

Take A Stance Expands to the Community

Blount County residents and retailers are invited to stand with and for local youth.

Each fall, high school students across Blount County are given the opportunity to sign a *Take A Stance* Pledge and commit to leading a healthy, substance-free life. The *Take A Stance* program, which was developed and is sponsored by the CHI Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team (SAPAT), is held in conjunction with October's Red Ribbon Week. This national drug, alcohol, tobacco and violence prevention awareness campaign is designed to promote awareness among young people about the negative consequences of underage alcohol and tobacco use and drug abuse.

In June, SAPAT expanded the scope of *Take A Stance* to encourage local adults — including retailers, coaches and youth leaders, educators and law enforcement officers — to get involved. SAPAT's community-wide *Take A Stance* efforts include:

■ Take A Stance ribbon campaign

SAPAT partnered with local retailers to sell \$1 paper *Take A Stance* ribbons in area businesses. Donors were encouraged to sign their ribbons in support of students who are committed to living healthy, substance-free lives. All proceeds from the ribbon campaign helped fund SAPAT initiatives addressing a number of local health and safety challenges including:

- underage tobacco use, drinking and drug abuse
- alcohol and tobacco sales to minors
- driving under the influence

- binge drinking among young people ages 14-24
- community-wide prescription drug abuse
- methamphetamine labs and use
- accidental drug overdoses
- medication safety

■ Watch for the *Take A Stance* billboards.

SAPAT is partnering with community leaders and local students to create a series of billboards promoting the *Take A Stance* campaign. The billboards will feature Blount County

high school students who have signed the *Take A Stance* pledge, as well as a diverse mix of Blount Countians who have chosen to stand with and for local youth by supporting SAPAT initiatives. Familiar faces to look for on the billboards include Blount County Sheriff James Lee Berrong, Maryville Police Chief Tony Crisp and pharmacist Phil LaFoy from Blount Discount Pharmacy.

■ Blount County Public Library display

The CHI display case at the Blount County Public Library includes information about *Take A Stance*, SAPAT and the projects and achievements of other CHI action teams. This informational display is designed to reach the diverse cross section of residents who visit the library.



Get Involved: Everyone in Blount County is invited to join in the *Take A Stance* effort by:

- supporting and encouraging young people who want to live substance-free
- sharing information about the negative consequences of substance abuse, including the legal implications of underage use
- securely storing medications and alcohol at home to prevent underage drinking and substance abuse
- not hosting or supporting house parties or events where alcohol is available to young people under age 21

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Meet the Action Teams

Approximately 180 people donate their time and talents to one of the Blount County Community Health Initiative action teams listed below.

For a brief description of each team, visit www.blounthealth.org.

- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Team
- Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team
- Blount BEneFITs Team
- Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention Alliance
- Task Force Against Domestic Violence
- Environmental Health Team
- Blount Believers Team
- Food Allergy Support Group
- SAFE Blount County (*violence prevention including child and senior abuse and neglect*)

Blount County Needs You

By sharing your time and talents with a Community Health Initiative action team, you can make a positive, lasting contribution to the health of our community. New volunteers are matched to the action team which best fits their interests, professional background or life experience. To learn how you can get involved, complete a volunteer action team application.

Applications are available on the Community Health Initiative website, www.blounthealth.org, or by calling Blount Memorial Foundation and Community Outreach project manager Jessica Belitz at 865-977-5745 or Blount Memorial Foundation executive director Jane Andrews at 865-977-5727.

Celebrate Blount County's Healthy Lifestyle Leaders

Meet the 2015 Ready, Set, Move! award-winning businesses and schools.



The Ready, Set, Move! Awards program, sponsored by the CHI Blount BEneFITs action team, recognizes area businesses and schools that are promoting, contributing to and enhancing quality of life through healthy lifestyle opportunities.

Here is a list of the 2015 winners recently recognized at the annual Ready, Set, Move! awards banquet hosted by Blount BEneFITs.

Business

- Small (1-25 full-time employees):
Maryville Farmers' Market
- Medium (26–50 full-time employees):
Cherokee Health Systems, Good Samaritan Community Health Center
- Large (51+ full-time employees):
overall winner, **DENSO Manufacturing Tennessee, Inc.**
and **Maryville City Schools** (tie);
runner-up, **Blount County Schools**



School

- **Alcoa Elementary School**

UPCOMING EVENT

Are you a hair stylist or salon owner?

Learn what you can do to help prevent suicide.

Suicide Prevention Training and Focus Group Discussion

For hair salon owners and hair stylists

■ Monday, July 20, noon-2 p.m.

■ Balance Point Counseling, 352 High St., Maryville (Hightower Professional Office Building, lower level entrance)

■ RSVP to MHASPA co-chair Anna Shugart at 865-981-2306.

Hosted by the Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention Alliance (MHASPA), this free program offers important information about how Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) might be useful in hair salon settings.

QPR is a short-format training program designed to help people recognize the signs that someone else may be feeling suicidal. Hair stylists and other salon staff who participate in QPR training are equipped with the skills needed to recognize a suicidal client (or, anyone exhibiting warning signs of suicide) and refer him or her to the appropriate experts for help.

ACTION TEAM SHOWCASE

Safe Blount County

Team announces 2015-2016 Safe Blount Prevention Series.

Safe Blount County, a CHI action team focused on community safety concerns, is planning a series of free community training events. The first program, “Mentally Prepared for Success,” will be held Tuesday, July 28 and is open to the community. Registration is required, and breakfast and lunch will be provided.

