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Maine Source

Tips and Talk About Raising Healthy Youth in Maine Township

MCYAF and Police Kick Off *Parents Who Host Lose the Most* campaign

Des Plaines, Park Ridge and Niles Police Departments will kick off the ***Parents Who Host Lose the Most*** campaign in May in time for prom and graduation season. The annual campaign is part of a national effort that discourages parents from hosting parties for their children and friends where alcohol is served to anyone under the age of 21. Look for banners and signs displayed around town and in local businesses that remind parents not to be a party to teenage drinking.



"We want our kids to be safe," said Des Plaines Police Chief Jim Prandini. "We hope parents understand that underage drinking is not a rite of passage, and providing alcohol to teens is not

"cool" or acceptable. It's unhealthy, dangerous and illegal for teens to drink. Their brains are not fully developed, so alcohol affects their bodies and judgment differently than adults. We also want to avoid any drinking and driving. Taking the keys away is not a foolproof plan for preventing harm. Limiting access to alcohol is a better way," Prandini added.

To help prevent underage drinking, he advises parents not to host parties or allow their children to attend parties where alcohol will be served to teens. And if necessary, lock up alcoholic beverages.

"We urge parents to contact other parents and double-check that social events will be alcohol-free and chaperoned. If they do host a party, make sure alcohol isn't brought into the house or on their property by their own child, his or her friends, or other adult family members," said Prandini.

According to the 2010 Illinois Youth Survey, teens in Maine Township say their top three sources of alcohol are from a party or friend (16%); sibling, parent, stranger or other adult with permission (13%); or a

parent or other adult without permission (7%).

In Illinois, it is illegal for a parent or guardian to knowingly permit his or her residence to be used by anyone under 21 to consume alcoholic beverages. In addition, parents may be liable for supplying alcohol to someone under 21 if that person hurts himself, someone else, or damages property.

Anyone who knows of an underage drinking party in progress should contact the police at 9-1-1. MCYAF is a sponsor of the ***Parents Who Host Lose the Most Campaign***.

What's for Dinner?



Meat and potatoes? Pasta and salad? If your answer is "a conversation with my kids" ... good for you! You're not alone.

For example, in a typical week, 72% of Maine Township High School freshmen and 65% of seniors eat dinner together with their parents and/or guardians on three or more days.² When it comes to what's for dinner, the food on the plate is just as important as the talk around the table.

In a Chicago Tribune article in August 2010, Sociology Professor Bradford Wilcox from the University of Virginia said, "Research has linked family dinners to positive behaviors in children, including improved academic performance, less likelihood of suicidal thoughts, and avoidance of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs."

Making time for family may be just what to serve for dinner tonight.

² Source: 2010 Illinois Youth Survey, N=5048



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What's in your Medicine Cabinet?

Some teens are abusing prescription and over-the-counter drugs to get high. These include painkillers, such as those prescribed after surgery; depressants, such as sleeping pills; and stimulants, as in what's prescribed for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Teens may also abuse over-the-counter medications, such as cough and cold remedies.

According to the 2010 Illinois Youth Survey¹, 15 percent of 8th and 12th grade students in Maine Township said they'd used over-the-counter drugs such as cough syrup one or more times for non-medicinal purposes during the past year. In addition, 3 percent of our high school seniors used steroids and/or uppers without a doctor's prescription, and 5 percent of the same group used downers (Valium, etc.) and/or other medicines (such as OxyContin) one or more times in the past 12 months.

Steps to Limit Access to Drugs

Think about your home. What prescription and over-the-counter drugs do you have? Where are they kept? Would you know if some were missing? You can take steps to limit access to drugs and help keep your child drug-free.

1. Safeguard all drugs at home. Monitor quantities and control access.
2. Set clear rules for children about all drug use, including not sharing medicine and following proper dosage and doctor's advice.
3. Be a good role model by following these same rules with your own medicines.
4. Properly dispose of expired, unwanted or unused medications.
5. Talk to your teen about the dangers of abusing prescription and over-the-counter drugs. They are powerful drugs that, when misused, are just as dangerous as illegal street drugs. Tell your child it's not worth the risk.

Dangers of Abusing Medications

Increased blood pressure or heart rate	Disrupted breathing
Damage to brain and other organs	Seizure
Accidental overdose or poisoning	Death
Physical dependence or addiction	Risk associated with mixing multiple drugs or combining with alcohol

Possible Signs of Abuse

Some signs that your child might be abusing prescription or over-the-counter drugs include constricted pupils, slurred speech or flushed skin. Other symptoms vary, but be alert for personality changes, mood swings, irritability, excessive energy or sleepiness, sweating, loss of appetite, forgetfulness or clumsiness.

For more information, see http://www.mcyaf.com/media/pdfs/prescription_abuse_brochure.pdf

Medication Take Back Day

To help prevent substance abuse, MCYAF is sponsoring a Medication Take Back Day on April 30th to collect expired, unwanted or unused prescription and over-the-counter medications at the Des Plaines, Park Ridge and Niles Police Departments. Another Take Back Day will be held in the fall.

¹ 2010 Illinois Youth Survey, N=5048

Making the Message Stick

On April 13th, 85 youth with adult chaperones conducted **Project Sticker Shock**. In a whirlwind of activity, 20 teams visited 49 stores in Maine Township placing 5000+ stickers on alcoholic beverages reminding adults that it's illegal and dangerous to provide alcohol to anyone under the age of 21. Thank you to all our youth and adult volunteers!

