



# ACTION

NEWS – NOUVELLES

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## Cannabis now rivals alcohol use on the road

**C**CSA's report, *Clearing the Smoke on Cannabis: Cannabis Use and Driving*, is the third in a series of publications that review the effects of cannabis use on various aspects of human functioning and development. This report highlights recent evidence indicating that among youth, driving after cannabis use now rivals or exceeds rates of drinking and driving.

Young drivers are most likely to report driving after using cannabis. In the 2004 Canadian Addictions Survey (CAS), 20.6% of drivers aged 16 to 18 reported driving after cannabis use. This evidence reflects similar findings in student surveys in both Ontario and the Atlantic provinces. In Ontario, 19.3% of students in Grades 10 to 12 admitted driving after using cannabis; in the Atlantic provinces, 15.1% of senior students admitted to having done so. Moreover, all three surveys indicated that youth were more likely to drive after using cannabis than to drive after drinking.

The research suggests that many young people do not know or appreciate the dangers associated with driving after using cannabis. Cannabis has been shown to impair a wide variety of cognitive and motor skills critical to driving safely—e.g., tracking, reaction time, divided attention. In addition, many people are not aware that new legislation in Canada

gives police the authority to demand that drivers suspected of using cannabis (or other drugs) submit to tests to determine presence of drugs and provide a sample of blood, urine or oral fluid to test for the presence of drugs.

*Cannabis Use and Driving* points out that more research is needed to fully appreciate both the size of the problem and the factors leading to this behaviour. Awareness and educational programs are needed to inform both the general population and targeted audiences, such as youth, about the harms associated with driving after using cannabis and/or other drugs.

To read this report in full, please visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) and click on Our Publications under the Knowledge Centre tab. >



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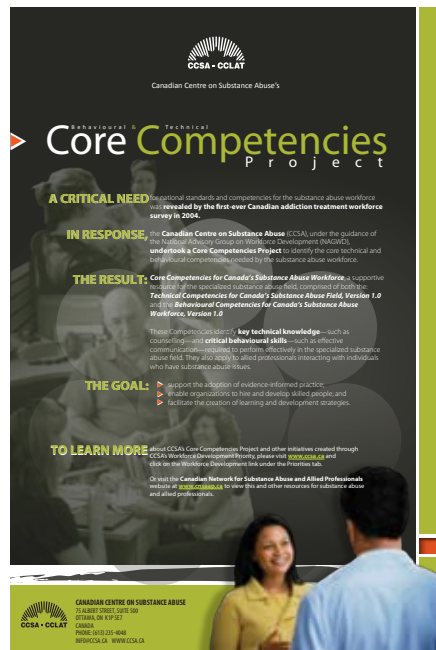
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# Positive reviews for Behavioural Competencies

Early in 2009, CCSA conducted 11 cross-Canada focus groups with more than 120 substance abuse workers in the field to help inform the development of the *Behavioural Competencies for Canada's Substance Abuse Workforce, version 1.0* (see Action News, Vol. 19, No. 2). Since sharing the draft document with focus group attendees, CCSA has been receiving positive reviews from the field.

In fact, several organizations have tried out the draft Behavioural Competencies and supporting tools (provided to them in consultations) by using them in their hiring and retention strategies. Feedback reveals people are pleased with the results. They believe that *Behavioural Competencies for Canada's Substance Abuse Workforce, version 1.0* helped them to better identify key people for leadership and support positions on their teams. One respondent shared that

the Behavioural Competencies assisted that person's organization in hiring more 'skill-based people' and provided a clear way to assess individual skill sets.



The Behavioural Competencies are part of the CCSA's Core Competencies Project—which also includes the *Technical Competencies for Canada's Substance Abuse Field*. The project aims to enhance professionalism within the field by providing tools and resources to:

- identify knowledge and skill sets for allied professionals
- support employers in hiring and staff development
- assist educators and trainers in developing strategies for learning
- provide Canadians with more consistent quality of service delivery from the substance abuse workforce

Version 1.0 of the Behavioural Competencies has gone to press and will be available shortly. To learn more about this and other CCSA Workforce Development initiatives, please visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) and click on the Workforce Development link under the Priorities tab. >

## The Buzz: Youth Strategy Feedback

Two key initiatives developed through *A Drug Prevention Strategy for Canada's Youth's* (see Action News, Vol. 17, No. 4)—CCSA's innovative drug prevention website Xperiment.ca, and the School-based Standards—are receiving remarkable amounts of feedback, which has been immensely helpful in informing the future developments of these projects.

