

For Immediate Release

From: The Branch County Substance Abuse Task Force

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Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Prevention of Underage Drinking in Branch County

Is teen drinking a problem in Branch County? Isn't it just a few bad apples? Isn't it just at parties in the summer out in a cornfield somewhere? It can't be as bad as Meth! If they're supervised what's the big deal? Have you heard any of these comments from other parents? Have you said or thought some of these things yourself? In 2007 we surveyed teens in Branch County and this is what THEY said.

- How much do teens drink? - 2 in 3 said at least once a month
- Where do teens drink? - 6 in 10 said at home or at a friend's house
- Do you ever binge drink (3 or more in 2 hours)? - 1 in 2 said yes at least once in the last year
- How easy is it to get alcohol? - 1 in 2 said it was east to get alcohol
- When do teens drink? - 3 in 4 said on the weekend
- Do your parents talk with you about the dangers of alcohol & drugs? - 1 in 3 said NEVER; 1 in 2 said never or maybe 1 or 2 times (with a teen this might qualify as never!)

Do you still think underage drinking isn't a problem in Branch County? There will be a series of town hall meetings all across the United States in the next 2 weeks in an attempt to raise awareness about the issue of underage drinking, how it affects communities and to try and come up with solutions that we can use in our own communities to reduce or eliminate this problem.

This forum will provide an opportunity for parents, teachers, public officials, and community members to voice their concerns and suggest ideas for preventing young people from using alcohol. This is your chance to be heard and to offer real solutions.

Agenda for Town Hall Meeting

- When:** March 31, 2008 ~ 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- Cost:** **FREE**
- Where:** Branch Area Careers Center ~ 366 Morse Street, Coldwater
- Featured Speaker:** Dr. Jeffrey Greene, Evaluation Specialist (survey designer)
- Local Panel:** Panel discussion with law enforcement, substance abuse experts, court personnel and local medical professionals.

A question and answer session will follow the local panel discussion where parents can ask questions and propose solutions to this problem that affects all of us. This is an event you will not want to miss.

Sponsored by: The Branch County Substance Abuse Task Force

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