



The Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations

March 29, 2009

To All PTAs and School Communities:

As we come upon the prom season, the Montgomery County Council of PTAs would like to remind all PTAs and school communities of the following position taken by the National PTA. The Montgomery County Council of PTAs fully supports the positions taken by National PTA and Maryland PTA related to underage drinking and drug abuse.

Please take time to review the informational materials provided below.

Sincerely,

Kay Romero, President  
Montgomery County Council of PTAs

**Enforcement of Laws Regarding Alcohol, Drugs, and Driving  
Under the Influence**

*Adopted by National PTA Convention Delegates June 2008*

Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations will support law enforcement in their efforts to increase public awareness of, and advocate for the enforcement of local, state and federal ordinances which prohibit the purchase, possession, or consumption of alcohol and other drugs, or drug paraphernalia by underage persons; and be it further

Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations will support strict enforcement of driving under the influence laws and the passage of more stringent laws that would remove from the road drivers under the influence of alcohol or other drugs; and be it further

Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations will support Zero Tolerance laws that make it illegal for persons under the age of 21 to purchase or publicly possess alcoholic beverages and that make it illegal for persons under the age of 21 to drive with any measurable amount of alcohol in their blood; and be it further

Resolved, That National PTA and its constituent organizations will support the age of 21 as the minimum legal drinking age.



## Teenage Drinking: A Preventable Problem

Proms and school dances are on the calendar, graduation parties may be in the works, pool parties are fast approaching— and underage drinking may be on the guest list. According to a 2002 report by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, underage drinkers account for 11 percent of all the alcohol consumed in the United States.

Among the influences on teen choices to drink is alcohol marketing through popular TV shows and in magazines. (See “Drinking It All In: Alcohol Advertising and Youth” for more information.) So are your teen’s peers. The article “Teens and Alcohol: Preventing that Lethal Combination” has information about peer pressure, provides tips to help kids say “no” to alcohol, and offers guidelines parents may wish to consider for parties and other social events.

A wealth of information about alcohol and other substance abuse can be found at the American Medical Association website. In addition, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) has made its booklet, *Make a Difference: Talk to your Child about Alcohol*, available online. Be sure to visit the Parent Resources area of National PTA’s website, [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) for articles on drugs and alcohol and other topics to keep your family safe and healthy.

*Reprinted with permission from Maryland PTA Bulletin (May/June 2006)."*

### **Maryland PTA Legislative Platform 2009**

[http://www.mdpta.org/bridge\\_legislation.html](http://www.mdpta.org/bridge_legislation.html)

### **Powered By Me**

<http://www.poweredbymemd.com/>

### **MCCPTA Safety Committee - Teen Safety**

<http://www.mccpta.com/safety.html>

["Adults Who Host Lose the Most" brochure](#)  
[Parent Liability and Teen Drinking](#)

**Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program:** *Federally funded program to reduce drug, alcohol and tobacco use and reduce violence through education, prevention and early identification in our nation's schools.*

<http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/safe/>

### **Drawing The Line On Underage Alcohol Use**

<http://www.drawingtheline.org/about.htm>

### **Underage Drinking in Maryland- *The Facts***

<http://www.udetc.org/factsheets/Maryland.pdf>



**More Background Material:**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FROM THE ACTING SURGEON GENERAL

**Call to Action To Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking 2007**

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underagedrinking/calltoaction.pdf>

(Excerpt): Alcohol is the most widely used substance of abuse among America's youth. A higher percentage of young people between the ages of 12 and 20 use alcohol than use tobacco or illicit drugs. The physical consequences of underage alcohol use range from medical problems to death by alcohol poisoning, and alcohol plays a significant role in risky sexual behavior, physical and sexual assaults, various types of injuries, and suicide. Underage drinking also creates secondhand effects for others, drinkers and nondrinkers alike, including car crashes from drunk driving, that put every child at risk. Underage alcohol consumption is a major societal problem with enormous health and safety consequences and will demand the Nation's attention and committed efforts to solve.

For the most part, parents and other adults underestimate the number of adolescents who use alcohol. They underestimate how early drinking begins, the amount of alcohol adolescents consume, the many risks that alcohol consumption creates for adolescents, and the nature and extent of the consequences to both drinkers and nondrinkers. Too often, parents are inclined to believe, "Not my child." Yet, by age 15, approximately one half of America's boys and girls have had a whole drink of alcohol, not just a few sips, and the highest prevalence of alcohol dependence in any age group is among people ages 18 to 20.

**A Guide to Action for Families**

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underagedrinking/FamilyGuide.pdf>

**A Guide to Action for Communities**

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underagedrinking/CommunityGuide.pdf>

**Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth**

<http://camy.org/>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Alcohol and Public Health**

[http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/quickstats/underage\\_drinking.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/quickstats/underage_drinking.htm)

**Quick Stats- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Alcohol and Public Health**

<http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/quickstats/mla.htm>