

# Joining Forces to Prevent Teen Drinking

Crawford Abuse Resistance Effort (C.A.R.E.) of Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital, Prairie du Chien Police Department, and the Crawford County Sheriff's Department have joined forces to prevent adult hosted drinking parties in Crawford County using the "Parents Who Host, Lose the Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking" campaign.

Parents Who Host Lose the Most is a state-wide effort involving more than 60 Wisconsin Counties that alerts parents to the legal and health-related consequences of purchasing, providing or pouring alcohol for anyone under age 21, other than their own child. As part of the campaign, coalition members will be providing information about the dangers of underage drinking, the legal consequences of hosting underage drinking in your home, and how parents and other family members can host safe and fun alcohol-free events for youth.



*From left: Rick Peterson, Director, C.A.R.E.; Chad Abram, Prairie du Chien Police Department; Linda Munson Prairie du Chien City Council; Mike King, Prairie du Chien Police Chief; Aaron Kramer, City Administrator, Prairie du Chien; Jane Schaaf, Family Living Agent, UW Extension; Emily Wetter, Prevention Specialist, C.A.R.E.; and Jerry Moran, Crawford County Sheriff.*

"Parents often cite two misguided reasons for hosting teen parties where alcohol is served. First, they believe it is safer for teens to drink at home; and secondly, some parents think that hosting teen parties makes them appear to be cool parents," explains Emily Wetter, Prevention Specialist with Crawford Abuse Resistance Effort (C.A.R.E.) of Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital. "When parents serve alcohol to teens in their

home, in reality what they are doing is facilitating their child's comfort with alcohol. This sends a mixed message. Teens believe if it's acceptable to drink at home, it's ok to drink."

In addition to the planned public information effort, local law enforcement will be conducting alcohol age compliance checks in the area to confirm that local vendors comply with laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol to anyone under age 21. The Prairie du Chien Police Department received a CARD (Comprehensive Alcohol Risk ReDuction) Grant. This grant will help to fund alcohol compliance checks as well as party patrol over the upcoming graduation season. Alcohol compliance checks are among the most effective strategies law enforcement can use against underage alcohol abuse.

"The Prairie du Chien Police Department takes underage drinking seriously," warns Chief Mike King. "Individuals who purchase, provide or pour alcohol for anyone under age 21, except their own child, are committing a crime and will be charged accordingly. Fines for someone providing alcohol to a minor under the age of 16 is \$767.50. Providing alcohol to a person age 17 – 20 is \$515.50 for first offence and \$767.50 for second offence."

"Underage drinking is illegal, it has long-term health consequences, and it is a factor in all five of the leading causes of death among youth," said Rick Peterson, Program Director of C.A.R.E. of Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital. "We want this to be a happy graduation season, underage drinking isn't part of that picture."

For more information on C.A.R.E. please call 608-357-2083.