



WASHINGTON, March 22 / PRNewswire / — The Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking, chaired by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), in partnership with state and local agencies and organizations, is spearheading a nationwide campaign to curb underage drinking before it starts. Town hall meetings, with the theme “Start talking before they start drinking,” are being convened on and around March 28, 2006, in approximately 1,200 communities across the country.

In over 2 dozen rural and urban Oklahoma communities, residents will come together to learn more about the latest research on the impact of underage drinking on both individuals and the community, and to discuss how their community can best prevent underage alcohol use by reducing demand, availability and access. Oklahoma governor Brad Henry, who has proclaimed March 28, 2006 as underage drinking prevention day in the state, and first lady Kim Henry will be participating in a number of town hall meetings. Other state and local officials, parents and youth will join community leaders and organizations (spanning health, education, law enforcement, highway safety, and alcohol control) across the state to encourage parents to talk with their children early and often about the negative effects of alcohol.

Research shows that parents of teens generally underestimate the extent of alcohol used by youth and its negative consequences, with parents viewing underage drinking as “inevitable.” According to the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, roughly 10.8 million underage persons ages 12 to 20 (28.7 percent) reported current alcohol use. Of these underage drinkers, 4.4 million were age 12-17. Approximately 11.1 percent of the 12-year-olds reported using alcohol at least once in their lifetimes. By age 13 the percentage doubles, and by age 15 it is over 50 percent. Teens use alcohol more frequently than all illicit drugs combined. In addition to its negative impact on health, alcohol use among youth is strongly correlated with violence, risky sexual behavior, poor academic performance, alcohol-related driving incidents, and other harmful behaviors. In fact, alcohol is responsible for six times the number of youth deaths than can be attributed to all other drugs combined.

The town hall meetings will feature recently released public service announcements, developed in collaboration with the Ad Council, that bear the theme “Start talking before they start drinking.” Other first ladies will participate in town hall meetings in Florida, Maine, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio and Wyoming.

More detailed information about date, time and location of town hall meetings across Oklahoma is appended. To learn about town hall meetings elsewhere across the country, see the Stop Underage Drinking federal partners website: <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov>; click on “town hall locations” and click on any state for town hall information.

SAMHSA, a public health agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the lead federal agency for improving the quality and availability of substance abuse prevention, addiction treatment and mental health services in the United States.

Town hall meetings are sponsored by the Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking, which includes the Administration for Children and Families, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Trade Commission, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Office of the Surgeon General, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Organizations Conducting Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meetings

Oklahoma

[This list includes Town Hall meetings reported as of 3/20/06 and, thus, may not be a complete list]

Altus, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Jackson County Community Health Action Team
Email: brandieb@health.ok.gov (mail to: brandieb@health.ok.gov)
Address: Jackson County Health Department, 401 West Tamarack Road

Antlers, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Pushmataha County Turning Point Coalition
Email: donnasg2002@yahoo.com (mail to: donnasg2002@yahoo.com)
Address: c/o Pushmataha County Hospital, 510 East Main Street

Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Washington County Turning Point
Email: ystevens@bartnet.net (mail to: ystevens@bartnet.net)
Address: Turning Point Alcohol & Drug Center a Division of Family Crisis & Counseling, 622 Frank Phillips Blvd.

Clinton, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Red Rock West APRC
Email: mwalls@red-rock.com (mail to: mwalls@red-rock.com)
Address: 3030 Cuter Avenue

Enid, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Community Development Support Association/Youth Opportunity Task Force
Email: cdsa-enid@sbcglobal.net (mail to: cdsa-enid@sbcglobal.net)
Address: 2615 East Randolph
Location: To be determined
Address: TBA
City: Enid
Date: 4/28/2006
Event time: Noon
Town Hall leader: Sean Byrne, Executive Director, PreventionWorkz Inc.

Location: Cherokee Strip Conference Center

Address: 123 West Main

City: Enid

Date: 03/28/06

Town Hall leader: Sean Byrne, Executive Director, PreventionWorkz

Town Hall leader: Lisa Jobes, DARE Officer

Town Hall leader: Justin Simmons, Executive Director Youth & Family Services

Town Hall leader: Jay Curtis, Moderator

Town Hall leader: Cornelius Pitts, Pastor

Town Hall leader: Mike Field, Assistant D.A.

