

SPRING 2007

A Word from PPWN President...

Dani Altieri Marinucci

While shopping for a prom dress with my daughter I was a bit surprised by the prices, as was my college-age son who had tagged along for the free lunch that preceded our outing. While the offending price tag dangled from my fingertips he and I raised our collective eyebrows with concern. She calmly stated that the next gown I'd be buying for her would be worn at her wedding. She got the dress.

Prom is here and graduation will quickly follow, bringing Spring and Summer time celebrations. These kids have worked hard and have achieved much in the last twelve years and yes, they sure do deserve a party. And we as their parents should share in the congratulatory celebrations—but not by pouring them a drink.

If you don't think our peers are supplying the kids with booze—think again. Ohio's Drug Free Action Alliance reports in 2006 that 29% of students surveyed indicated that they know of parents who host teen alcohol parties and the American Medical Association reports that 24% of teenagers surveyed in 2005 say they have consumed alcohol with their parents.

You will never know how your friends and neighbors feel on this topic without asking them.

And it isn't just parents doing the serving—the distributors are adding tiny, pocket size shooters with lollipop flavors

to the already kid-friendly flavored lemonades, vodkas and wine cooler market. These 2-oz bottles fit snugly into a tux pocket or tiny tote and boast a 12% alcohol content. [Link to MSNBC Article.](#)

Even if you do not share the opinion that alcohol is unhealthy and a deadly combination when mixed with the teenage brain maybe learning that your home and savings are at risk by hosting the alcohol will change your mind.

Parents who host, lose the most: it is illegal to give or allow your teen's friends to drink alcohol in your home, even with their parents' permission and anyone found guilty of providing alcohol to youth can face up to a \$1,000 fine and six months in jail, in addition to any civil action that can be brought as a result of damages or injury related to the offense. It is the civil action that should get your attention, that is where you're most vulnerable to a costly lawsuit.

The Westlake Parent Connection is hosting a parent education day on May 1 and all adults are invited—see page 2 & 3 for event info and party hosting tips.

This prom and graduation season, please be a parent and not a bartender—the future holds many events—like weddings—to attend in our children's honor.

With gratitude—*Dani*

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Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking

Recently the Acting Surgeon General announced a call to action against underage drinking. Prefacing his six action steps, Dr Moritsugu states, "Too many Americans consider underage drinking a rite of passage to adulthood." He cites a mass of research and studies proving the negative, long-term effects of underage alcohol use. One of his goals is to engage parents, schools, communities, and government in a coordinated effort to prevent and reduce underage drinking.

The Westlake Parent Connection announces a month-long community-wide awareness campaign to address underage drinking. During May the WPC will provide accurate information about the health risks of underage drinking and the legal consequences of providing alcohol to youth. The WPC is joined in this campaign by the Westlake City Schools, Mayor Dennis Clough, Police Chief Richard Walling, Fire Chief Richard Pietrick and the Churches of Westlake, with financial support from Lakewood Hospital and Celebrate Westlake, and guidance from the Drug Free Action Alliance.

Prom and graduation season brings with it great excitement, anticipation and celebration. Sadly, it is also a risky time for our teenagers as they prepare for their new role in life. Poor choices made in the heat of celebration are a danger we as a community wish to avoid. This campaign encourages parents and the community to send a unified message that teen alcohol consumption is not acceptable.

Making alcohol available to underage youth is illegal and can pose serious health risks and legal ramifications for everyone involved.

The legal facts in Ohio:

- Parents who give alcohol to their teen's friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, are breaking the law.
- Parents who knowingly allow a person under 21 to remain in their home or on their property while consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages can be prosecuted and everything associated with such a violation can be confiscated, including personal property.
- Parents can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under 21 and they in turn hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.

