

Newsletter Article

“Parents Who Host, Lose the Most”

Parents play a major role in their children’s choices about alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. In a recent nationwide survey by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, nearly half (46%) of 17-year-olds had attended parties where teens were drinking alcohol, smoking pot, or using cocaine, Ecstasy or prescription drugs while a parent was present.

The South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) adopted the national “**Parents Who Host, Lose The Most**” public awareness campaign to provide parents with accurate information about the health risks of underage drinking and the legal consequences of providing alcohol to youth. The campaign encourages parents and the community to send a unified message that teen alcohol consumption is not acceptable. It is illegal, unsafe and unhealthy for anyone under age 21 to drink alcohol.

Here are the facts:

- It’s illegal to give alcohol to your teen’s underage friends under any circumstances – even in your own home, even with their parents’ permission.
- You cannot knowingly allow a person under 21, other than your own child, to consume or possess alcohol in your home or on your property.

What can happen if you break the law:

- You face a maximum sentence of 30 days in jail and \$1,075 in fines and fees.
- Your penalties can “stack up,” as you can be ticketed for each underage person you provide with alcohol.
- You can be sued if you give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they, in turn, hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.

What you can do to protect yourself:

- Refuse to supply alcohol to anyone under 21
- Be at home when your teen has friends over
- Make sure that alcohol is not brought into your home or property by your teen’s friends
- Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at other events your child will be attending
- Create alcohol-free opportunities and activities in your home so teens feel welcome
- Report underage drinking to local law enforcement

For more information, go to www.daodas.org.

“Parents Who Host, Lose the Most” is an original program of the Drug-Free Action Alliance.

