HEALTH CARE UPDATE

Harris poll discovers "alarming" trend

Study finds college women, young people drinking more

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) – College women in New York state may be getting an unintended lesson at school in how to drink.

Female students are twice as likely to be heavy drinkers than their counterparts who are out of college, according to a study of New Yorkers' drinking habits released Sunday by the state Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse.

The survey also found that three-quarters of all adult New Yorkers consume alcohol and that 7 percent of the adults, or 834,000 people, account for half of the alcohol drunk in the state.

The survey of 6,364 New Yorkers was conducted by Louis Harris and Associates and will be used by state officials to guide alcohol education and abuse prevention programs in the coming years, said Richard Chady, spokesman for the alcohol abuse division.

Male college students, just like women, are more likely to drink than their non-college peers, but there isn't the same discrepancy with the number of problem drinkers than there is with women, according to the survey.

The survey found 17 percent of full-time female college students are classified as "heavier" drinkers, compared to only 8 percent of women that age who don't go to college. "Heavier" drinkers consume an average of more than two drinks per day.

Among men, 25 percent of non-college students are heavier drinkers and 22 percent of college students fit that category.

"It's a very alarming trend and it calls for a lot more study to find out what it is about being in college that causes this," Chady said. "Is it because college women don't have the restraints on that their sisters out in the work force do?"

College women are becoming more like men in their drinking habits, said Alan Berkowitz, a counseling psychologist at Hobart and William Smith colleges in Geneva.

"College gives more options and freedom in terms of behavior for women than used to be found in larger society and that can be a plus or a minus depending on what options are chosen," Berkowitz said.

Overall, 82 percent of the 538,000 full-time college students in New York state drink, and an estimated 97,000 of them are heavier drinkers, the survey found. Drinking levels are higher for students who attend college in upstate New York instead of New York City.

To attack the problem of drinking on campus, counselors must recognize the difference in drinking habits between men and women, Berkowitz said. Women tend to seek help for a drinking problem faster than men, he said.

For the most part, the survey found New Yorkers' drinking habits aren't much different than those of people living elsewhere in the country, Chady said. The drinking rate is higher in New York state than in the rest of the country, but the level of problem drinkers is about the same.

State officials point to one survey finding as justifying the 1985 law change that raised the legal drinking age to 21. The younger people were when they started drinking, the more likely they are to be heavier drinkers now, researchers found.

Among people aged 35 to 49, one-quarter of those who admitted they started drinking at 16 years old or earlier are classified as heavier drinkers. For people who started drinking at age 21 or older, the rate of heavy drinking is 5 percent.

"It shows why people are concerned about advertising and the kids," Chady said. State officials have criticized alcohol manufacturers for tailoring their advertising to make drinking appear more glamorous for young people.

The survey estimated that 1.7 million New Yorkers have admitted to driving under the influence of alcohol during the last year. An estimated 182,000 said they do this at least weekly.

Overall, 80 percent of men drink compared to 68 percent of women. The rate of heavier drinking is almost four times as great among men as women.

The survey found 83 percent of New Yorkers aged 21 to 34 drink, while the number drops to 55 percent among residents aged 65 and over.

However, researchers found that the rates of heavy drinking among men didn't vary much with age. Past surveys found that the rate of heavy drinking decreased with age, so it appears older men are drinking more than men did in the 1960s and 1970s, Chady said.

The more money a person makes each year, the more likely he or she is to drink, the survey found, but Chady said that's not unusual.

"We've never really seen all this documented before," Chady said of the survey. "It's the first and most extensive look at the drinking habits of adult New Yorkers."

Dale Carnegie tips to avoid holiday stress

On the 100th birthday anniversary of the author of "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living," the organization, he founded, Dale Carnegie & Associates, Inc., of Garden City, N.Y., offers tips to avoid being strung out this holiday season:

– List holiday activities in order of importance and hold to that schedule.

– Remind yourself of the high price worry exacts in terms of health.

– Avoid fussing over trifles.

– Live in day-tight compartments, concentrating on today.

– Put enthusiasm into whatever you do, whether it is gift-shopping or addressing holiday greetings.

– Take a breather before you get tired.

– Give for the joy of giving.

Get your flu vaccination soon, watch children's fevers, suggests Dr. Scott

By Julie Pheifer
Of The Carlisle Mercury Staff

Cold weather is coming on strong and Dr. Tim Scott has a few warnings about health problems in these chilly months ahead.

Colds are more prevalent, in fall and winter because people are indoors more, he said. There are over 200 viruses that cause colds, spread by droplets when you cough or sneeze.

November is the prime month to get your flu vaccination, Scott said, especially if you are over 65 or suffer from some chronic illness. All of the doctors in Carlisle now have the flu vaccine, which arrived in Carlisle last Friday, he said.

