

YOUTH TAKE CHARGE OF UNDERAGE DRINKING PREVENTION

Capital City Youth Coalition for Alcohol Education and the Franklin County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy recognizes local law enforcement and youth

Frankfort, KY. (May 8, 2014) –No matter what county a minor lives in, older siblings, friends, even parents can be a source for booze. On March 27, teenaged members of the Capital City Youth Coalition for Alcohol Education (YCAE) placed bright yellow warning stickers on alcohol beverages to remind adults its illegal to purchase alcohol for minors.

“Sticker Shocks are a proven approach to get youth involved in reducing underage drinking by reducing the social availability of alcohol to minors,” said Tara McGuire, State Alcohol Prevention Enhancement Site Manager with Bluegrass Prevention Center. “The fact that 70% of Franklin County 12th grade students report its sort of easy to very easy to get alcohol (2012 KIP Survey) is disturbing.”

Seven (7) YCAE members from Western Hills High School and Franklin County High School: Destini Ledford; Charisma Haynes; Japira Dorsey; Jalissa Clay; Kristein Pilcher; Kayla Gibson; Caroline Coles, placed approximately 800 stickers on multi-packs of beer at Pic Pac in Frankfort. Students were accompanied by their adult advisors: Betty Lawson, Amy Rawlins and Tara McGuire. Two (2) Frankfort Police Department officers attended the event: Officer Mike Wells and Officer Herb Wilson.

“The point is for adults to see the stickers in the stores, and if they purchase the alcohol, to see the message again inside their refrigerators, and choose not to provide alcohol to a minor,” said McGuire. The stickers were designed by youth coalition members and read, “Parents: You are the Greatest Influence in your Children’s Lives. Underage Drinking can cause permanent damage to the developing brain, and lead to injury or even death. Keep Alcohol Away from Youth. It’s the Law, and Your Responsibility.” This project was funded by the Franklin County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy (ASAP) Board.

The YCAE students and Franklin County ASAP Board are also planning to conduct a law enforcement and youth recognition event at the Franklin County Fiscal Court Meeting on May 8, 5:00 p.m., and at the Frankfort City Council Meeting on May 19, 2014. The youth will recognize the Frankfort Police Department with an Outstanding Service Award Plaque in appreciation of exceptional leadership, innovation and dedication in support of the Capital City Youth Coalition for Alcohol Education and Franklin County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy. This plaque recognizes the entire department for their commitment to the Capital City YCAE’s mission to reduce underage drinking.

In addition to the presentation to the Frankfort Police Department, Officer Herb Wilson and Officer Mike Wells will receive special recognition for their participation in the Capital City YCAE Sticker Shock campaign and dedication to the enforcement of underage drinking laws. Youth will present the officers with a Certificate of Appreciation and an engraved Underage Drinking Prevention Law Enforcement Hero Medal.

The seven youth members of the Capital City YCAE who participated in the Sticker Shock campaign will also be recognized with Certificates of Appreciation for their outstanding leadership and support of the Capital City Youth Coalition for Alcohol Education, and dedication to the prevention of underage drinking.

Youth coalition teens are taught to look at the whole environment that often condones and contributes to underage drinking, and then look for community-based solutions to change people’s behavior. The YCAE’s goal is to reduce social and retail availability of alcohol to minors and to ensure enforcement of underage drinking laws. By participating in YCAE, youth gain a better understanding of how alcohol affects their brain. They not only generate awareness of what they learn within the community by participating in projects designed to reduce underage drinking, they go back to school and spread the word about the dangers of alcohol consumption by minors to their friends. Youth are very powerful advocates, especially to their peers.

10 FACTS ABOUT UNDERAGE DRINKING

1. **Alcohol is the No. 1 Youth Drug Problem in Kentucky** (KIP 2012, NIAAA 2012)
2. The World Health Organization indicates alcohol is the **world's third largest risk factor for disease burden**.
3. DEATH: On average, **alcohol is a factor in the deaths of approximately 4,700 youth** in the United States per year (CDC 2011).
4. **BRAIN DEVELOPMENT:** Alcohol damages the developing brain, heart and liver (2013 NIH)
5. **DEPENDENCE:** The younger teens drink the more likely they are to become alcohol dependent and drinking drivers (2013 NIH).
6. **MEMORY LOSS:** 1 in 5 KY 12th-graders have reported blacking out from drinking or drug use (2012 KIP)
7. Alcohol is implicated in homicide, suicide, unintended pregnancies, crime, violence, educational failure, and other problem behaviors; all of which are magnified by early onset of teen drinking (PIRE 2011).
8. According to the SAMHSA Drug Abuse Warning Network in 2011, on average, **EVERY THREE MINUTES someone under the legal drinking age in the U.S. has to go to the ER because they drank underage**.
9. Most underage drinkers reported drinking in a private residence verses in a restaurant, bar, park, or vehicle (SAMHSA, CBHYSQ, NSDUH, Special Data Analysis, 2012).
10. **40% of those who reported having started drinking before age-15 reported alcohol dependence** at some point in their lives, a percentage that was 4x higher than that reported by those who started drinking at age-21 (Grant and Dawson 1997).

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Funded by Franklin County ASAP and
Capital City Youth Coalition for Alcohol Education

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