Prevention

Reducing underage drinking requires a cooperative effort from all levels of government, alcohol manufacturers and retailers, the entertainment industry, schools, parents and other adults in a community. (IOM) We need to change social norms to reinforce the message that underage alcohol use is unacceptable. (NIAAA)

What MCSAC is doing

- **Education:** Provide alcohol vendor education through PREP and Safe Community Festival Initiative.
- **Law Enforcement:** Support legislation to create a safe and healthy community (e.g., Social Hosting law passed in July 2011 which stiffens criminal penalties).
- **Monitoring:** Work with law enforcement to increase ID compliance checks. Compliance rates improved from under 50% in 2009 to 88% in 2010.
- **Environmental Scans:** Scan community festivals/events and offer suggestions for a safer environment. Provide ID scanners for use at festivals/events to reduce underage drinking.

What you can do

- Drink in moderation: 2 drinks/day for men, 1 drink/day for women. (Rethinking drinking)
- Never drive under the influence, or allow others to do so.
- Never serve alcohol to anyone under age 21. Learn more about social hosting.
- Seek help if you have a problem; encourage others to do the same.
- Support policies and legislation that promote alcohol abuse prevention and treatment.
- If you are pregnant do not drink

Avoid alcohol if you are:

- Taking medications that interact with alcohol.
- Managing a medical condition that can be made worse by drinking.
- Planning to drive a vehicle or operate machinery.
- Pregnant or trying to become pregnant.

Additional tips for parents

Parents often believe that their children don’t listen to them, yet 74% of kids say they turn to their parents for guidance on drinking. (MADD) Adolescents who are aware that their parents would be upset if they drank are less likely to do so. (NIAAA)

- Be informed; use reliable sources: Evaluate web-based health resources
- Talk early and often, in developmentally appropriate ways, with youth about alcohol.
- Be aware of the latest fads (e.g., four loco). See emerging issues.
- Model responsible alcohol consumption.

Manatee County Substance Abuse Coalition
1112 Manatee Avenue West #504, Bradenton, FL 34205
(941) 749-3030 ext 3491 • www.drugfreemanatee.org
• Know the warning signs of an alcohol disorder.

Read more:

• Underage Drinking: The Power of Parents
• Recommendations for hosting/supervising teen events
• Parenting to prevent childhood alcohol use

Underage Drinking

Hosting underage drinking in your home is illegal. Know the law!

• Some people believe that alcohol use is a part of normal adolescence and that parents should encourage responsible drinking. But in fact, adult-supervised settings for alcohol use may actually result in higher levels of harmful alcohol consequences. (JSAD) Read more: Underage drinking is not a harmless rite of passage.
• Some parents believe that it is better to allow teens to drink in their home so they can keep them safe. While this idea may be well intentioned, it is simply misguided. Parents cannot keep impaired teens safe. Read more: A Parents’ Guide to Teen Parties

Minimum Drinking Age of 21 Saves Lives

• More than 25,000 lives have been saved in the U.S. thanks to the 21 Minimum Legal Drinking Age. (MADD)
• The law has led to an 11% drop in alcohol-related traffic deaths among youth. (Accident Analysis and Prevention)