Coalition Co-Chairperson.

The study also states that teens that have infrequent family dinners have more access to alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs (to get high) than teens who have consistent family dinners with their parents and siblings.

“Having meals, even if they are on the go, with your child gives parents the opportunity to answer questions and recognize that they (the parent) have the power to help keep their children substance free. This is a very powerful study, and the best thing about it is that family dinners are an actionable goal for parents and teens to achieve. It's not always easy because of busy schedules, but it is doable”, stated Kristin McConnell, Coalition Co-Chairperson.

For a FREE Family Dinner Kit please visit:  
<http://casafamilyday.org/familyday/tools-you-can-use/family-dinner-kit/>



### Coalition Chairpersons:

Joseph A. DeMarzo  
Kristin E. McConnell

### Newsletter Editor/Coalition Coordinator

Elaine Santos

### Meetings:

Putnam County CTC Coalition  
Carmel Committee  
Mahopac Committee  
Putnam Valley Committee

### Contact:

1717 Route Six, Suite 201  
Carmel, NY 10512

[www.putnamncadd.org/ctc.html](http://www.putnamncadd.org/ctc.html)

845.225.4646 ext. 13

Email for more information on the  
Putnam CTC Coalition at  
[putnamdfcgrantee@gmail.com](mailto:putnamdfcgrantee@gmail.com)

Like us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Visit us on [Blogger](#)

# Staying Safe this Halloween



**The scariest part of Halloween isn't the spooky costumes and scary pranks; it's alcohol-impaired drivers. If you think about driving drunk this Halloween, the Putnam County Communities That Care Coalition has a message for you: keep the party off the road. Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.**

Nationwide, Halloween is a particularly deadly night due to the high number of drunk drivers on the roads. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2011, when Halloween fell on a Monday, 44 percent of the nation's fatalities during the Halloween weekend<sup>1</sup> occurred in a crash involving a driver or a motorcycle operator with a

blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher. Thirty-eight percent of fatalities on Halloween night<sup>1</sup> occurred in a crash involving a driver or a motorcycle operator with a BAC of .08 or higher. Some more facts:

- From 2007-2011, 172 people, or 52% of all national fatalities occurring on Halloween night lost their lives in a drunk driving-related crash.
- Young men are particularly at risk of being involved in a traffic crash as a result of "buzzed" or drunk driving. Males ages 21-34 comprised almost half of all drunk drivers who were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes nationwide during the 2011 Halloween period.
- That's why this Halloween state and local law enforcement will be out in full force cracking down on drunk drivers that haven't gotten the message to, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

**With drunk driving, there's no trick and there's no treat. The law makes it clear that driving while impaired has scary consequences.**

- Driving while impaired is a crime that seriously risks your safety and the safety of those around you. Whether you have had one too many or are way over the limit, drunk driving is not worth causing a traffic crash, serious injury, or worse—death.
- The legal and financial costs of driving while impaired can be significant. Drunk driving violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver's license, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other unanticipated expenses ranging from attorney fees, court costs, car towing and repairs, and lost wages due to time off from work.
- Refusing to take a breath test in many jurisdictions results in the loss of your driver's license on the spot and the impoundment of your vehicle. Also, there's the added embarrassment, humiliation, and consequences of telling family, friends and employers of your arrest.
- Sometimes, obeying the law is still not enough to protect yourself or others from a drunk driving crash. If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact your local law enforcement immediately.

**Plan ahead so you don't turn the roads into a real-life horror show.**

- Before the Halloween festivities begin, plan a way to safely get home at the end of the night.
- Always designate a sober driver.
- If you are impaired, take a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation.
- Walking impaired can be just as dangerous as drunk driving. Designate a sober friend to walk you home.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact local law enforcement.
- If you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them .
- make safe travel arrangements to where they are going.

For more information, please visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.org](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.org)

<sup>1</sup> Halloween weekend/period is defined as 5:59 p.m. October 28 to 5:59 a.m. October 30; and 5:59 p.m. October 31 to 5:59 a.m. November 1.  
<sup>1</sup> Halloween night is defined as 6 p.m. October 31, 2011, to 5:59 a.m. November 1, 2011.

## What is Krokodil?

Krokodil is a new drug that has appeared in Russia in 2002. It started showing up in Siberia and has spread throughout the country since then. While several drugs are harshly addictive and physically damaging, krokodil sets a new standard for fast destruction of mind, spirit and body.

The medical name for the drug is desomorphine. It is made at home by acquiring codeine, sold over the counter for headaches, and cooking it with paint thinner, gasoline, hydrochloric acid, iodine and the red phosphorous from matchbox strike pads. The resulting liquid is injected into a vein. The high from this drug lasts 90 minutes to two hours, and it takes about a half-hour to make the drug. So a krokodil addict does little other than get the ingredients and cook up the drug.

