



Healthy Waldo County Substance Abuse Prevention

http://www.healthywaldocounty.org/Substance_Abuse_P

April 2009

In This Issue

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Prom Time Tips For Parents
- Link found between adolescent drinking and adult tolerance

Welcome to the first newsletter for the Substance Abuse Prevention Project of Healthy Waldo County.

Please feel free to share it with a friend.



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April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Healthy Waldo County Coalition would like you to get involved.

Underage alcohol consumption has received a significant amount of attention as a public health concern. High risk drinking in adolescence is associated with serious consequences, including motor vehicle injury and death, suicide, sexual assault, sexual activity, and developmental impairment. Although the Maine Youth Use Survey reports that there has been a 19% decline in underage use of alcohol in 2008, there is still work to do. Over one in four students in the 11th and 12th grades they have reported binge drinking in the previous two weeks.

What can you do to help? Begin by taking notice of your attitude toward alcohol. Send a message that you are sending to youth. Being a good role model to teens helps them make healthy decisions.

Familiarize yourself with the risk factors and talk to your family physician or doctor you have. On its website for underage drinking prevention, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) advises parents that while all teens are at risk by alcohol use, the following risk factors put some teens at exceptional risk for alcohol problems:

- Alcohol or other drug use before the age of 15.
- A parent who is a problem drinker or an alcoholic.
- Close friends who use alcohol and/or other drugs.
- Aggressive, antisocial, or hard-to-control behavior from an early age.
- Childhood abuse and/or other major traumas.
- Current behavioral problems and/or problems with school work.
- Parents who do not support them, talk to them, or keep track of where they are with and what they are doing.
- Ongoing anger or rejection from parents and/or harsh, inconsistent discipline.

They also recommend including in your conversations the precise reason(s)

up the subject of alcohol use. Following are some potential reasons to include this conversation:

- You want your child to avoid alcohol.
- You want your child to have self-respect.
- You want him to know that drinking is illegal.
- You want him to know that drinking at his age can be dangerous.
- You may have a family history of alcoholism, or there may be

One of the most effective things parents can do to protect their children is to Communicate with them about alcohol.



Prom Time Tips For Parents

The High School Prom is a special event in your child's life. Your teen will be making decisions in the next few months. Decisions will be made about their dating choice, the prom theme, prom gowns and tuxes, prom hairdos and corsages. While prom night is a special occasion and a few family rules may be bent, (like giving a later curfew); setting clear consequences will still be important for your teen.

One way to ensure that your child's prom night's dreams are realized is to have a planning meeting with your teen and his/her circle of friends. Together you can establish ground rules, expectations and consequences. You will also be able to gather information and communicate with the other parents before the prom to let them know the agreed upon prom ground rules.


Many decisions will be made; who will take the pictures, curfew, after prom transportation, and safe driving and respectful behavior at the prom. One decision often forgotten in the excitement of planning is to plan what to do if something goes wrong. Let your teen know it is ok to call you for any reason at any time. By discussing predicaments and consequences in advance, you will help your teen and their friends to really make their prom night "Remember".

For more information and parent tips on limiting access, networking, reinforcing, parental monitoring, and being up and ready go to www.maine.gov
Find Out More, Do More!

Study Finds Link between Adolescent Drinking & Adult Tolerance

Parents can help to reduce their children's risk of problem drinking during

Underage consumption of alcohol carries a variety of health risks.



college by keeping a watchful eye on them during high school. The finding is the result of new research published in a recent edition of Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy.

College drinking is a significant public health problem. Although parental monitoring and supervision reduces the risk for alcohol consumption among younger adolescents, few studies have investigated the impact of earlier parental monitoring on later college drinking. This study examined whether parental monitoring indirectly exerts a protective effect on college drinking by reducing high school alcohol consumption.

Even moderate amounts of alcohol can alter teens' brain and liver function, possibly leading to higher alcohol tolerance later in life, according to new research from Baylor University. "The body and brain are still developing during adolescence and this shows even a small amount of alcohol can have harmful effects."

"Many balance alcohol consumption, based on perceived changes in the way they feel or behavior, and what has been shown is that you can have no changes in your behavior in terms of tolerance but still be changing liver and brain function that will produce tolerance later in life," said lead researcher Douglas Matthews.

The study findings were published online Nov. 28, 2008 in the journal [Alcohol](#).