The first year that someone receives the shot, he said, there needs to be a booster shot a month later. The vaccination will protect a person for four to six months.

There is a pneumonia vaccine as well, for people at risk. He explained that this vaccine protects against pneumococcal-type pneumonia, a more serious type of the disease. One vaccination will last a lifetime.

Children will, of course, bring home colds, Scott said, they need to be watched so complications, like ear infections, don't result.

If a fever persists for 24 to 48 hours, the child probably needs to see the doctor. however, if the child is running a low grade fever, has the sniffles and a cough, Tylenol and other acetomenophen type pain relievers will do the trick.

Aspirin needs to be avoided when children have the flu or chicken pox, Scott said, because the use of aspirin with these diseases may lead to Reye's Syndrome.

Also to be considered are falls and accidents due to the icy weather, Scott said. Elderly people may need to have someone to help out and drivers need to simply be more cautious.

Immunity, motherhood prepare Curran for role as school aide

By Julie Pheifer
Of The Carlisle Mercury Staff

Thursday morning found Louise Curran doing "head checks," for lice her least favorite thing to do as Nicholas County Elementary School aide.

The day before she had seen 86 children for various troubles, and even sent a few home who had temperatures. Seeing 86 children is an average day, Curran said.

The health office is often very busy while Curran helps children feel better.

"I treat them the way I would treat my own," she said, referring to Dewayne, Dawn and Rhonda.

She doesn't give them aspirin, only Tylenol, as well as cough drops, crackers and doses of prescribed medicine they may bring in.

It is the cold season she said, but she has been blessed with the ability not to catch the various colds she may be exposed to.

Louise Curran

She is an aide to Mrs. Dorothy Woosley, which means in addition to feeding crackers to children with upset stomaches, she sells supplies and lunch tickets in the morning and answers the phone.

Children usually don't try to put anything over on her, she said.

"The kids are pretty honest," she explained. "I will call the parents, but I explain that their parents are working. I let the parent make the decision on whether or not to come and get them."

She said she enjoys working with the children, finding it very rewarding. She also praises the "cooperative" faculty and "excellent" administration.

"You have to enjoy what you do," she said, adding that these factors help her enjoy her work.

"At the end of the day," she said, "I know that I have done the best I can for each child."

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GENERAL NEWS

Nicholas Board

Continued from Page 1

ployees did receive the state raise of 3 percent at the beginning of this school year. In addition, teachers had requested the board grant two personal days and one emergency leave day, per school year.

According to Pat Atkinson, who spoke to the board for the teachers, some certified employees (because of the increase in taxes and health care costs) are actually receiving as much as $400 to $1200 per year in salary *less* than last year. She also presented figures from the state department of education showing Nicholas County's ranking in teachers' salaries.

Members of the board questioned Nicholas County Superintendent Don Elder's recommendation of the 2 percent increase - and personal day next year.

"Why can't we be first? Why do we have to look around at other systems - the seven counties around us - and see what they're doing.

"Let them keep up with us for once," Elder said.

Elder explained that in 1985-86 raises throughout the system were higher for classified personnel - as high as 10 percent - than for teachers, which received only 3 percent.

"We have always gone along with the state increase alone," he said.

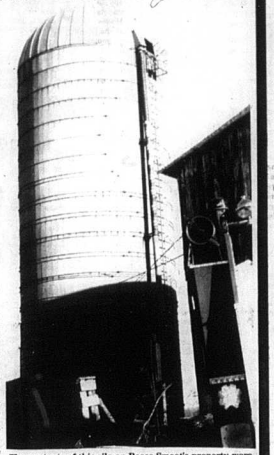
"As I recall, these other employees were underpaid to start with," Cleaver said.

"Teachers are underpaid," Elder replied.

The raise will cost the school system about $39,000 per year, for teachers, and about $1400 total for the 12 aides' increases.

In other action, the board;

- tabled acceptance of bids on work at the baseball field until more information can be obtained;
- accepted bids for lunchroom materials, once the bids have been complied;
- approved facilities use requests and trips by teachers and students;
- heard a letter from the Nicholas County Ministerial Association questing the practice of holding little league basketball games on Sunday;
- heard a letter from Nicholas County High School Head Football Coach Robbie Barr, thanking the board for its support during the basketball season;
- asked Nicholas County Board Attorney Billy Hopkins to draw up a resolution concerning the ADA exchanges with surrounding school systems;
- and, heard Elder explain that Dr. Tim Scott will chair a committee on Parenting and Family Life Skills.



The contents of this silo on Reese Smoot's property were destroyed in a fire that workers specualited burned for two or three days before it was discovered. - Julie Pheifer photo

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