



April 8, 2013

Dear Local Pediatrician:

When your patient was a toddler, you delivered parental advice to safeguard household cleaners, and other dangerous liquids so parents could keep their children out of harm's way. Fast forward 10+ years and your patient is a teen. Now it is more important than ever that you continue to give your expert advice and guidance *to both your patient and their parent* about how to stay healthy.

Kids today are faced with an enormous amount of pressure to fit in and the risks facing teenagers today are very real. And, no one should underestimate the risks associated with underage drinking. Alcohol kills more teens than all other illegal drugs combined. The consequences of underage drinking are devastating to families, the community and our teens' physical, mental and social well-being.

The Manhasset Community Coalition Against Substance Abuse, (CASA), Inc. is working to reach pediatricians about the need to speak with their teen patients about alcohol use. Nationally, one in three children starts drinking by the end of 8th grade. In Nassau County, students self-report alcohol use at alarming rates according to the 2010-11 New York State Youth Development Survey Results for Nassau County:

- **Past 30 Day Use of Alcohol**
 - 61.1% for 12th Grade Students;
 - 50.2% for 11th Grade Students;
 - 39.5% for 10th Grade Students;
 - 24.2% for 9th Grade Students

- **Heavy Use of Alcohol/Binge Drinking**
(Binge Drinking is defined as having five or more drinks of alcohol in a row in the past two weeks)
 - 39.1% for 11th/12th Grade Students
 - 19.3 % for 9th/10th Grade Students
 - 5% for 7th/8th Grade Students

And, according to a new study led by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), pediatricians often miss the opportunity to ask their young patients about alcohol use.

What can you do?

Talk to your patients as well as their parents.



The enclosed guide, produced by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), is a simple and easy tool for you to identify youth at risk for alcohol related problems. This evidenced based guide allows you to discuss underage drinking and assess a patient's risk with just two powerful questions.

Please consider working with us in CASA's mission to reach youth before they are in trouble and help teens to grow up to make healthy and responsible choices.

Should you have any questions about the guide, our efforts to reduce underage drinking, or would like a copy of the 2010-11 New York State Youth Development Survey Results for Nassau County, please contact Cathy Samuels, Manhasset CASA at 516-267-7548 or email casa_org@manhasset.k12.ny.us.

We thank you for your support and look forward to working with you to ensure all children grow up to be healthy and responsible adults.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen L. Dewey", written on a light-colored background.

Stephen L. Dewey, Ph.D.
Feinstein Institute for Medical Research
North Shore/LIJ Health Systems

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey L. Reynolds", written on a light-colored background.

Jeffrey L. Reynolds, Ph.D., CEAP, SAP
Executive Director
Long Island Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence
LICADD, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisbeth Shibley", written on a light-colored background.

Lisbeth Shibley
Executive Director & President
Manhasset CASA, Inc. (CASA)