



# REVIEW

*Month in*

## PRESCRIPTION DRUG TRACKING LAW SIGNED BY GOVERNOR CRIST

Florida will join 38 other states that have created prescription drug monitoring systems under a bill signed into law June 18 by Gov. Charlie Crist. The new law requires that Florida track prescriptions of controlled substances designated as Schedule II, III and IV drugs, which includes drugs such as codeine, methadone, amphetamines, anabolic steroids and ketamine. While the new law states the Department of Health has until December 1, 2010 to get the new database up and running, the new law was "certainly something that we needed desperately here in Sarasota County" states Curt Lavarello, Executive Director for the Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse. The number of pharmaceutical deaths (overdoses and unintentional poisonings) in Sarasota County has led the state since 2007 and continues to be very high.

Recently, Sheriff Tom Knight announced that the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office would begin to form a new investigative unit that will focus on prescription drugs. Recently Curt Lavarello met with Sheriff Knight and expressed the Coalition's interest to work with the new Sheriff's unit to assist in the education component that will focus on informing the public of the dangers and risks associated

with prescription drug use and misuse. "I applaud the Sheriff's Office with this commitment as it is a step in the right direction. Doctors, who are part of the problem and not part of the solution, should run the risk of criminal consequences" continued Lavarello.

Last year the Coalition hosted four (4) town-hall meetings that addressed prescription drugs and the local Sarasota Education Channel televised one of the events to reach those who could not attend. "We intend to continue our town-hall meetings this fall" said Lavarello.

## PROJECT AIM (Alcohol Impairment Measure) UPDATE

The following establishments have participated in our Project AIM training in the month of July:

- The Olde World Restaurant Lounge
- Discount Tobacco & Beer

We continue to reach out to local businesses within Sarasota County, to offer this free service. Project AIM is designed to educate local businesses that sell or serve alcohol as to the serious impact of both underage alcohol consumption and over-serving consumers at their establishments. If you know a business that might be interested, please ask them to call our office at (941) 377-7736 for additional information.

## SCOSA PARTICIPATES IN THE NATIONAL REACH OUT NOW TEACH-IN

SCoSA recently participated in a National Teach-In at Alta Vista Elementary School where 5th graders were informed of the dangers of substance abuse. The lessons were led by Outreach Prevention Coordinator, Hilary Woodcum as a part of the national Reach Out Now Teach-In initiative. Hilary talked to the students about

different substances, why people might use them, what to do if someone tries to offer drugs and alcohol, and fun activities students can do instead of using substances. The students were given booklets called "Growing Up Drug-Free" and encouraged to talk to their parents about what they learned that day.

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### Board of Directors

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ABC 7

**Honorable Larry Eger**  
Public Defender, 12th Judicial Circuit

### Our Mission:

*To promote substance abuse free environments through increased community awareness and advocacy.*

# COALITION TO RE-FOCUS ON COUNTY DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE INITIATIVE

For years, the Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse has assisted local businesses in establishing their Drug-Free Workplace policies and help them save important dollars as they relate to employees who experience substance abuse issues while in the workplace. However, with the recent hiring of area outreach coordinators, SCOSA will now be much more visible at community events encouraging businesses to participate and highlighting the benefits of doing so. Businesses who establish a Drug-Free Workplace policy and comply with statutory requirements, are eligible for up to 5% discounts on their Workers' Compensation insurance rates. "With the downturn in our economy, those discounts can really make a difference to many businesses struggling" stated Curt Lavarello, Executive Director of SCOSA. In addition, businesses that participate typically see reduced amount of workplace injuries, improved productivity and decreased Workers' Compensation claims, all of which provide an overall cost savings to the employer as well as demonstrate that businesses have a vested interest in their employees.

Businesses interested in having SCoSA assist in the drafting of a policy or for

additional information on the Drug-Free Workplace policy should contact the Coalition at (941) 377-7736.

Businesses who participate with the coalition are honored at our Annual Sarasota's Shining Stars event held each March to honor those who create a safer Sarasota County.

**SCoSA.org Website Stats**  
 Since we began tracking website activity in January 2009\*:

- 1,947 Absolute Unique Visitors
- 3,924 Visits
- 8,309 Pageviews

*While the majority of our visitors are from the United States, we have received hits from Canada, India, the United Kingdom, Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Singapore and Venezuela.* \*Report date July 15, 2009

**Our next Board of Director's meeting is scheduled for:**  
 Tuesday, August 18th, 2009  
 12:00PM - 1:30PM at the  
 Sarasota Coastal Credit Union  
 Guest: Sheriff Tom Knight

Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse, Inc. [SCoSA] is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization that advocates for substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment through collaborative efforts. Since its inception in 1999, SCoSA has played a vital role in reducing substance abuse and its destructive impact in Sarasota County.

Are you interested in taking a real step in making our community a Substance Abuse Free Environment?

Please complete this form and mail it with your membership dues and/or contribution to:  
**Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse, 701 McIntosh Road, Sarasota, Florida 34232**

**Type of Membership:**  Individual [\$25]  Not for Profit Organization [\$100]  
 Family [\$50]  For Profit Organization [\$150]

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff / Support**

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**Amy L. Samsal**  
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**Hilary Woodcum**  
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**Carol Sikora**  
 Administrative Assistant  
 Carol@scosa.org

**Would you like to receive our monthly newsletter?**

**Email Carol at:**  
**Carol@scosa.org**

**For a list of substance abuse treatment and intervention resources, visit our community resources page at:**  
**www.scosa.org**



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