
Press Release

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“STICKER SHOCK” CAMPAIGN TARGETS UNDERAGE DRINKING
Martin’s Liquor Store in Mount Laurel To Host March 17th Kickoff

Burlington County Health Officials today announced that a "Sticker Shock" campaign is being initiated in Burlington County to warn adults not to purchase alcohol for anyone under the age of 21.

Freeholder Mary Ann O'Brien said that the awareness campaign will officially "kick off" with a special event at Martin's Liquor Store, Route 38 & Marter Avenue, Mount Laurel, at 10 AM on Saturday, March 17, 2012.

"With the evidence clearly indicating some young people in Burlington County begin drinking as early as the age of 12, it's important to raise the awareness factor for everyone," said O'Brien

"We're pleased that vendors like Martin's Liquor are helping spread the word and also impressed by the number of community partners who are participating in the campaign," she added.

Participants in the upcoming event include the Burlington County Coalition for Healthy Communities, Burlington County Municipal Alliances, The Youth Group TEAM (Teen Exposing Alcohol Myths), Burlington County Youth Advisory Board members and students from Burlington County College's Human Services Club.

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The participating youth will be placing decals on the package goods that state: “Keep it Legal, the penalty for purchasing alcohol for people under 21 is up to 180 days in jail and a fine of up to \$1,000”

Similar events have been held in the past at the Wine Cellar in Cinnaminson, Cramps Liquors in Edgewater Park and Otts in Medford.

The facts regarding under-aged drinking can alarm, said O'Brien. Some of these include:

- Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for America's youth.
(Source: Monitoring the Future, 2004)
- Alcohol kills more teens than all other illicit drugs *combined*.
(Source: New Jersey Middle School Substance Use Survey, 2003)
- Of the surveyed 7th & 8th grade students in NJ, 46.4% have used alcohol some time in their lifetimes. *(Source: New Jersey Middle School Substance Use Survey, 2003)*
- Approximately 395,000 underage youth in NJ drink each year.
(Source: Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation)
- The average age of first use of alcohol in Burlington County is 12.3 yrs.
(Source: (2010-2011 PRIDE survey)
- Studies show that children who begin drinking alcohol before the age of 15 are 7 times more likely than those who start after age 21 to develop alcohol problems. *(Source: American Medical Association)*
- Research indicates that the human brain continues to develop into a person's early twenties and exposure of the developing brain to alcohol may have long-lasting effects on intellectual capabilities, may interrupt key processes of brain development and alcohol-induced brain damage may persist. *(Source: American Medical Association)*
- 20% of NJ youth had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before age 13. *(Source: Center for Disease Control, 2005, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System)*

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- In 2005, underage drinkers consumed 17.3% of all alcohol sold in New Jersey, totaling \$825 million in sales.
(Source: Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation)
- The total cost of underage drinking in 2005 was \$1.5 billion (problems include youth violence, traffic crashes, high-risk sex, property crime, injury, poisonings and psychoses, alcohol treatment, etc.).
(Source: Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation)

Compounding the problem is evidence that the number one place for obtaining alcohol by youth is their home. Moreover, 24% of high school students reported that they binge drank in the past 30 days (5 or more drinks in an hour).

Residents interested in joining the Burlington County Coalition for Healthy Communities can contact Joe Conlin, Prevention Plus Coalition Coordinator at 609-261-0001 or visit www.prevplus.org.

The Burlington County Municipal Alliances are community-based volunteer organizations in the county that coordinate local effort to combat substance abuse. For more information on how to join an alliance in your community, contact Elfrieda M. Francis, County Municipal Alliance coordinator at efrancis@co.burlington.nj.us or (609) 265-5538.

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