



Public Health
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Frederick County Health Department

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

APRIL 6, 2017

APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

FREDERICK, MD – Each day in the United States, an estimated 4,750 kids under the age of 16 take their first full drink of alcohol (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA). Locally, one third of Frederick County High School students reported having at least one drink of alcohol on one or more occasion in the past 30 days. Approximately one in six students reported binge drinking, defined as drinking 5 or more drinks within a couple of hours (2014 Youth Risk Behavior Survey).

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and the Frederick County Health Department joins other health professionals across the nation to raise awareness around alcohol use. This year, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) highlights the important public health issue of underage drinking. The focus of this year's theme "Connecting the Dots: Opportunities for Recovery" is to prevent teen alcohol use and highlight the important role parents can play in preventing alcohol use by youth.

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Alcohol use by youth can cause changes in the structure and function of the developing brain, which continues to mature into a person's mid-20s. Other consequences of underage drinking can include academic, social and legal problems. Youth who start drinking before the age of 15 are six times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse later in life than those who begin drinking at or after the age of 21 according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Parents can play a key role in preventing underage alcohol use. Research shows kids who learn about the dangers of underage drinking from their parents are up to 50% less likely to experiment with alcohol than kids who don't. For more information and resources on how to talk to your kids about alcohol visit www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking.

If you are concerned about a suspected party involving underage drinking or drug use in Frederick County, please contact the **Underage Party Tip Hotline at 301-600-1318**. Callers are not required to give their names and all information is confidential.

Members of the community are encouraged to get involved by joining the Frederick County – Alcohol Prevention Initiative (FC-API) Coalition. This community-based coalition is comprised of motivated individuals and agency members aimed at reducing the misuse of alcohol by youth and young adults in Frederick County. For more information contact Laura LaMotte, Prevention Coordinator at the Frederick County Health Department at 301-600-3390 or email llamotte@frederickcountymd.gov.

The Frederick County Health Department offers a variety of substance abuse and mental health treatment services and prevention resources for parents, youth and the community. For more information, call 301-600-1755 or visit www.frederickcountymd.gov/BHS.

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