With over 94,000 site visits since its launch in March 2009, Xperiment.ca is generating an abundance of comments. In response to some constructive criticism, Xperiment.ca's information on cannabis use and its link to cancer were further nuanced to articulate the increased risk of lung cancer as a *potential* long-term effect.

Xperiment.ca is also being celebrated in the design world. It has been featured as 'Site of the Day' on FMA.com, 'Site of the Week' on Allmyfaves.com, and was also presented in Adobe's Edge Newsletter as a site that "offers plenty of good information...that is not stifled with scaremongering."

The Canadian Standards for School-based Youth Substance Abuse Prevention have also received widespread attention, with

several international initiatives referencing this resource document in the development of their own national standards projects. The practical value of the School-based Standards was highlighted by Drug Education News in an online interview with Manuela Festa, Programme Director at Mentor UK. In addition, several Canadian organizations have shown interest in piloting the Standards in their work. A second consultation

of the document, along with findings from focus groups conducted across Canada will help inform Version 2 of the School-based Standards, due for publication in March 2010.

The new Canadian Standards Task Force, charged with the development of the Family- and Community-based Youth Substance Abuse

Prevention Standards, has been assembled. This group plans to complete Version 1 of this resource guide by March 2010.

To learn more about A Drug Prevention Strategy and its initiatives, please visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) and click on the Prevention link and the Priorities tab. >



## Countdown to IOS 2009

Only a few weeks remain before over 400 professionals in the substance abuse field meet in Halifax to take part in *Issues of Substance 2009*. A hundred speakers from across Canada will discuss a wide range of topics around the conference theme, *Pathways and Bridges to Change*. To learn more about topics and presenters, please see the detailed program on the conference website at [www.issuesofsubstance.ca](http://www.issuesofsubstance.ca).

### EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

The conference kicks off with two pre-conference sessions Sunday afternoon. The **Drug-Impaired Driving in Canada: Implications for Prevention and Treatment** session will provide participants with cutting-edge skills and techniques to better recognize the signs and symptoms of drug use. The

second pre-conference session, **National Networking Session on Women's Treatment Policy and Practice**, will examine how best to support women's specific health issues and culturally diverse needs in addiction, prevention, and treatment services. These sessions are followed by the opening reception where delegates can mix and mingle.

Monday opens with a keynote address by **Annette Dale-Perera**, Strategic Director, Addictions and Offender Care Directorate, Central and NW London NHS Foundation Trust, with a discussion on implementation of a tiered model of care in the UK. The day closes with dinner and entertainment by the very popular **Second City Improv Troupe**, who will perform tailored skits and

improv designed specifically for the IOS conference.

**Dr. Franco Vaccarino**, Vice-President and Principal, University of Toronto, opens Tuesday with the much anticipated presentation on the neuroscience of addiction and its application to treatment, entitled *Neuroscience, Discovery Research and Treatment Implications*.

The conference closes Wednesday with **Christopher Kennedy Lawford**, an author, lecturer, public policy advisor and advocate in the field of addiction, who will speak about his personal experience with addiction and efforts to reduce stigmatization. Register at [www.issuesofsubstance.ca](http://www.issuesofsubstance.ca).

See you in Halifax—where you will be part of pathways to change. >

## Planning under way for CCSA Chair Lecture Series

In 2008, CCSA initiated a lecture series in honour of past CCSA Board chairs aimed at stimulating discussion and dialogue on some of the more challenging issues facing the field.

The first in the Chair Lecture Series, the David Archibald lecture took place in November 2008 to coincide with CCSA's 20th anniversary and Drug Awareness Week and focused on harm reduction in a socio-political context (a podcast of this lecture is available at [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)). David Archibald lectures explore the challenges of building social and political consensus

around new ways of addressing substance abuse and addictions—something for which the late Dr. Archibald had a rare and widely acknowledged talent.

The second David Archibald lecture is set to take place on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at the *Issues of Substance* conference in Halifax. This year's topic *Alcohol: Shared and Competing Values* explores industry involvement in activities that address alcohol-related harms—an ongoing issue of concern to many organizations in health-related sectors. Guest speaker Barbara Russell, a Bioethicist at the Centre

for Addiction and Mental Health and at the University of Toronto's Joint Centre for Bioethics, will lead a panel discussion exploring a range of perspectives, followed by a Q&A session.

