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## **Parents and Teens Opinions Differ on Access to Alcohol**

*Parents underestimate ease of teens ability to obtain alcohol.*

(Columbus, Ohio) Since 2000, Drug-Free Action Alliance has been educating parents and their adolescent children about Ohio's underage drinking laws through its successful *Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking* public awareness campaign. These efforts have shown an increased understanding and awareness of Ohio's underage drinking laws. Nevertheless, adolescents continue to have access to alcohol, possibly because adults are uninformed about the extent of their children's alcohol use.

Survey results collected between 2001 and 2006 show that parents fail to recognize the extent to which their children are attending parties where alcohol is made available for teenagers to drink. In 2006, parents underestimated their children's attendance at such parties by almost 12 percent, a knowledge gap that may be contributing to continued teen access to alcohol.

"Parents should be aware of Ohio's laws regarding youth alcohol use," said Patricia Harmon, Executive Director of Drug-Free Action Alliance. "Parents must be vigilant about knowing where their children are and should talk with their teens about the health, safety, and legal risks to themselves and others, including other adolescents and/or adults buying or providing alcohol for them."

Ohio law states that underage individuals cannot be given alcohol or be permitted to consume alcohol by anyone other than their parents, who must be present at the time of consumption. It is illegal for parents to give alcohol to their teens' underage friends even if the friends have their parents' permission. Parents and other adults can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under age 21 who then hurt themselves or someone else and/or damage someone's property. Finally, parents and other adults can face a maximum sentence of six months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine for breaking these laws.

Parents are encouraged to host alcohol-free parties for their teen and their friends and to send a clear message that the use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs is illegal, unsafe, unhealthy and unacceptable.

Drug-Free Action Alliance is a statewide non-profit organization providing leadership to promote safe and drug free communities by bringing together individuals, groups and resources to prevent the abuse of alcohol and the use of other drugs. More information, and the analysis of the evaluation data from the *Parents Who Host Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking* media campaign, can be obtained online at [www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org](http://www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org).

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Red Ribbon Celebration

College Initiative to Reduce  
High Risk Drinking

Ohio Resource Network  
Clearinghouse

Statewide Prevention  
Coalition Association

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

Ohio Center for  
Coalition Excellence

Know!

Youth Philanthropy  
Council

[www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org](http://www.DrugFreeActionAlliance.org)