



June 1, 2010

Dear Parent(s),

As representatives of the Upper Bucks Healthy Communities Healthy Youth Coalition, we are participating in a national campaign called, *Parents Who Host Lose the Most*, (developed by Ohio Drug-Free Action Alliance).

This letter is being sent to parents of high school students in the Palisades, Pennridge and Quakertown school districts with important information to ensure we take every possible precaution to keep our children safe, as the season approaches for graduation parties and summer celebrations.

Every other year, the UBHCHY conducts a survey with all 8th, 10th and 12th grade students measuring the level of positive traits, called the "40 Developmental Assets", (see the 2010 Student Support Card at www.justcommunity.com). As part of the survey, youth are asked to share their perceptions and choices in regards to underage drinking. The most recent statistics for all Upper Bucks 12th graders reveal the following:

- 64% report they have been to a party where peers are consuming alcohol within last year
- 40% report they have used alcohol within the last 30 days
- 40% report that there is no risk or only a slight risk of harming themselves if they would drink alcohol nearly every day at their age
- 28% report they have engaged in "binge drinking" (>5 drinks in one sitting) within the last 14 days
- 37% report that if their parents would find out they had been drinking, they would be "not upset at all, only a little upset or only somewhat upset"
- 25% report they have ridden in a car with a driver who has been drinking within last year
- 13% report they have driven a car after drinking themselves within last year

There is good news to report though. The number one "influencer" in regards to whether your child chooses to drink is **YOU**- not the media or their peers. According to a 2007 national survey conducted by the Roper Organization, 76% of teenagers said parents were the **leading** influence on their decision about whether or not to use alcohol

In the interest of keeping their child "safe", some parents mistakenly believe that hosting a party, (with alcohol and teenagers) on their own property and "collecting keys" is simply their moral prerogative. However it is a clear violation of the law and places everyone present at risk for serious legal and civil consequences. Please go to www.justcommunity.com to download important literature from the *Parents Who Host Lose the Most* campaign. If you would like more confidential information or if you are concerned about another person's drinking or other drug use you may call 800-221-6333.

Reducing the prevalence of underage drinking requires a coordinated response from all of us. During the upcoming week please have a conversation with your child about this issue. Share this letter and downloaded information on the law. **Remember:** *Parents hold the most influence in a young person's life in relation to choices about underage alcohol use.* If we work together, Upper Bucks communities, families and all graduating seniors will experience a safe and fun season of celebrations!

(over)

Upper Bucks High School Principals:

Mr. Thomas Creeden
Principal
Pennridge High School

Mr. Richard Heffernan
Principal
Palisades High School

Ms. Anita Serge
Principal
Quakertown High School

Members of the Upper Bucks HCHY Coalition Steering Committee:

Ms. Lois Dodson
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Pennridge Community

Mr. Joseph Ferry
Pennridge School District
Pennridge Community

Mr. Ray Fox- *Chair*
Parent Volunteer
Quakertown Community

Mr. Steve Gratias
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Pennridge Community

Ms. Donna Holmes
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Ms. Judi Pason
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Ms. Lynette Reed
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