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LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT RECOGNIZED FOR “ZERO TOLERANCE” FOR UNDERAGE DRINKING

Local agencies and individuals are honored by the Bluegrass Prevention Center for support of the Bluegrass Law Enforcement Regional Law Enforcement Task Force to Reduce Underage Drinking

LEXINGTON, KY. (May 8, 2015) –Bluegrass Prevention Center recognized the local prevention and law enforcement agencies and individuals at the May 8th meeting of the Bluegrass Law Enforcement Regional Task Force for their dedication to keeping youth safe by enforcing underage drinking laws.

M.E. Kobes, Director of Bluegrass Prevention Center, presented eight individuals from the Bluegrass Region with an Outstanding Service Award in appreciation of exceptional leadership and support of the Bluegrass Law Enforcement Regional Task Force. Nine agencies were also recognized for their commitment to the task force’s mission to reduce underage drinking.

The following individuals and agencies received recognition for their support.

INDIVIDUAL OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS:

- Deputy Bill Cruce, Mercer County Sheriff's Office
- Local ABC Administrator Bridgette Lester, City of Danville
- Lt. Jason Whitaker, Georgetown Police Department
- Assistant Director of Enforcement Josh Crain, Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
- School Resource Officer Kevin Babcock, Powell County Sheriff's Department
- Sharon Turner, Woodford County ASAP Board/ Midway Council
- Investigator Steve Newell, Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
- Education Branch Manager Tiffany Quarles, Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control

DEPARTMENT/ AGENCY OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS:

- City of Danville
- Georgetown Police Department
- Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
- Lexington Division of Police
- Mercer County Sheriff's Office
- Nicholasville Police Department
- Powell Co. Sheriff's Department
- Woodford County ASAP/ Midway Council
- Woodford County Sheriff's Office



The Bluegrass Law Enforcement Regional Task Force began in August 2013, to provide an opportunity for law enforcement collaboration and training to reduce underage and binge drinking. The task force has hosted eight quarterly law enforcement trainings attended by 118 individuals representing 37 agencies; and featured national and state presenters from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Training Center, the National Marijuana Initiative, Idaho Prosecuting Attorneys Association, Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy, Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Kentucky State Police, Lexington Division of Police, and Richmond Police Department. The task force is funded through a PFS II Grant in association with the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities.

Alcohol is a factor in the deaths of approximately 4,700 youth in the United States per year (CDC 2011) and is the no. 1 youth drug problem in Kentucky (KIP 2012, NIAAA 2012); but **with dedicated and collaborative action between youth, parents, coalitions, law enforcement and communities -- WE CAN PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING.**

For more information about the Bluegrass Law Enforcement Regional Task Force and alcohol illegal use and abuse prevention in Kentucky visit: www.kyprevention.com.

10 FACTS ABOUT UNDERAGE DRINKING

1. **Alcohol is the No. 1 Youth Drug Problem in Kentucky.** KIP Survey, 2012
2. **Alcohol is the world's third largest risk factor for disease burden.** World Health Organization
3. **DEATH:** On average, **alcohol is a factor in the deaths of approximately 4,700 youth** in the U.S. per year. CDC, 2011
4. **BRAIN DEVELOPMENT:** Alcohol damages the developing brain, heart and liver. NIH, 2013
5. **DEPENDENCE:** The younger teens drink the more likely they are to become alcohol dependent and drinking drivers as adults. NIH, 2013
6. **MEMORY LOSS:** 1 in 5 Kentucky 12th-graders have reported blacking out from drinking or drug use. KIP, 2012
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. **EVERY THREE MINUTES, on average, someone under the legal drinking age in the U.S. has to go to the ER because they drank underage.** SAMHSA Drug Abuse Warning Network, 2011
9. Adolescents who obtained alcohol at a party from a parent, either their own or a friend's, reported consuming more drinks and were twice as likely to report past 30-day alcohol use and binge drinking. Foley, 2014
10. Kentucky's Alcohol Retailer Compliance Rate remains high at 93% of retailers refusing to sell to underage youth when checked by the KY ABC in 2013. KY ABC Operation Zero Tolerance, 2013



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