



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



ParentUp Campaign Encourages Parents to Talk to Teens

Vermont Parents Can Learn How to Prevent Underage Drinking

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BURLINGTON – You can't be everywhere with your teenager, and shadowing your child every hour of the day is not a realistic way to eliminate the risk that they will drink. In 2009, half of all high school seniors reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days.

So how do you intervene when you can't be there to stop them from drinking? As the Vermont Department of Health launches the second phase of the "Parent Up" campaign today, parents can learn how and when to intervene.

"We want parents to be aware of the many community prevention and intervention resources available to help," said Barbara Cimaglio, deputy commissioner, Division of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Programs. "Parents can help protect teens from consequences that can affect them for the rest of their lives."

The first phase of the campaign was designed for parents of middle-school aged students. Parents can play a significant role in changing the high rates of underage drinking in Vermont, and studies show that parents have the most influence on whether or not their child will drink.

The campaign includes a postcard mailed to 15,000 parents of Vermont high school students. The postcard shows a scene of teens gathered around a campfire in the woods. In the foreground is a mom, reading in her easy chair dressed in a robe and fuzzy slippers, who looks like she's at the scene ... but she isn't. Because you can't be everywhere with your teen.

The ParentUpVT.org Web site and other materials illustrate simple, proven steps parents can take such as setting clear rules, limiting access to alcohol, and refusing to host underage drinking parties.

While the rate of youth alcohol use has declined significantly in the last decade, 36 percent of Vermont eighth through 12th graders still report they drank alcohol at least once in the last 30 days. The majority of older teenagers say that someone gave them the alcohol, or that they had someone purchase it for them.

The campaign is one component of Vermont's larger Strategic Prevention Framework efforts and involves 29 community coalitions. Parent Up supports local community coalitions with tools to create the right localized approach. ParentUpVT.org acts as a clearinghouse for information and resources.

The campaign is funded by the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration and the Department of Justice.

For more information on about the ParentUp campaign go to ParentUpVT.org or <http://healthvermont.gov> or dial 2-1-1.

You can follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/healthvermont>.

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