

BARRON COUNTY SAFE & STABLE FAMILIES COALITION

The Barron County Safe & Stable Families Coalition builds community partnerships to promote family strength and stability for the development of healthy communities.

March 11, 2008

Barron County Safe & Stable Families Coalition would like to invite you and your associates to attend a Community Town Hall Meeting “What’s Up With Alcohol?” on Monday March 31, 2008 from 7-8:30 at UW Barron County in Rice Lake.

Alcohol use by teens in our community is often seen as a right of passage; part of our Wisconsin culture that is “*harmless*”. Often heard is “we did it when we were that age”, “you’ll never stop this” or “as long as they don’t drive what’s the big deal”? Research into alcohol use by our children is showing that it is a big deal! We now know that alcohol affects children and teens differently than adults. We should be concerned and we must work to change the acceptance of underage alcohol use in Barron County and Western Wisconsin. Did you know?

- Western Wisconsin had one of the highest rates of underage binge drinking in the nation. Binge Drinking is defined as 5 or more drinks in 2 hours for males and 4 or more drinks in 2 hours for females (2006 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Report).
- 24% of Wisconsin students had their first drink (not a sip or two of someone’s drink) before they were 13 years old (2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey).
- Of children who start drinking before age 14, 47% become alcohol dependent at some point in their lives vs. only 9% of those who wait until they are age 21 to start drinking (Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine, 2006 Jul;160(7):739-46).

State Representative, Mary Hubler, will facilitate the Town Hall Meeting where we will discuss the latest information and trends on underage alcohol use. Discussion groups are built into the evening to brainstorm ways each of us can help combat underage alcohol use in our homes and communities. As leaders in your communities you have the power to make a difference! Please attend and invite your coworkers, friends, and neighbors.

Coffee, milk, cookies and many door prizes will be provided. For more information contact Laura Sauve, 537-6109 or laura.sauve@co.barron.wi.us.

The coordinating committee thanks you for your commitment to the health of our youth,

Cindy Becker, CESA #11

Donna Cordes, County Board Supervisor

Linda Heppner, UW- Extension

Karen Lettner, Barron Area Schools

Marty Voshell, Cumberland Hospital

Karen Chilson, CESA #11

Chris Fitzgerald, Rice Lake Police Dept.

Lyndsey Kurtz, Boys & Girls Club

Laura Sauve, DHHS-Public Health

Joe Willger, Marshfield Clinic

Sample town hall meeting invitation courtesy of Barron County Safe & Stable Families Coalition, Barron County, WI, Northwoods Coalition member