



FOR TEENS

In the wake of the tragic death of a Chiles High freshman in a preventable car crash, local organizations are teaming up in a community-wide discussion on the pressures and dangers facing today's teens related to alcohol and drug use.

In a partnership with the Leon County School District, the "Week of Awareness" is scheduled for May 17-22. It will feature in-depth, collaborative reporting by both the Tallahassee Democrat and WCTV – in print, on television and online at Tallahassee.com and WCTV.tv.

The goal is to arm students, parents and school officials with the information and confidence to have difficult discussions.

The Tallahassee Teen-Parent Alcohol Attitude Survey documents widespread alcohol use (and some drug use) at parties and informal get-togethers, with use increasing in the later high school years. Chances are good that you will be offered alcohol and may face peer pressure to drink and engage in other risky activities. Consequences may seem far-fetched or improbable. They aren't.

Safety Consequences

- Drivers with a BAC of even just .01% – the lowest level possible – are 46% more likely to be solely blamed for a car crash than a sober driver.
- Every day in the US, about 30 people die in alcohol-related crashes. This amounts to 1 death every 51 minutes.

While just 18% of Tallahassee teens report drinking monthly or more, nearly 70% believe that everyone else is drinking this often.

Peer pressure is being felt across the board

1 in 3 Tallahassee juniors and seniors have experienced regular peer pressure to drink alcohol.

Teens feel reluctant to report their concerns

41% of juniors and seniors have avoided reporting another student's problematic alcohol or drug use for fear of social repercussions.

78% of non-drinkers and 51% of regular teen drinkers feel they would absolutely intervene if they saw a peer about to drive under the influence.

30% of non-drinkers and 18% of regular teen drinkers feel they would absolutely intervene if they saw a peer drinking to excess.

However... Lives are saved when we are accountable to and for one another...

Talk with your friends and parents today.

Legal & Life Consequences

- These choices are against the law. Your driver's license may be suspended or revoked if you are underage and are caught purchasing or possessing alcohol or a fake ID.
- While adults must have a Blood Alcohol Concentration of .08% or higher to be charged with a DUI, Florida law has a "zero tolerance" BAC limit of .02% for underage drinkers. This BAC level is easily achieved with only one drink.
- DUIs and possession charges can mean difficulty getting into your preferred colleges or jobs.
- Your parents could face criminal charges or an expensive lawsuit if teens drink in your home and someone is hurt.

Health Consequences

- No matter how smart you are or how much you may know, your brain is still developing. Teenage brains are undergoing several maturational changes that make them more vulnerable to substances.
- Alcohol use before your 20s can create permanent, irreversible changes related to learning, memory and more.
- Young drinkers are 4 times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who begin drinking at age 21.
- Every day, 6 Americans die from alcohol poisoning.

Teens think more of their peers are drinking than is reality

40% of students report that they've used alcohol.