Underage use of alcohol is a serious problem that too often leads to harmful consequences for youth and their families. Follow these guidelines when hosting parties for their children:

- Host safe, alcohol-free activities and events for youth during prom and graduation season.
- Refuse to supply alcohol to children or allow drinking in your home or on your property.
- Be at home when your teenager has a party.
- Make sure your teenager's friends do not bring alcohol into your home – check backpacks, grocery bags and water bottles when they come through your door.
- Talk to other parents about not providing alcohol at youth events.
- Report underage drinking to authorities.

Attend these campaign events and learn the legal facts and health risks about hosting teenage parties and help us send a unified message this prom and graduation party season that serving and consuming alcohol before age 21 is unacceptable.

Mock Car Crash & Community Kick Off

Tuesday, May 1, 2007, 1:30 PM
Westlake High School Stadium,
27830 Hilliard Boulevard

This event is planned by the Westlake High SADD chapter with the Westlake Police and Fire Departments. Police and emergency teams respond to the tragic aftermath of an alcohol-fueled mock car crash. The Mock Car crash is the community-wide public kick-off to the May awareness campaign.

(Rain Date: Thursday, May 3, 2007)

Parent Program "Parents Who Host Lose the Most"

May 1, 2007, 7:00 PM,
Westlake Porter Public Library,
27333 Center Ridge Road

Kevin Piazza of the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services explains the legal facts behind hosting parties. Join the discussion and learn how you can host a safe and legal party for your teen.

Underage drinking is not inevitable, it is avoidable. Changing a perceived community norm is not a simple task – but with everyone's help – we can do it.



Source for pages 2—3:

Parents Who Host Lose the Most: A program of Drug-Free Action Alliance
 With support from the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services™

To offer this program in your city go to www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org

Prom and Graduation Season Is HERE

Suggestions for Parents

If your teen is giving a party

- Help your teenager plan the party. Make a guest list and invite only a specific number of people.
- Have your child pass out or send invitations and try to avoid the "open party" situation. Don't send e-mail invitations. They can be forwarded to a large number of people quickly and you lose control of who has this information.
- Put your phone number on the invitation and welcome calls from parents. Let attendees know that if they leave, they can't come back.
- Set rules ahead of time such as no alcohol, drugs or tobacco. Set a start and end time for the party.
- Have plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages. Plan some activities such as music, games, movies, etc.
- Let your neighbors know in advance there will be a party and that you will be there to supervise. Familiarize yourself with the noise ordinance in your area.
- Limit the party access to a certain area of the house/property. Have a plan for dealing with vehicles. Include parking information on your party invitation.
- Call parents of any teen who arrives in possession of alcohol or under the influence. If you can't get in touch with the parents, keep the teen there or call the police if necessary. You can be civilly liable if you know they have been drinking and you let them leave.

- Secure all forms of alcohol, firearms and other potentially hazardous items in your home in a safe place.
- Make regular and unobtrusive visits to the party area with sensitivity to teens' needs for privacy and independence.
- Invite some other parents to help chaperone if there will be a large number of teenagers.

When you're away from home or out of town

- Set and communicate rules and standards to be followed in your absence.
- Do not allow underage youth to have unsupervised parties or gatherings.
- Remind them of their responsibilities and the consequences of their actions.
- Have a relative or responsible adult stay at your home during your absence, have your teenager stay with a responsible adult or ask a neighbor to watch the house and stop in while you are gone.
- If you are concerned that your child might have a party anyway, you can call your local police and ask them to drive by at some point over the time you are gone. Make it a point to tell your child that you have asked the police to do this.

If your teen is attending a party

- Know where your child will be. Call the parent in charge to verify the occasion and location of the party and ensure there will be adult supervision.

- Ask how many teens are expected at the party and offer to help supervise or provide refreshments.
- Make certain that the host will not be serving or allowing alcohol. Ask how they plan to handle the situation if a teen shows up with alcohol or has been drinking.
- Indicate your expectations to your child and the parent hosting the party that if the teens leave and go somewhere else, you will want to know.
- Set a curfew for your teen to be home and when they arrive home, have them check in with you.
- Know how your child is getting to and from the party. Reinforce the message to your teenager that they should never allow someone who has been drinking or using other drugs to drive them anywhere.
- Assure your child that they can telephone you to be picked up whenever needed.
- If the activity seems inappropriate, express concern and keep your child home.

