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Parents Matter

Havana Area Prevention Team

Special points of interest:

- Your Actions Matter
- Health Risks
- HAPT Contact Info

This month's *Parents Matter* newsletter focuses on the current prevention campaign happening around Mason County. Have you seen any of these images before? This month's newsletter also shares reminders about the health risks associated with underage drinking. Please talk about these risks with your child.

Your Actions Matter

Tragic health, social and economic problems result from the use of alcohol by youth. Underage drinking is a causal factor in a host of serious problems. In 2010, underage drinking costs the citizens of Illinois \$2.9 Billion. This translates to a cost of \$2,276 per year for each youth in the State or \$3.26 per drink consumed underage.

Any adult who cares about young people, needs to know that adults can play an important role, for or against teen health and safety. **Research has shown that while youth alcohol use is swayed by many factors, some of the most important factors are what adults say and do about youth drinking.**

HAPT along with other local coalitions is continuing the implementation of a substance-abuse prevention campaign in Mason County. Now in its fifth year, the focus of this campaign is to encourage adults in Mason County to help keep alcohol out of the hands of underage youth.

According to the 2014 Illinois Youth Survey, 19% of Mason County 10th graders reported that they sometimes or often get alcohol from an adult (other than their parents) with that adult's permission. The good news is that 19% is a decrease of 4% from the previous survey year (2012)! This positive trend is encouraging, yet action is still needed.

Underage alcohol use may be viewed by some as an acceptable rite of passage. Reality, exposed by health data, is that underage drinking is a serious threat to youth

development and health. As a community, parents and other adults can share the responsibility to keep teens safe.

YOUR *Actions do* **MATTER**

*It takes a community
to keep our kids safe.*

HELP PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING

chestnut.org/prevention

Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



Havana Area
PREVENTION TEAM



Some ways to do this include:

- Locking and monitoring the liquor in your home.
- Supporting the message underage drinking is a threat to the health of teens.
- Not providing or purchasing alcohol for a minor.
- Understanding the current laws.
- Working together to create a community where young people can socialize and feel good about themselves without drinking.

Teens say that they rely on adults in their lives more than anyone else to help them make tough decisions and to provide good advice. As a parent your actions matter when it comes to preventing underage alcohol use.

Campaign materials are being distributed throughout the county in the form of billboards, flyers, newspaper ads, and posters. Funding for the campaign is provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the USA.

Havana Area PREVENTION TEAM

PO Box 431
Havana, IL 62644

Phone: 309-543-3381
E-mail: havanapreventionteam@gmail.com

Promotes comprehensive community-wide prevention efforts.

Empowers youth & families to develop and lead healthy lifestyles.

Havana Area Prevention Team is a non-profit organization that seeks to promote:

- Healthy, happy, and responsible lifestyles for area youth and families.
- Awareness of positive alternatives and support of positive actions and activities for youth and families in and around the Havana area.

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Health and Safety Risks of Underage Drinking

- Underage drinking is a risk factor for heavy drinking later in life, and continued heavy use of alcohol leads to increased risk across the life span for acute consequences and for medical problems such as cancers of the oral cavity, larynx, pharynx, and esophagus; liver cirrhosis; pancreatitis; and hemorrhagic stroke.
- Underage drinking is a leading contributor to death from injuries, which are the main cause of death for people under age 21. Annually, about 5,000 people under age 21 die from alcohol related injuries involving underage drinking. About 1,900 (38%) of the 5,000 deaths involve motor vehicle crashes, about 1,600 (32%) result from homicides, and about 300 (6%) result from suicides.
- Youth who report drinking before the age of 15 are more likely than those who begin drinking later in life to have other substance abuse problems during adolescence; to engage in risky sexual behavior; and to be involved in car crashes, unintentional injuries, and physical fights after drinking, both during adolescence and in adulthood.
- Underage drinking plays a significant role in risky sexual behavior, including unwanted, unintended, and unprotected sexual activity, and sex with multiple partners. Such behavior increases the risk for unplanned pregnancy and for contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including infection with HIV/AIDS.
- Underage alcohol use increases the risk of physical and sexual assault, academic failure, illicit drug use, and tobacco use; and can cause a range of physical consequences, from hangovers to death from alcohol poisoning. It can cause alterations in the structure and function of the developing brain, which continues to mature into the mid-to late-twenties, and may have consequences reaching far beyond adolescence.
- About 45% of people who die in crashes involving a drinking driver under the age of 21 are people other than the driver.



** Information taken from National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Handout "Facts About Underage Drinking"*

For more education information please visit <http://www.samhsa.gov/underagedrinking>