NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

NCADD – National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.

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NCADD: A Symbol of Help and Hope**:**

NCADD Saves Lives and Helps Families Recover from Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

MISSION: The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) and its Affiliate Network is a voluntary health organization dedicated to fighting the Nation's #1 health problem – alcoholism, drug addiction and the devastating consequences of alcohol and other drugs on individuals, families and communities.

VISION:

- To share the joy of recovery and knowledge about alcoholism and drug dependence
- To break down barriers of ignorance and stigma
- To encourage individuals, families, companies and communities to seek help

Addiction—A primary, progressive brain disorder, characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences, and by long-lasting chemical changes in the brain which interfere with a person's ability to think clearly, exercise good judgment, control behavior, and feel normal without using drugs (Learn About Drugs).

Addiction to alcohol or other drugs may be:

- *Chronic*—Once an addiction is developed, it will always be a condition that requires management. For the large majority of people, it is not possible to use the substance again in the future without further negative consequences.
- *Progressive*—Addiction gets worse over time.
- *Primary*—Addiction is not just a symptom of an underlying psychological problem.

Advocacy—The process by which individuals or groups aim to influence public-policy and resource allocation decisions relative to addiction and recovery; promoting policies and legislation that will fight the stigma of addiction and reduce discrimination by helping people with alcoholism and drug dependence to more easily find treatment, recovery support and for people in recovery, establish equal rights in education, housing and employment.

People with addiction face many barriers to recovery, such as discrimination in health insurance reimbursement, employment, housing and student financial aid. Advocacy resources provide the opportunity to change government and industry policies, to promote effective treatment, and to help educate the general public on the needs, rights and struggles of those in recovery.

In 1944, Marty Mann founded what is now the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD). Mann's goal was nothing short of changing how America viewed alcoholism and the alcoholic. To achieve that goal, Mann organized NCADD's National Network of Affiliates across the country that provided alcoholism-related information and education, worked to open hospital doors for detoxification, and encouraged the development of alcoholism treatment and convalescent centers. These early advocacy efforts laid the groundwork for today's continuing struggle to achieve parity for drug and alcohol treatment services at the same benefit level as other chronic diseases.

Affiliates—NCADD's National Network of Affiliates currently consists of nearly 100 Affiliates across the U.S. that provide programs and services to assist local communities in the fight against alcoholism and drug dependence, including: information and referral for individuals and families; prevention, education and training; community awareness; intervention, treatment and recovery support, and advocacy services to help raise public awareness about alcoholism and drug dependence. Dedicated staff and volunteers are available on a local basis to help individuals, families and entire communities, and to work with the media, as well as federal, state and local policy makers to enhance prevention and research.

Alcoholism—A primary, chronic, progressive disease with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. The disease is often fatal if untreated. It is characterized by continuous or periodic: impaired control over drinking, preoccupation with the drug alcohol, use of alcohol despite adverse consequences, and distortions in thinking, most notably denial (Learn About Alcohol).

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)—An informal society of more than 2 million recovering alcoholics throughout the world. AA was founded in 1935 by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith (Bill W. and Dr. Bob) in Akron, Ohio. With other early members, Bill W. and Dr. Bob developed AA's Twelve Step program of recovery. AA's Twelve Traditions were introduced in 1946 to help AA stay unified and grow. The Traditions recommend that members and groups remain anonymous in public media, help other alcoholics achieve sobriety and include all who wish to stop drinking. The Traditions also recommend that AA members acting on behalf of the fellowship steer clear of dogma, governing hierarchies and involvement in public issues. Subsequent fellowships such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA) have adopted and adapted the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions to their respective primary purposes.

According to the AA Preamble (Copyright © by The AA Grapevine, Inc.), a statement read at the beginning of most AA meetings around the world: "Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."

Anonymity—The practice of not publicly revealing one's personal identity and membership in the

Twelve Step Fellowship of AA or similar organizations dealing with recovery from alcoholism, drug dependence and other substances and behaviors.

Anonymity in AA is often referred to as the greatest single protection the organization has to assure its continued existence and growth.

In AA, Anonymity serves two different yet equally vital functions (from the AA pamphlet, "Understanding Anonymity"): "At the personal level, anonymity provides protection for all members from identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers; at the level of press, radio, TV, films and new media technologies such as the Internet, anonymity stresses the equality in the Fellowship of all members by putting the brakes on those who might otherwise exploit their AA affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain."

For more information about anonymity and how people in recovery can cooperate in advocacy efforts without compromising this important principle, see Advocacy with Anonymity.

Hope, Help and Healing—a public education campaign focused on educating the public about alcoholism, drug dependence and recovery. Campaign materials encourage individuals and families to seek help utilizing the NCADD National Network of Affiliates for localized information and referral services.

Intervention—A direct, staged confrontation generally conducted by a professional interventionist, usually a highly trained alcohol or drug counselor, to engage and confront the addicted person, often in the company of family, friends and/or work colleagues, to start the healing process and set the stage for identifying and recommending the right treatment plan towards recovery.

Parity—Parity for treatment of alcohol-related disorders refers to State and Federal requirements that health plans provide the same levels of benefits for these disorders as they do for medical and surgical conditions.

Recovery—Is best thought of as a summary of all the positive benefits stemming from a way of life without addiction to alcohol and drugs. People in recovery, by getting the help they need, enjoy far more than just sobriety. To be in "recovery" and living a sober life is really an ongoing journey--a search for a better way of living, a quality of life marked by improved emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual well-being (For People in Recovery).

Self-Help—Support groups, often 12-step programs available like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Al-Anon Family Groups, Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Nar-Anon and others that serve as options for people seeking help with their addiction to alcohol or drugs (see Mutual Aid/Support Groups).

Treatment—According to the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), "treatment" is defined as "in- or out-patient services that focus on initiating and maintaining an individual's

recovery from alcohol or drug abuse and on preventing relapse." Detoxification (detox), therapy and counseling, medical evaluation, and aftercare are the key components to effective treatment. Services are available, too, for family members, children and friends affected by alcoholism or drug dependence.

Treatment of alcoholism and drug dependence is as successful as treatment of other chronic diseases, such as asthma, diabetes, and hypertension. Some studies show that up to 70% of patients who are treated for substance dependence eventually recover.

Individuals who receive treatment for addiction have:

- Better long-term outcomes;
- Improved long-term health;
- Reduced relapse, and
- Improved family and other relationships.

War on Drugs—A controversial campaign of prohibition and foreign military aid and military intervention undertaken by the United States government, with the assistance of participating countries, intended to both define and reduce the illegal drug trade. The term "War on Drugs" was first used by President Richard Nixon on June 17, 1971.

On May 13, 2009, Gil Kerlikowske, the current Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), signaled that although it did not plan to significantly alter drug enforcement policy, the Obama administration would not use the term "War on Drugs," as he claimed it was "counter-productive."

The Global Commission on Drug Policy concluded in a June 2011 report that the decades-old worldwide war on drugs "has failed, with devastating consequences for individuals and societies around the world." The 19-member commission included former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and former U.S. official George P. Schultz, who held cabinet posts under U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon.

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