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** Student Survey **

The Drug Abuse Prevention Council in conjunction with Ellington Public Schools has conducted an anonymous drug and alcohol survey to middle school and high school students every four years since 1996. As reported in the last newsletter, results from the 2005 survey revealed that binge drinking in Ellington had increased since the 2000 survey. The 2005 survey also included risky behavior questions and as a result a comprehensive health curriculum was introduced this year at the middle school. Other important data from this survey was used to write a \$255,000 three-year grant for the prevention of underage drinking that the Town of Ellington received in 2006. In late May/early June another survey will be conducted to students from grades 6 through 12. The results of this survey will be very important. We will be able to evaluate our efforts since receiving the grant and results will also provide data to help in obtaining future grants. Parents of 6th grade and high school students will be receiving a letter in the mail regarding the survey and middle school parents will receive their letters attached to their child's mid term report in mid-May. A copy of the survey will be available on our website for parents to view until June 12th. To view the survey, please go to <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>. Your support and cooperation is appreciated!

For more information on youth and alcohol, check out the following websites:

<http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>
www.theantidrug.com
www.stopalcoholabuse.gov
www.preventionworksct.org
www.housepartybill.org
www.madd.org/under21
www.mourningparentsact.org
www.dontserveteens.gov
www.alcoholfreechildren.org
www.Alot2Lose.com
www.thecoolspot.gov
www.sadd.org
www.niaaa.nih.gov
www.notmykid.org
www.drugfree.org

** Parent Survey **



The Parent Connection is always in search of ways to improve communication and information for parents. When visiting our website to view the student survey, we ask that you take a few moments to complete a parent survey. Results of the survey will help us to provide future speakers, workshops and other important information for parents.

Thank you!

Be sure to check out our websites!

<http://youth.ellington-ct.gov> and <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

When your teen attends a party:

- Talk to the hosting parents to ensure that alcohol will not be served or consumed by youth.
- Set and enforce a curfew
- Arrange safe transportation to and from the party. Be available if needed.
- Be awake when your teen arrives home. Check for signs of alcohol use.

When your teen hosts a party:

- Watch the premises at all times to make sure that alcohol is not served or consumed.
- Limit the number of guests, know who is invited, and enforce a "no-crashing" policy.
- Do not permit guests to leave and then return to the party.
- Notify parents or police if teens arrive at the party under the influence of alcohol.

A Stone's Throw: Adult Alcohol use and its impact on youth attitudes and behavior

<http://faceproject.org/Films/Stone.html>

DON'T SERVE ALCOHOL TO TEENS.

It's unsafe. It's illegal. It's irresponsible.



WWW.DONTSERVETEENS.GOV

Rise Above On Community Voice Channel



The CVC production crew members of Rise Above have a new show that is airing on Comcast Cable Access Channel 5. This show is titled *Be the Change With Rise Above presents This Place*. Seniors Alyssa Pallotti and Kara Stauffer are the hosts for the show and their special guest Dennis Laird, M.D. discuss with them the dangers of underage drinking to youth. Dr. Laird is an emergency room physician at Connecticut Children's Medical Center in Hartford. The group show a powerful 13 minute film called THIS PLACE. This film was produced by FACE, which is a non-profit organization whose mission is to advocate action to reduce alcohol problems. The video THIS PLACE can be previewed on the Face website. Go to <http://faceproject.org/Films/Place.html>. To view the entire Rise Above production tune to Comcast Cable Access Channel 5 during the dates and times listed below:

May 6th: 3:30pm
 May 14th: 5:00pm
 May 19th: 9:30pm
 May 23rd: 10:00am
 May 26th: 11:00am
 May 28th: 3:00pm



Rise Above Production crew from left to right: Nick Larew, Demetri Voukounas, Tim Larew, Dr. Dennis Laird, Kara Stauffer, Alyssa Pallotti and Kelly Stauffer.

Social Host Law



Spring brings warmer weather and important events. With prom and graduation season upon us, there also comes an increase in parties and underage drinking. There are parents who believe adult supervised house parties (taking the keys) are a way for teens to gain experience with alcohol and be in a "controlled" environment. Prior to October 1, 2006 underage drinking that took place in private homes was not illegal. **Now it is.** Not only are these parents breaking the law by hosting a house party but they are violating the rights of all other parents who rightfully expect other adults not to facilitate dangerous activities involving their children. The first offense for parents who host is an infraction. After that they are subject to a \$500 fine and up to one year in prison. In addition, they can be held liable for injuries to their guests and also face cancellation of their homeowners' insurance policy. Parents are subject to liability even if a party takes place without their knowledge. For more information on the House Party Law, please visit www.housepartybill.org.

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Website-<http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

Depression in Teens

Most of us feel sad or unhappy at various times in our life, but teenage depression that extends for longer than two weeks and interferes with daily life is considered to be major depression. This type of teen depression is one that isn't to be taken lightly and should be treated as early as possible to prevent further problems. Studies and statistics show that approximately one in eight adolescents may be suffering from depression, a very scary statistic. Even more frightening is that only about 30% of these children who are suffering emotional and mental turmoil are receiving any treatment. Many teens have mood swings or are quick to express anger, but how do you distinguish between normal teenage angst and a more serious problem? The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends doctors perform routine screening on all American teenagers for depression, according to guidelines published in the April issue of *Pediatrics*.

Teen Depression Warning Signs



Although at times teens will normally go through some of these following signs, when they occur alone or for extended periods of time and or occur in conjunction with each other it's important to look at what may be causing them. Major adolescent depression, if left untreated, will rarely go

- Sadness or hopelessness
- Low self-esteem
- Substance abuse
- Spending more time alone (this includes time alone from you as parents and time away from their regular friends)
- Decrease in desire to do things they used to like to do (sports, activities, hobbies)
- Physical ailments (headaches, appetite problems, sleeping problems)
- Problems in school (failing grades, getting into trouble, not paying attention in class)
- Talking about death or suicide (never to be taken lightly)
- Not caring about appearance
- Running away from home

away on its own. Relapses are extremely common and should always be prevented. Other forms of mental health illnesses are more common as well in depressed teens. If teens are left without help, they may decide to take things into their own hands. They can turn to alcohol and or drug abuse to help make their pain go away. At its worst, teen depression can lead to suicide.

Who's At Risk for Teen Depression?

- Females are more likely to develop adolescent depression than males.
- Abused or neglected individuals
- Children that have or have had long-term or chronic illness
- Teens that have a family history of depression
- Teens with family disruptions at home (divorce, death in family, etc)

Source: www.familyfirstaid.org

For questions or concerns or more information on teenage depression, please contact Youth Services Director Diane Lasher-Penti at 870-3130 or email dpenti@ellington-ct.gov. Diane is a licensed marriage and family therapist.

!IMPACT to Visit Students at Ellington High School

Mourning Parents ACT, Inc, also known as !IMPACT, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to eliminate tragedies caused by inexperienced drivers through awareness, education and legislation. They will be visiting students at the high school on Thursday, May 28th as part of a pre-prom assembly. !IMPACT was founded by the families of Dan, Ryan, and Joey...three teens who were killed in separate car crashes in Connecticut within an eleven-day period and a 25 mile radius of one another in December 2002. Besides speaking at schools they have developed a teen driver safety program and programs for parents, educators and law enforcement officials. To learn more about them, visit their website at www.mourningparentsact.org.

Town of Ellington Youth Services

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Ellington Drug Abuse Prevention Council