Other ideas

- Get to know your children's friends and their parents.
- Find out their policy on alcohol, drug and tobacco use.
- Remember, it is illegal to serve minors, or to knowingly allow a minor to have alcohol on your property.
- Encourage alcohol-free and drug-free parties and activities for underage youth.

April—Alcohol Awareness Month

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Underage drinking is one of our society's most stubborn and complex challenges.

We know alcohol is the drug of choice for children and teens under 21 years old. We face opposition from peers who see teenage alcohol consumption a rite of passage.

We hear the arguments: "I did it and I turned out fine"; "if they don't 'learn' to drink when their in high school they'll abuse alcohol in college"; and the ever popular, "everyone does it".

Please consider some facts before falling for the arguments above—or any other suggestion that alcohol is okay before the age 21.

They Are Drinking—Are You Helping Them?

Nationally in 2004-2005 almost a quarter (22.7%) of all persons age 12 or older participated in past month binge drinking.

- Binge drinking is having five or more drinks on the same occasion on at least one day in the 30 days prior to the survey.
- The binge drinking rate in Ohio was 20.8%.

29% of 1,382 parents surveyed and 29% of 812 teens surveyed indicated that they know of parents who host teen alcohol parties.

25% of these teens indicated that they have attended a party where alcohol is served to underage youth in the past two months.

61% of these teens said that it is generally easy for underage youth to get alcohol.

12% of these teens maintained that they drank alcohol at the party or they would have drunk if they had attended a party.

Source: "Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking" Evaluation Report, December 2006)

One in three eighth graders drank alcohol in the last year.

One-third of the nation's 10th graders report being drunk in the last year.

These percentages rise steeply during adolescence until reaching a plateau at 21 years old.

Source: Monitoring the Future Study, 2006 & Surgeon General's Call to Action 2007.

Every day, 5,400 young people under 16 have their first drink of alcohol.

Source: Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth with calculations from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health

Alcohol consumption by adolescents results in brain damage - possibly permanent -and impairs intellectual development.

Source: Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, Volume 24, Number 2 National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, February 2000

Underage drinking cost Ohioans \$231 million in medical costs in 2001.

Source: Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, 2004

Parents Make the Difference

The kids are telling us what we need to do to help them make healthy choices—are we listening?

- Adolescents drink less and have fewer alcohol-related problems when their parents discipline them consistently and set clear expectations.

Source: Hawkins JD, Graham JW, Maguin E, et al. 1997 Exploring the effects of age of alcohol use initiation and psychosocial risk factors on subsequent alcohol misuse. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*. 58(3): 280-290

- If drinking is delayed until age 21, a child's risk of serious alcohol problems is decreased by **70 percent**.

Source: Calculated from information contained in: Grant BF, Dawson DA. 1997, Age at onset of alcohol use and its association with DSM-IV alcohol abuse and dependence. Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey. *Journal of Substance Abuse* 9:103-110.

Yes Your Teen is Crazy—Dr. Michael Bradley

Fairview Park Community Challenge Coalition hosted two events featuring psychologist and bestselling author Dr. Michael Bradley on March 28 & 29, 2007.

Coalition Coordinator, Karen Salamon reports 165 parents from 18 communities heard Dr. Bradley's engaging presentation at Fairview High School.

Bradley discussed the most recent studies and research that redefines the picture of how the adolescent brain functions and interacts.

Dr. Bradley demonstrated how respect-based techniques for adolescent intervention is demonstratively more

effective than fear-based motivation.

His lecture was interspersed with entertaining experiences from his own family—both as a child and a father, his lengthy and impressive practice and his research.

The following morning, Dr. Bradley met with 80 area teen professionals from 15 communities.