The second in the Chair Lecture Series is the Bill Deeks lecture, which will be initiated in early 2010. Focusing on the subject of youth and substance abuse, the lecture will take place in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan. Check upcoming issues of Action News for more information. >

## CCSA Teams with Going M.I.L.E.S.

CCSA is pleased to announce an exciting new collaboration with Aboriginal actor Dakota House and *Going M.I.L.E.S.*, a non-profit organization that assists youth with positive self-expression through the arts. Dakota played the character 'Teevee Tenia' on the CBC series *North of 60* for six years and is also the founder of *Going M.I.L.E.S.* (which stands for Motivating, Inspiring, Lead, Empowering and Succeed). This innovative program helps foster a positive environment for Aboriginal youth via interaction with today's top Aboriginal talent in the fields of dance, theater arts and music.

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Dakota and his team of First Nations performers—including well-known actors, traditional dancers and talented musicians—reach out to Aboriginal youth in their home communities, reminding them that they can succeed in all their endeavors and giving them the opportunity to express themselves. The dynamic and thought-provoking presentations by First Nations role models demonstrate firsthand how obstacles and

challenges can be overcome and negative experiences can be turned into positive opportunities.

Along with Dakota House, Scott Ward (a Métis hypnotist), and the Going M.I.L.E.S. team, CCSA will be co-hosting a series of Youth World Café events in Canada's Arctic cities in early 2010. Stay tuned for more information in the next issue of Action News. >

## New CCSA Glossary database

**O**n July 30th, CCSA launched a new terminology database—the *CCSA Glossary*. It is the third in a series that also includes a *lexicon and acronyms and abbreviations*.

The CCSA Glossary includes 15 terms that were identified during a scan and review of addiction literature from national and international sources. These terms and their definitions will assist authors in defining the terminology that they are using in their writings. Each term in the Glossary includes related terms, three or more definitions and sources, and, where available, additional information or explanatory notes about the term or source. An alphabetical list of the terms

is as follows: Addiction, Alcoholism, Binge Drinking, Dependence, Harmful Use, Hazardous Use, Heavy Drinking, Low-risk Drinking, Moderate Drinking, Problematic Substance Use, Recreational Drug Use, Substance Abuse, Substance Misuse, Substance Use, and Substances.

The CCSA Glossary is available only in English since a literal translation is not possible—terms that require clarification of definition in English are not necessarily the same terms that require definition in French.

To access the Glossary, please visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) and click on Our Databases under the Knowledge Centre tab. >

## Relaying findings through song

**A** song documenting the healing experiences of Aboriginal women who have struggled with drug abuse and addiction has been written as part of a Canadian Institutes of Health Research-funded addictions research project. The project is being conducted by Colleen Dell of the University of Saskatchewan in partnership with CCSA and the National Addictions Partnership Foundation.

The song, entitled “From Stilettos to Moccasins”, is sung by Violet Naytowhow and was written in collaboration with Aboriginal women who are healing from illicit drug abuse and problems with the law. According to Dell, “Along with a video we plan to create, the song will be used as a teaching tool with both treatment centres and the general public.” To listen to the song online, visit: <http://www.nnapf.org>. >

# EVENTS

**October 25–28, 2009**

**10th Annual International Alcohol Interlock Symposium**

Melbourne, Australia

T: 416-619-3524 F: 416-619-3501

E: [info@interlocksymposium.com](mailto:info@interlocksymposium.com)

**October 27–29, 2009**

**Wounded Souls and the Vulnerable Self, Trauma and Addiction: Causes, Consequences and Treatment**

Vancouver, BC, Canada

T: 604-682-2344 Ext. 62942 F: 604-806-8210

E: [kmarchand@mail.cheos.ubc.ca](mailto:kmarchand@mail.cheos.ubc.ca)

**October 27–28, 2009**

**DACSAW presents: Alcohol & Drug Free Workplace: Prevention & Recovery**

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

T: 780-437-8013 F: 780-439-6879

E: [dorothy@icdr.com](mailto:dorothy@icdr.com)

**October 28–30, 2009**

**We Can Do It: Evidence and Interventions for Transforming Mental Health in the Workplace**

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

W: <http://www.wrepcamh.org/>

E: [secretariat@wrepcamh.org](mailto:secretariat@wrepcamh.org)

**October 29–31, 2009**

**The Future of Addiction Education, Practice and Research**

New Jersey, USA

W: <http://incase-edu.net/annualconference.aspx>

E: [NYProf@gmail.com](mailto:NYProf@gmail.com)

**November 2–4, 2009**

**Making Gains in Mental Health and Addictions**

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

T: 905-335-7993 F: 905-332-1587

E: [linda@mmsonline.ca](mailto:linda@mmsonline.ca)

**Friday, November 6, 2009**

**Annual Methadone Prescribers' Conference**

Toronto, Ontario,

T: 416-967-2600 ext.307 F: 416-967-2605

E: [kbrown@cpso.on.ca](mailto:kbrown@cpso.on.ca)

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