### Migration from Heroin to Krokodil

Russia has a severe problem with heroin addiction, but when a heroin addict can no longer afford that drug, he can make up krokodil which has a stronger kick and costs about a tenth the price. But while the life expectancy of a Moscow heroin addict is four to seven years, the life expectancy of a krokodil addict is just a year or two.

At one meeting of drug enforcement officials, two regional governors reported that krokodil accounts for about half of all addictions and drug-related deaths in their regions. And in some other areas, krokodil has nearly replaced opiates as the drug of choice.

It is estimated that somewhere between a few hundred thousand and a million people are injecting this deadly drug. Between 2009 and 2011, the amount of krokodil seized by law enforcement increased 23-fold. In just the first three months of 2011, 65 million doses were seized.

### Why is it Called Krokodil?

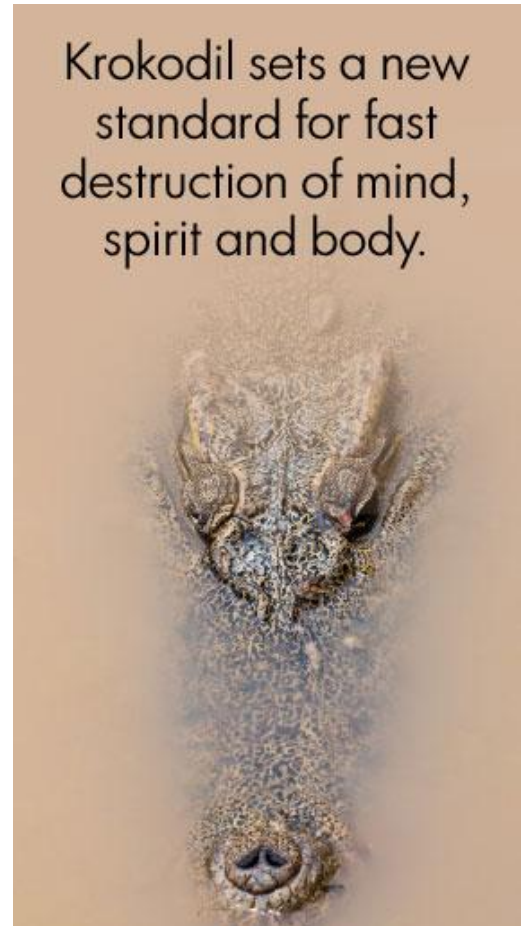
Krokodil gets its name from the fact that the caustic drug causes an addict's skin to become green, scaly and bumpy like a crocodile's. If the drug misses a vein and is injected into flesh, that flesh will develop abscesses. It is common for addicts to develop gangrene and require amputations. The flesh on some body parts affected by krokodil injections will rot off completely, leaving bare bone.

**Withdrawal is savage, much worse than heroin.** Heroin can cause sickness and pain for up to ten days but withdrawal from krokodil can result in a month of unbearable pain. Extremely strong tranquilizers are used during withdrawal so the addict does not pass out from the pain. Doctors dealing with addicts say that this is the strongest level of addiction and the hardest to cure. If a person does manage to get clean from krokodil, they may be left with permanent damage like a speech impediment, vacant gaze and erratic movements.

**Resources:** "Narconon", [Krokodil - the Drug that Eats Junkies](http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2078355,00.html) <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2078355,00.html>



If a person does manage to get clean from krokodil, they may be left with permanent damage like a speech impediment, vacant gaze and erratic movements.



## October is Prescription (Opiate) and Heroin Abuse Awareness Month

**October 2013 will be the first time Putnam County will have a Prescription (opiate) and Heroin Awareness Month. The following are some frequently asked questions about opiate and heroin.**

### **What is Heroin?**

Heroin is a morphine derivative and morphine is opium's most potent active ingredient. First synthesized in 1874, heroin was widely used in medicine in the early part of the 20th century, until its addictive potential was recognized. Pure heroin is a powder with a bitter taste. Street heroin may vary in color from white to dark brown because of impurities or additives. There is a dark brown or black form of the drug, as dense as roofing tar or coal, known as "black tar."

### **Who uses Heroin?**

There is no "cookie cutter" heroin user. Individuals of all ages and lifestyles have used heroin. According to the DEA, approximately 1.2% of the population reported using heroin at least once in their lifetime.