If you missed this invaluable lecture read the book! [Click here for a review of Dr. Michael Bradley's book.](#) *Yes your teen is Crazy! Loving Your Kid Without Loosing Your Mind*

Local Programs—Free and open to the public

April 24, 9:30 – 11 AM

Helicopter Parents: Learn When to Step Back ,Foster Independence

Sally Rapp, LPCC
Beach Education Center,
Fireside Room, 1101
Morewood Parkway,
Rocky River

May 1, 7PM

Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Campaign Against Underage Drinking

Kevin Piazza, Ohio Department Of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services,
Ohio Investigative Unit
Westlake Porter Public Library, 24350 Center Ridge Road, Westlake

The Price of Privilege by Madeline Levine, Ph.D.

Dr. Levine is not only a practicing psychologist, but a parent raising kids in a community much like Westlake, Ohio. Her insight into the issues that confront our children and us as parents, is remarkable.

The book is divided into four very distinct parts, each addressing a specific issue and certainly can stand alone if necessary.

Part One: America's New "At-Risk" Child

Tells us that even affluent kids can get depressed, money does not buy happiness, nor should it.

Part Two: How the culture of affluence works against the development of the self

Dr. Levine recounts example after example of kids who just feel empty. On the outside, these teens have "everything", a shiny

new car, money in their pockets, good looks, good grades, but on the inside, they are struggling to find their sense of self. Are they really the person their parent's see or are they struggling to discover who they really are?

Part Three: Parenting for Autonomy

Here she acknowledges that we all probably read numerous books on parenting when our children were born, but what about now that they are teens, does that advice still apply? Yes, but we need to understand the "style" of parenting we are using and how it affects our children and their behavior.

Part Four: Why you have to stand on your own two feet before your children can stand on theirs

Just because everyone is doing it, doesn't make it right. She empowers us to make the tough choices for our children, and for ourselves, in order to ultimately help them to make the right choices for themselves.

-Book Review by Lynda Appel, who has three children ages 14, 12 & 8.

Dr. Levine is raising her kids in a community much like Westlake, Bay Village, Avon Lake or Rocky River

Her insight into the issues that confront our children and us as parents, is remarkable.

PPWN Mission

The Parent to Parent Westside Network is a non-profit group representing Westside communities of Cleveland, assembled to educate, communicate, and network with fellow parents about the tough issues confronting all school age youth.



PPWN Vision

To create a venue for communities (defined as Westside families, homes, schools, and places of worship) to discuss the tough issues that face our youth and seek solutions together.

And to give voice to the people who share this healthy vision



The PPWN is a 501(C)(3) tax-exempt organization

Parent to Parent Westside Network

P.O. Box 45145

Westlake, Ohio 44145

Executive Committee

Dani Altieri Marinucci, President

Lynda Appel, Vice President

Laurie Comiskey, Treasurer

Julie Johnson, Secretary

WWW.PARENT2PARENTNETWORK.ORG

Parent to Parent Westside Network

The Parent to Parent Westside Network (PPWN) is a coalition of parenting groups that have joined efforts to promote education, communication and networking among our parenting peers on the tough issues facing our children.

The PPWN provides individual and member organizations with: shared advertising of parenting programs, combined volunteer resources, larger audiences, and most importantly a stronger voice and influence in preventing risky youth behavior.

Our children's social, academic,

and athletic lives cross geographic boundaries, therefore we as parents must create our own "connections" with our peers in other cities. The network allows individual parents, schools or parenting groups to access quality parenting programming and critical information on the latest risky behavior facing our kids.

Members include individuals and schools from: Amherst, Avon, Bay Village, Fairview Park, Lakewood, North Olmsted, North Ridgeville, Rocky River and Westlake. Network organizations in-

clude the Amherst Parent Connection, Bay Advocates, Community Challenge, Fairview Park Community Challenge Coalition, Rocky River Coalition for Youth Asset Development and Westlake Parent Connection.



Reaching Out!