

Prom and Graduation Season Substance Abuse Prevention Strategies and Activities

Name of strategy or activity: Social Host Awareness Campaign

Description: To educate students, parents, and the community about the risks and consequences associated with underage drinking, safe prom and graduation celebrations, and the penalties for providing alcohol to minors under the Suffolk County Social Host Law.

How to get started: At the onset of planning the Pre-Prom Red Carpet Reception, we included information about the prevalence of underage drinking and its negative impact on youth, families, and the community in our press release and in resources on our website. We asked the Riverhead Central School District to change their prom contract policy by including a copy of the Social Host Law summary with the contract and requiring parents to sign and acknowledge that they were aware of the policy and agreed to abide by it. At the event, we had a table at which parents could obtain pamphlets and resources, join our mailing list, and connect with us on social media for updates and latest trends in youth substance abuse. In order to get parents to visit the table, we offered to email them a link for free high resolution photo downloads from the event.

Resources needed:

Local media including print, online, and radio
Information pamphlets and resource table
Sign-in sheets
Signage

People to get on board:

Coalition staff/volunteers
Local media
School

Steps to Success:

While every effort is made to ensure that the Pre-Prom Red Carpet Reception is a fun, elegant celebration for students and families to remember, the premise of the event is the prevention of underage drinking. The goal is to keep students safe and to seize opportunity to educate parents and the community about the health and safety implication of youth alcohol use.

In 2015, at the urging of the Riverhead Community Coalition for Safe and Drug-Free Youth, Riverhead Central School District incorporated the following verbiage in the Student-Parent Prom Contract, "I have read and understand the Suffolk County Social Host Law information included in this packet and will fully comply with the contents of the law." In addition, Riverhead High School included an informational brochure for parent regarding the prevention of underage drinking provided by the Coalition.

In 2015, the parent resource table was expanded to include information for parents and students transitioning to college and the impact of alcohol use on college campuses.

For more information, contact: Riverhead Community Awareness Program, Inc. (CAP) at (631) 727-3722 or visit us at RiverheadCAP.org.