

Initiative to Promote Responsible Drinking

Royal Gazette, Bermuda by Tauria Raynor

Bermuda's community has come together to execute an initiative to promote responsible alcohol consumption to address the increase of alcohol-related road accidents.

The Department for National Drug Control (DNDC), under the Ministry of Culture and Social Rehabilitation, yesterday announced an overwhelming community response to TIPS (Training for Intervention Procedures) which was introduced in March.

As a part of DNDC's master plan to address drug control, they united with the Centre for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (CADA) to provide licensed establishments with TIPS.

The goal of TIPS is to prevent the misuse of alcohol and to promote responsible consumption.

TIPS is the global leader in education and training for the responsible service, sale, and consumption of alcohol. A skills-based training program, it is designed to assist communities in preventing intoxication, underage drinking, and drunk driving.

DNDC efforts will require each licensed establishment to have TIPS certified servers/sellers on the premises at all times. It encourages managers to be certified as well.

Said a spokesman: "We have now trained and certified 33 local TIPS trainers during this initiative and have trained 220 servers and bartenders in 53 different establishments including restaurants, bars, groceries, nightclubs and tour boats.

"The community feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The feeling was we needed more TIPS-trained and certified servers and waiters to sustain the high-level of service our Island is known for.

"As a result, we continue to hold training sessions once per quarter, over a seven-day period, and will continue to support this initiative until all establishments have at least three trained and certified personnel on staff."

Before the initiative was introduced, there was only one certified trainer on the Island offering TIPS.

The training started in 2006. A total of 156 persons in eight establishments were exposed to the training in the two years prior to the DNDC initiative.

"We are glad to now recognise that 61 establishments including six tour-boat companies have participated in TIPS training since its introduction," said the spokesperson.

Minister of Culture and Social Rehabilitation Dale Butler said: "TIPS gives individuals the knowledge and confidence they need to recognise potential alcohol-related problems and intervene to prevent alcohol-related tragedies.

"Our goal is to have the entire Bermudian community speaking the same language when it comes to promoting responsible alcohol consumption. TIPS training will become mandatory so please take this initiative seriously and do your part."