



Scott Walker
Governor

Dennis G. Smith
Secretary

State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

Alliance for Wisconsin Youth

<http://www.allwisyouth.org/>
1 W. Wilson St. Room 850, Madison, WI 53703
608-266-9485



April 19, 2011

Romy Snyder
Executive Director
Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau
Administrative Office
115 La Crosse Street
P.O. Box 390
Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965-0390

Dear Ms. Snyder:

I am writing on behalf of the Alliance for Wisconsin Youth, a statewide organization made up of over 120 local community coalitions throughout Wisconsin with a mission of preventing alcohol and other drug abuse and promoting health youth development.

Prom and graduation is soon upon us, and many people are concerned with upcoming post-prom/graduation parties. These parties are all too often the catalyst for underage drinking and related unhealthy and serious consequences. Young people in our state attend post-prom/graduation parties outside their hometown and travel to destinations, such as the Wisconsin Dells/Lake Delton area, for a weekend of celebration. The Wisconsin Dells/Lake Delton area is often a prime destination due to the high volume and availability of hotel rooms. As we want everyone to have a fun, safe celebration, we are asking for your help by communicating with your members to support healthy, safe, and drug free post-prom/graduation activities.

The Alliance for Wisconsin Youth supports a statewide campaign *Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking* to address the issue of teen drinking parties. The campaign encourages parents and the community, including businesses, to send a unified message at prom and graduation time that teen alcohol consumption is not only illegal, but unhealthy, unsafe and unacceptable.

Teen drinking parties not only result in risk to teens and any parents involved, but they can result in real problems for hotel and lodging establishments such as:

- Liability for knowing leasing a room for a teen drinking party.
- Financial problems due to vandalism or other property damage.
- Liability due to criminal acts occurring on the property.
- Threats to the public image of the business.

We would encourage your lodging and hotel members to help keep prom and graduation nights safe by monitoring teen room parties. Managers should prepare for prom and graduation season by providing training for staff, which should include:

- Staff and adult liabilities.
 - A child who legally consumes alcohol in the presence of their parent and then leaves that presence at any time while the alcohol is in their system is in violation of the law.
 - Adults can be held criminally liable and may be fined up to \$10,000 and imprisoned for up to five years for any harm that results from providing alcohol to anyone under age 18.
 - Adults who knowingly permit the provision of alcohol, or fail to take action to prevent the provision of alcohol to an underage person on their property may be fined \$500 for each underage person.
- Building refusal skills, especially among younger staff who may receive a lot of pressure to lease a room to friends.
- How to monitor the premises for teen parties.
- When and how to report guests who violate the law to local law enforcement officials.
- Consider raising the minimum age to rent a room to 21 years of age.
- Require that the person who is paying for the room be in attendance for check-in.
- Provide guests with written policies regarding their liability should any damages or violations occur relating to underage drinking or other drug use while they are guests.

The Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking campaign and other similar strategies are more effective when they are part of a larger comprehensive plan. Wisconsin faces a culture of alcohol abuse that must be addressed through a collaborative effort that includes community leaders, business, law enforcement, schools, parents, youth and many others. Together, we must act to send a clear message that underage drinking is unacceptable and that it will not be tolerated in our state.

As a state we should be proud of Wisconsin Dells and its reputation as a positive vacation destination that is family friendly, safe and welcoming. We look forward to supporting your efforts to ensure that underage drinking and its related consequences do not diminish the success and health of your community.

Let's pull together to create a strong safety net for our youth during youth celebrations. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,



Louis L. Oppor, Chairman
Alliance for Wisconsin Youth

Cc: Alliance for Wisconsin Youth Regional Prevention Centers
Seth Kuranz, Focus on Community, Racine, WI
Chief Jody J. Ward, Wisconsin Dells Police Department