

Preventing Underage Drinking in Caddo County

"Because Caddo County deserves better"

Caddo County Receives Funding to Reduce Underage Drinking

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Caddo County has a high rate of underage drinking. This should be a startling statement. According to the Oklahoma Prevention Needs Assessment (OPNA) survey in 2010, 31.5% of Caddo County 8th-12th graders reported drinking in the past 30 days, and 53.5% of Caddo County 6th-12th Graders reported they could easily obtain alcohol as compared to the state rate of 44.5%.

Many times minors are obtaining alcohol from someone they know, such as a parent, sibling, or friend. Providing alcohol to minors is not only against the law, but it is dangerous. 8.8% of youth in Caddo County reported drinking and driving as compared to the state average of 7.5% and 31.8% of Caddo County youth reported riding with a driver that had been drinking (OPNA 2010). In 2011 there were 53 alcohol related car crashes in Caddo County resulting in 6 deaths. Providing alcohol to minors can put their lives at risk along with others as well.

In 2011 the State of Oklahoma enacted a Social Host Law that makes it illegal for individuals to knowingly and willingly provide a venue (private residence, land, etc.) where underage drinking and other drug use occurs. Through social host liability laws, individuals can be held responsible for these parties if underage people are served, regardless of who furnishes the alcohol.

If someone were to be found guilty of violating the Social Host Law they could receive fines up to \$500 for the first offense (a misdemeanor), \$1000 for the second offense (a misdemeanor), and \$2,500 and 5 years in prison for the 3rd and consequent offenses (felonies), not to mention the possible lifelong memory of a teen that was injured or killed because they were provided a place to consume alcohol.

Currently the Red Rock RPC in Clinton has a Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG) funded through the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) specific to underage drinking prevention in Caddo County and is worked on by Caddo County Interagency Coalition (CCIC). There is a monthly SPF-SIG coalition meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of every month in Anadarko. The meeting for March is on the 13th and will be held at 11 a.m. before CCIC. All who are interested in learning how they can help prevent underage drinking are invited to attend. If you would like to attend please RSVP for location to Red Rock RPC SPF-SIG Coordinator Rob Bennett at 580-323-9784 or robertb@red-rock.com.