June 29, 2007

New legislation connects nearly 400 families to drug treatment services

Edmonton ... Within the first year of a new Alberta law to protect children abusing drugs 395 families have used the legislation to access treatment services.

The *Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act (PChAD)*, became law on July 1, 2006. Under the legislation, a parent or guardian of a child who is using alcohol and/or other drugs in a way that severely endangers themselves or others can apply to the provincial courts to have the child placed in a protective safe house for up to five days. During this court-ordered confinement, AADAC provides detoxification services, assessment for the abuse of drugs and alcohol, and works with the child and parent/guardian to develop a voluntary treatment plan that can be used after the child leaves the protective safe house.

"This new legislation is an important addition to the continuum of addictions services available in Alberta through AADAC." says Harvey Cenaiko, MLA, Calgary–Buffalo, and AADAC Chair. "We have connected with youth and families we may otherwise not have been able to help. In fact, of the youth who were confined in the past year, 229 chose to continue with voluntary services."

The PChAD legislation was introduced as a Private Member's bill by Red Deer-North MLA Mary Anne Jablonski. Passing with unanimous support of the legislature, it received Royal Assent on May 10, 2005. Alberta was the first to introduce such legislation providing parents an avenue through the courts to seek help for their children dealing with substance abuse issues.

AADAC is an agency of the Government of Alberta and reports to the Minister of Health and Wellness. It operates and funds services that address problems related to alcohol, other drugs and gambling, and undertakes related addictions research.

- 30 -

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Melissa Lovatt
Corporate Communications
AADAC
Phone: 415-8879
Cell: 909-7059
E-mail: Melissa.lovatt@aadac.gov.ab.ca