Town Hall leader: Talla Amborsini, Youth Speaker

Organization Name: Prevention Workz

Email: sean_b@cox.net (mail to: sean_b@cox.net)

Address: 1625 Garriott, Suite E

Eufaula, Oklahoma

Organization Name: McIntosh County Coalition for a Healthy Community

Email: shryl.hulme@okdhs.org (mail to: shryl.hulme@okdhs.org)

Address: 107 McKinley, #4

Guymon, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Texas County Turning Point Partnership

Email: kaya@health.ok.gov (mail to: kaya@health.ok.gov)

Address: 1400 North East Street

Hugo, Oklahoma

Organization Name: The Choctaw Nation Youth Advisory Board/Choctaw Nation Healthy Lifestyles

Email: tonubbee@sbcglobal.net (mail to: tonubbee@sbcglobal.net)

Address: Taskforce Choctaw Nation Healthy Lifestyles, P.O. Box 882

Location: Talihina School Auditorium

Address: 600 1st Street

City: Talihina

Date: 3/30/06

Town Hall leader: Joyce Wells, Director Healthy Lifestyles Angie Dancer, Assistant Director Healthy Lifestyles, Roger Green

Idabel, Oklahoma

Organization Names: McCurtain County Coalition for Change

Email: Kelly@mccare.k12.ok.us (mail to: Kelly@mccare.k12.ok.us)

Address: 103 NE Avenue A

Norman, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Noble Community Coalition

Email: smartin@naicnor.org (mail to: smartin@naicnor.org)

Address: P.O. Box 824

Location: Noble Public Schools Administration Building

Address: P.O. Box 499, 111 South 4th

City: Noble

Date: 03/28/2006

Event Time: 06:30 PM

Town Hall leader: Stacy Martin, APRC Director

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Eagle Ridge Institute APRC

Email: khobbs98@yahoo.com (mail to: khobbs98@yahoo.com)

Address: 601 NE 63rd

Organization Name: Red de Esperanza/Network of Hope

Email: anaya@coxinet.net (mail to: anaya@coxinet.net)

Address: 2416 South Harvey

Okmulgee, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Muscogee Nation Community Partnership Board

Email: mcn.ss.jhanun@sbcglobal.net (mail to: mcn.ss.jhanun@sbcglobal.net)

Pawhuska, Oklahoma

Organization Name: Osage Nation

Email: pshook@osagetribe.org (mail to: pshook@osagetribe.org)

Address: 1301 Grandview

Picher, Oklahoma
Organization Name: CPC
Email: cpc@picher.k12.ok.us (mail to: cpc@picher.k12.ok.us)
Address: P.O. Box 173

Shawnee, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Shawnee Asset Building Alliance
Email: shawneeaprc@gatewaytoprevention.org (mail to: shawneeaprc@gatewaytoprevention.org)
Address: 1010 East 45th
Location: Shawnee Public Library
Address: 101 North Philadelphia
City: Shawnee
Date: 03/28/2006
Event Time: 07:00 PM
Town Hall leader: Sonya McDaniel, OSU Extension

Stillwater, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Oklahoma State University
Email: elizabethbruce@osu-com.okstate.edu (mail to: elizabethbruce@osu-com.okstate.edu)
Address: PaNOK APRC, 2324 West 7th Place, Suite 3

Tahlequah, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Cherokee County Community Health Coalition
Email: caroljmc@health.ok.gov (mail to: caroljmc@health.ok.gov)
Address: 912 South Collage

Organization Name: Tahlequah Public Schools
Email: dobbinsv@tahlequah.k12.ok.us (mail to: dobbinsv@tahlequah.k12.ok.us)
Address: 400 West Morgan Avenue
Location: Armory Municipal Center
Address: 100 North Water
City: Tahlequah
Date: 03/28/2006
Event Time: 4:00pm-5:30pm
Town Hall leader: Val Dobbins, Tahlequah B.E.S.T. Coalition Coordinator

Tulsa, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Community Service Council of Greater Tulsa
Email: ablue@cscctulsa.org (mail to: ablue@cscctulsa.org)
Address: 16 East 16th, Suite 202
Location: East Central High School
Address: 12150 East 11th Street
City: Tulsa
Date: 03/28/2006
Event Time: 6:30 PM
Town Hall leader: Alice Blue, Senior Planner

Vinita, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Craig County Community Partnership
Email: cccpelmer@yahoo.com (mail to: cccpelmer@yahoo.com)
Address: P.O. Box 462
Location: Hornet's Corner Diner
Address: P.O. Box 462

City: Vinita
Date: 03/28/2006
Event time: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
Town Hall leader: Carolyn Elmer, Project Coordinator of DFC Grant

Walters, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Positive Education Program Coalition
Email: jbillywps@yahoo.com (mail to: jbillywps@yahoo.com)
Address: 418 South Broadway
Location: Comanche Nation Community Center
Address: Route 3 Box 82
City: Walters
Date: 03/28/2006
Town Hall leader: Jennifer Billy, Project Coordinator

Woodward, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Woodward, Oklahoma
Email: su'ren@odmhsas.org (mail to: su'ren@odmhsas.org)
Address: 1222 10th Street
Location: Pioneer room
Address: 9th & Texas Avenue
City: Woodward
Date: 03/28/2006
Event Time: 6:00 PM
Town Hall leader: Richard Burney, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Yukon, Oklahoma
Organization Name: Yukon, OK
Email: casey.worthen@yukonps.com (mail to: casey.worthen@yukonps.com)
Address: c/o Yukon Public Schools, 600 Maple