11,000+ Drug Treatment Centers Receive TV Special
9th Annual PRISM Awards: Treatment Center Outreach Expanded Version

The 9th Annual PRISM Awards, hosted by Survivor’s Jeff Probst, was distributed to more than 11,000 drug treatment and recovery centers nationwide in September, in honor of National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. The 55-minute Special Edition includes comments from celebrities, Congressional leaders, and federal officials speaking directly to those in treatment.

The video distribution, now in its fifth year, is an example of the entertainment industry’s ongoing commitment to addressing treatment and recovery. In the past, EIC and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) supported distributing the show to a few thousand treatment centers. This year the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provided an additional financial commitment, making it possible to expand the distribution to nearly every treatment center in the country.

NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow, SAMHSA Director Charles Curie, EIC President/CEO Brian Dyak, Florida First Lady Columba Bush, U.S. Senator Jon Corzine (D-NJ), U.S. Representatives Diane Watson (D-CA) and Mark Foley (R-FL), and Department of Homeland Security Under Secretary Asa Hutchinson are all featured making brief comments on the tape. Celebrities featured include Gerald McRaney, Thora Birch, Michele Lee, Dennis Weaver, Persia White and Dr. Drew Pinsky.

“Studies have shown that youth drug abuse goes down if they feel that drugs are in fact harmful,” said Dr. Nora Volkow. “If we're going to win the battle against drugs, we definitely have to treat, but we also should prevent. That is why education is important and that’s where the entertainment industry plays such an extremely important role. Portraying the dark side of drug addiction entertainment productions can help people understand that drugs are not glamorous; they don’t have pretty faces; they are actually quite tragic. The entertainment industry reaches millions of people every year and provides a sobering reality to everybody.”

Charles Curie observes, “Drugs do their damage one person at a time, but their effects are felt by husbands and wives, by children and youth, by employers and neighbors, and by communities as a whole. What often is not known is that drug abuse is an illness from which people can and do recover, and it’s an illness that can be prevented by educating often and early.

These PRISM Award-winners in television, video and the movies are helping America understand those truths about drug abuse. Together, we can build resilience and facilitate recovery for millions of our citizens. Together, we can show America that a life in the community to recover from drug abuse, together, we can work to build a next generation that is healthy and drug-free.”

The PRISM Awards, produced by EIC in partnership with NIDA, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), and the FX Network, recognize the accurate depiction of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use and addiction in film, television, music, video, and comic book entertainment. The show is being specially packaged for treatment centers with discussion questions to be used in treatment settings. The questions pull scenes from PRISM-nominated productions and songs as well as quotes from the PRISM show itself.
How do the PRISM Awards affect treatment and recovery?

In 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003, the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC) distributed an average of 3,500 copies of the PRISM Awards television special to treatment and recovery centers throughout the nation. This year, thanks to additional support from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), EIC is able to send out more than 11,000 copies of the 8th Annual PRISM Awards—that’s one copy to every single treatment center in SAMHSA’s national database!

The special treatment-oriented video is edited to include commentary about drug, alcohol and tobacco use and addiction from PRISM-winning celebrities and congressional representatives, who speak directly to treatment counselors and to those in treatment.

Discussion questions are included with the PRISM Awards treatment video. Developed by EIC in consultation with Dr. Allen Berger, Clinical Director of the Center for Counseling and Recovery in Torrance, CA, these discussion questions are used by counselors to encourage clients in treatment to discuss their problems openly and to diminish addiction-related stigma. It also serves as a point of departure among treatment counselors.

A Few Questions

- Jeff Probst, host of the 8th Annual PRISM Awards, described the mission of the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC) as “honoring shows that accurately depict and portray the dangers of addiction.” List six personal dangers that your addiction has caused in your life. How does being aware of the dangers of addiction help your recovery?
- In a “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit” episode, the detectives investigated a case of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. When a pregnant woman drinks during pregnancy there is a risk of harming the fetus. This widely publicized risk during pregnancy doesn’t stop many alcohol-addicted women from drinking and endangering their children. What does this tell you about addiction and its effect on a person’s judgment?
- Anthony LaPaglia in “Happy Hour” portrayed a frustrated alcoholic writer whose full potential was never realized because of his drinking. How has your addiction sabotaged your life and in what ways has it interfered with fulfilling your potential?

For more discussion questions from the 8th Annual PRISM Awards Treatment Center Outreach, go to www.prismawards.com.

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