WHAT: “Mentally Prepared for Success”

WHEN: Tuesday, July 28, 8–11:30 a.m.

WHERE: Lambert Hall, Clayton Center for the Arts, Maryville

“Mentally Prepared for Success” is designed to help adults empower Blount County students for success. Since both physical and mental health affect student performance in the classroom and in life, the workshop focuses on helping young people build the solid mental health foundation they need to succeed.

The keynote speaker is Gene Cash, Ph.D., a nationally certified school psychologist, student mental health expert and professor at the Nova Southeastern University Center for Psychological Studies in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The workshop’s training session topics include:

- How to deal with bullying
- How to identify the signs and symptoms of suicide
- How to address the psychosocial impact of life-threatening allergies

Educational professionals (including teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses and other school personnel), as well as youth coaches and group leaders are particularly encouraged to attend.

For more information or to register for the free workshop, contact Jessica Belitz at jbelitz@bmnet.com or 865-977-5745.

Action Team Updates

In each issue of CHighlights, we'll include any recent updates and achievements from the action teams. To feature your team in an upcoming newsletter, send news items to Jessica Belitz at jbelitz@bmnet.com.



Food Allergy Support Group

The Community Health Initiative’s Food Allergy Support Group offers information and

support for individuals and families affected by food allergies and anaphylaxis. The group meets the fourth Tuesday of each quarter from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Blount Memorial Hospital auditorium. For more information, call 865-977-5727.

feeling depressed. The new middle school initiative included stress-reduction activities and resources from the college program that were adapted for younger students. Activities included a visit by HABIT (Human-Animal Bond in Tennessee) therapy dogs.



Empowering hairstylists to help prevent suicide:

Several nations — most notably Australia, New Zealand, Northern Ireland and Japan — have implemented effective training programs to enlist the help of hairstylists, taxi drivers, bartenders and other service providers in suicide prevention efforts. Since customers often feel more comfortable sharing feelings and fears with a “trusted stranger” than with a family member or friend, MHASPA will

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Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention Alliance (MHASPA)

Expanding stress-buster efforts:

MHASPA was able to extend its student stress-reduction program to include middle school students. MHASPA and Maryville College co-sponsor the “MC Uplift” program each year to promote emotional wellness and encourage students to seek help when

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host a QPR suicide prevention training session for hairstylists on July 20. [See “Upcoming Event.”] Topics will include identifying the signs and symptoms of suicidal thoughts, and how to respond if you suspect a client may be contemplating suicide. Participants will receive suicide prevention resources to share with customers.

Safe Blount**Child Car Seat Safety:**

Safe Blount County now has a fitting station at Blount Memorial Founda-

tion’s office at 811 Jones Ave., Maryville. Several Safe Blount County team members are trained and certified child car seat technicians. Certification requires completion of a 30-hour class, which prepares technicians to properly install child car seats, instruct parents and others in proper car seat installation and maintenance, and evaluate car seats for safety.

For more information on fitting stations in your area and on child passenger safety, visit tntrafficsafety.org.

Substance Abuse Prevention Action Team (SAPAT)**Drug Take-Back Day:**

On April 25, 141 people dropped off unused, surplus or expired medications at the Spring Drug Take-Back Day. This biannual event hosted by SAPAT and the Fifth Judicial Drug Task Force helped our community:

- prevent drug-related abuse, thefts, accidental poisonings and environmental hazards
- safely dispose of 341.5 pounds of medications

Healthy Resources

**FREE GUIDES****• RECREATION**

The Blount BENEfits action team created a Recreational Resource Guide for Blount County to help families easily access local recreational and wellness information. Visit www.blounthealth.org to download the guide.

• SUICIDE PREVENTION

The Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention team helped develop a suicide prevention resource guide for the community. Visit www.blounthealth.org to download the guide, or get a free copy by calling the Blount Memorial Emotional Health & Recovery Center at 865-981-2300.

• TOBACCO USE

Living Tobacco-Free is a free, local resource guide from Blount Memorial for people who are ready to quit smoking or stop using smokeless tobacco products. To get your free copy, call the Blount Memorial Foundation and Community Outreach at 865-977-5727, or visit www.blountmemorial.org and look under the Patient Resources block of the homepage.

WEBSITES

- Blount County Community Health Initiative, www.blounthealth.org
- Blount Memorial Hospital, www.blountmemorial.org
- Drug Free Communities Support Program, www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/dfc
- Tennessee Department of Health, <http://health.state.tn.us>

LOCAL RESOURCES

- Alcoa Police Department – 865-981-4111
- Blount County Health Department – 865-983-4582

- Blount County Sheriff’s Office – 865-273-5000
- BCSO Domestic Violence Unit – 865-273-5004
- Maryville Police Department – 865-273-3700
- Non-Emergency Dispatch – 865-983-3620
- Blount County District Attorney’s Office – 865-273-5600
- Child & Family Services – 865-637-8000
- Children’s Advocacy Center – 865-981-2000

24-HOUR HELP/SHELTERS

- Haven House (Blount County) – 865-982-1087, www.havenhousetn.org
- Sexual Assault Center of East Tennessee – 865-522-7273
- Iva’s Place (Loudon County) – 865-816-3481
- Hope Center (Athens) – 423-745-5289
- Domestic Violence Hotline – 1-800-799-7233