Greetings!

Prevention is a great thing, but changing behavior is challenging, especially addictive behaviors and those that are targeted through marketing and manipulation of our environment. In a society that continually promotes alcohol and drug use at every level, the need to provide education on the dangers of alcohol and drug use and its effect on children has never been greater.

CASAC believes education on this critical threat needs to begin as early as possible in people’s lives. Properly educated, children and youth are much more likely to avoid such dangers.

While many teens drink alcohol and use drugs, underage substance use is not inevitable. Families, communities and individuals are not helpless to prevent it. In fact, research confirms the benefits of parents providing consistent rules and discipline, talking to children about alcohol and drugs, monitoring their activities, getting to know their friends, understanding their problems and concerns, and being involved in their learning. The importance of open communication between parents and their kids regarding the negative effects of alcohol and drug use play a significant role in decreasing the chances of those kids developing a substance use disorder.

Prevention efforts are especially important for young people. Prevention programs can strengthen protective factors among young children by teaching parents better family communication skills, appropriate discipline styles, firm and consistent rule enforcement, and other family management approaches. At the same time, prevention strategies can address those most at risk with accurate information about alcohol and drugs, articulate the potential consequences from
their abuse, and offer activities and opportunities unrelated to drinking or drugging that may open new doors for youth who are still growing, learning, and expanding their horizons.

Much of CASAC’s work is through education and awareness, but also through policy and environmental change. Communities, schools, and workplaces provide essential venues for reaching those who may be at risk with prevention messages and strategies. It has been said that the best prevention is early intervention, and if the progress of alcoholism and drug abuse can be stopped early in its course, then great individual suffering and family disruption can be avoided. There is power in prevention!

About Us
Since 1974, Chautauqua Alcohol & Substance Abuse Council (CASAC), a United Way partner agency, has provided prevention education and community awareness regarding alcohol and other drugs. CASAC is the only New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) approved and supported alcohol and other drug prevention agency in Chautauqua County. For further information about CASAC’s programs and services, call the Jamestown office at 664-3608, the Dunkirk office at 366-4623, or go to CASAC’s website, www.casacweb.org.