### **What are the long-term consequences of Heroin use?**

Users say they are never able to recreate the euphoria of their first high. Heroin users develop a tolerance for the drug and progressively use more in an effort to get the original feeling. Heroin is highly addictive.

### **Is there a connection between Prescription Drugs and Heroin?**

Abuse of prescription opiate pain killers (i.e., Oxycontin, Vicodin, etc) are behind heroin's growth in popularity with young people: these pills are the doorway to heroin abuse. Youth become addicted to pain killers initially by helping themselves to their parent's prescriptions (or those of friends' parents). They then need to buy on the 'street', but the pills cost between \$20 - \$50 each. Heroin is inexpensive and accessible.

### **How to know when someone needs help?**

There are signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug abuse, but, it can be difficult to separate from typical teen behavior. You may find tell tale signs from the: Parents Resource Center sponsored by the Partnership for a Drug Free America at the web site <http://www.drugfree.org> or MADD - Power of Parents web site at <http://www.thepowerofparents.org>. Experts strongly agree that if you suspect something is wrong that you should consult a professional for an assessment. Teaming up with an addiction professional can get your child the help they need. Please refer to the OASAS web site for a listing of certified programs professionals at <http://www.oasas.state.ny.us> or call OASAS Addiction Services Helpline 1-877-8-HOPENY or the Putnam County Crisis Hotline at 225-1222. Referral services are also available at the National Council on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies/Putnam for information on treatment and the various levels of care available.

### **How can I prevent my child from becoming addicted?**

The best way to prevent your child from becoming addicted is to educate yourself about the signs and symptoms of both alcohol and drug abuse and take action as soon as you suspect that your child may be using. Most importantly, develop healthy communication with your child so that you can better recognize any changes that may occur with substance use. Your child will be more likely to seek you out if he or she has a problem if open communication has been established.

A great link for all this information can be found at the Parents Resource Center, sponsored by the Partnership for a Drug Free America at the web site <http://www.drugfree.org>

Please visit <http://www.putnamncadd.org/resources.html> for more information on resources available in Putnam County.

**REMINDER! THE NEXT MEDICATION TAKE BACK DAY WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup> FROM 9AM-2PM AT PUTNAM HOSPITAL CENTER, WAGNER CANCER PAVILION, 670 STONELEIGH AVENUE, CARMEL, NY. NO SHARPS, EPI PENS, LANCETS OR SYRINGES OF ANY KIND ARE ACCEPTED. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL MARY RICE AT 845-808-1390.**

## Coalition Member Spotlight: Kristel Halton

It is an honor to have Coalition members as devoted to youth drug prevention as Kristel Halton. Kristel has been a Prevention Educator at Putnam Family and Community Services since 2007 (she became Supervisor of the prevention team in 2011). Ms. Halton is also employed as a substitute social worker at Mahopac Central School District. In her role she has stated "it has been my privilege to work with such wonderful students, parents, teachers and faculty in the Mahopac Central School District. They continue to be welcoming and engaged in the Prevention Goal to assist students with positive support and character education." In her prevention education role she taught Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades.

As a Coalition member, Kristel is part of the Carmel, Pre Prom, and Simulated Impaired Driving Experience (SIDNE) committees. When asked why alcohol and drug prevention is so important to her Kristel stated, "The field of prevention is very important to me and I believe it is something that should be important to every parent, school district and community. The priority should be K-12 Prevention. It is the best way that we have to teach our children and students that good choices matter and that we have the ability to choose. We have all been impacted by someone who has struggled with substance abuse, gambling addiction or who has been in a violent relationship. We see it daily in the news and so prevention at an early age allows students the opportunity to talk, think creatively and to develop the skills needed to navigate life in a healthy way. Prevention is truly about developing the skills needed to speak openly about your feelings, to respect yourself and others and to be resilient.

Kristel also states, "There have been many challenges that students have to face in everyday life in addition to going to school. Parents are working harder than ever to keep their children safe and to help them be healthy. I have been so lucky to work collaboratively with wonderful teachers, educators and staff committed to student health; physical, emotional, mental, social, and academic. All are equally important. Change can only happen with collaboration and support and hope. The hope is that students will walk away with the skills needed to navigate some of life's more difficult situations and perhaps a resiliency to overcome the hardest challenges. "

Thank you Kristel for all you do for not only the Coalition, but for our community! We are fortunate to have you on our team!



Kristel Halton



Kristel and Family

In September 2013, the Putnam County Communities That Care Coalition was granted its competitive funding from the Office of National Drug Control Policy. These DFC grant funds will allow the Coalition to continue to involve and engage our local community to prevent substance use among youth. We are excited to continue this program for another five years and want to thank all the Coalition and community members that continue to support our mission!