



for the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse

PRESS RELEASE

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Parents Should Think Twice Before Hosting Parties for Teens Where Alcohol is Served

Big events such as prom and graduation deserve celebrations. Parents planning to host parties for their teens during prom and graduation season should think twice before serving alcohol. **“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”**. This slogan is not just a clever phrase but also a warning to parents not to serve alcohol at their teens’ parties.

Underage drinking parties are a health and safety problem with serious legal ramifications. The **Troy Community Coalition** is working in partnership with the Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities (ACHC) in Oakland County to launch a public awareness campaign which targets parents of teens. The “Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a party to teenage drinking” campaign educates parents about the legal ramifications, and health and safety risks of serving alcohol to teens.

Here are the facts:

- Parents who give alcohol to their teen’s friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, are breaking the law. You can face a minimum sentence of 3 months in jail and/or a \$500 fine.
- Parents who knowingly allow a person under 21 to remain in their home or on their property while consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages can be prosecuted and in some cases, everything associated with such a violation can be confiscated, including personal property.
- Parents can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they in turn hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.

“Prevention is the key. Drinking alcohol should not be a part of growing up,” says campaign spokesperson Yvonne Blackmon, Director, State of Michigan Office of Drug Control Policy. “Parents play a major role in keeping children alcohol-free, thus preventing the heartaches that so often come with alcohol use. Schools and communities need to unite with parents to send a clear message: We want all children to succeed and alcohol use robs them of their potential and future.”

“Too often parents look the other way when it comes to teen drinking, assuming it is a ‘rite of passage’. We want to educate parents that providing alcohol to teens is illegal and irresponsible.” Ann Comiskey, Executive Director, Troy Community Coalition.

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According to the 2003 Troy Student Survey:

1. Alcohol consumption by students has been reduced since 2000 by 1% (8th grade), 3% (10th grade) and 3% (12th grade).
2. Binge drinking has increased for 8th grade students and is above the national average for 12th grade students.
3. Students reporting they had ever been *drunk*, was also reduced by 1% (8th grade) 7% (10th grade) and 5% (12th grade) since 2000.
4. Those students who say they have consumed alcohol, report that they drink at a party or at a friend's home.

“Given our current data, it is clear that we have to get our prevention messages out to adults and parents in Troy, in addition to our youth.” Ann Comiskey.

Parents can protect themselves and their teens by hosting safe, alcohol-free parties for youth during prom and graduation season. Refuse to supply alcohol to children in your home or on your property; be at home when your teenager has a party; make sure your teenager's friends do not bring alcohol into your home; talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at youth events; provide teenagers with opportunities for alcohol free events and activities and provide non-alcoholic beverages.

Local retailers are being asked to partner with the Coalition on this important campaign by display campaign ad in their windows and distributing fact cards at their check out counters. Our goal is to inform every family in Troy about the dangers of underage drinking and legal consequences of serving alcohol to minors. All of us have the opportunity and responsibility to help Troy's youth have a safe prom and graduation season.

The **Troy Community Coalition for the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse** is an active non-profit organization in Troy that works to educate the community on issues related to substance abuse. The group holds monthly meetings and a variety of rewarding volunteer opportunities are available. For more information, contact the Coalition at 248-823-5088.

The “Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking” public awareness campaign is a program of The Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities (ACHC) and the Oakland County Health Division Office of Substance Abuse Services. The ACHC is a regional organization encompassing seventeen communities in southeast Oakland County. The mission of the ACHC is to combine the strength, vision, and talent of its partnership members in promoting healthy, drug-free communities.

The “Parents Who Host Lose The Most, Don't be a party to teenage drinking” program has been adapted from a campaign originated by the Ohio Parents for Drug Free Youth in 2000.