



Working for a Healthier  
Community

# The Valley Prevention News

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## Local Insurance Agency Warns Homeowners About Liability

### *Providing Alcohol to Underage Youth an Issue*

DVCP's 2009 Community Survey asked local residents whether they believed that their homeowner's insurance covered accidents or other incidents resulting from serving alcohol to underage persons. A few said "yes", 22% said "no" but almost 70% said they didn't know. So we went to the experts to find out exactly what that homeowner's insurance policy you have filed away actually says.

SPF-SIG Project Director, Andy Hauty talked with folks at the Department of Banking, Insurance, Securities and Health Care Administration in Montpelier and found that virtually NO insurance companies in Vermont protect homeowners from damage or injury suits which result from providing alcohol to individuals too young to drink legally.

When we spoke with Regina Werner of the Richard's Group in Wilmington she informed us that The Richards Group staff are currently working to develop a letter emphasizing this point. Plans are to send it out with policy holders' renewal notices. DVCP hopes to encourage other insurers to do the same. Dover Police Chief, Bob Edwards has spearheaded this effort as a way to discourage adults from allowing underage drinking parties to be held in their homes or on their property. "We'd rather avoid problems than have to intercede when they occur", he commented.



*"We're proud to be part of DVCP's campaign to reduce underage drinking in our community."*

*Regina Werner, The Richards Group, Wilmington, VT*

### Midnight Madness Event Includes a Parent/Student Dialogue

Midnight Madness (MM) was as much fun as usual this year but it included something new. In support of the **ParentUP** campaign and the survey of parents of high school and middle school students, DVCP organized a dialogue between adults and middle school students. The dialogue occurred following a pot luck dinner and prior to the MM festivities. It included two short surveys taken by students and adults.

Approximately 50-60 students and 45 adults participated in the dialogue and took the surveys. The results produced an active discussion on issues such as how often parents talk with their children about substance use and the degree of influence parents' opinions have on their children's behavior.

The perceptions of students and those of their parents differed on these two questions which also enhanced the discussion.

Most of the parents present agreed to sign a pledge not to host underage drinking parties or provide alcohol to underage persons and agreed to have their names published as supporters of this campaign to reduce underage drinking in our community.

[www.parentupvt.org](http://www.parentupvt.org)



Help reduce  
underage drinking  
in Vermont.





## Changing Minds by Speaking Yours About Underage Drinking

www.dvconfab.net

### Campaign Creates a Buzz Around Town

At the 2009 DVCP retreat, State Representative Ann Manwaring made a suggestion that got everyone's attention. On its face, it seemed simple enough though its implications were profound. She suggested that DVCP challenge the community to set a goal aimed at reducing underage drinking by a specific percent over a set period of time and then assist the community in reaching that goal.

It took many months to find a way to convey that message so that the community would "get it" and rise to the challenge. We think the **CONFAB** campaign is a good start down that road.

Using Gorilla Marketing techniques, the **CONFAB** Street Team, consisting of Kit Cincotta, Kira McCloskey, Rebecca and Hank Sweeney, Andy Hauty, Janet and Buck Boyd, Buddy Hayford, Randy and Vicki Capatani and Laura Sibilia, who collectively represent Wilmington, Whitingham and Dover, began with what is known as a stealth campaign. Signs and other materials were quietly distributed throughout the three towns in an effort to pique everyone's interest and start them questioning what it all meant.

Unfortunately, there were some unforeseen repercussions (see Page 4) and some feathers were ruffled. But the main goal was achieved. We've created a "buzz" and hopefully the conversation will shift from talking about the signs to discussing ways in which all members of our community can pitch in to reduce underage drinking in our towns.

Creative ideas on ways to follow up on this campaign have already been suggested and we'll keep you informed of what's happening as plans get firm up.

#### GET INVOLVED!

Call Cindy at **464-1698** to volunteer your ideas and tell us how you can help.

#### START A CONVERSATION!

Put a **CONFAB** cling on your car or in your business window, wear a **CONFAB** button, use the **CONFAB** logo on your stationery, sign our parent or community pledge. For more information and copies of the pledges, check out the **CONFAB** website at [www.dvconfab.net](http://www.dvconfab.net)

#### WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY!

### IMPACT OF TAXES ON ALCOHOL STUDIED

A December, 2009 summary of research on the effects of raising taxes on alcoholic beverages conducted by David Jernigan, PhD and Hugh Waters, PhD of the John Hopkins School of Public Health, states that, "...alcohol tax increases [impact the rate of] motor vehicle crash deaths, liver cirrhosis fatalities, sexually transmitted diseases (especially among youth), severe violence towards children, alcohol dependence, male suicides, hospital admissions and a variety of other crimes and ... public safety costs." They conclude that "When alcohol taxes go up, drinking goes down."

Current advocates for an increase in the Vermont beer tax point out that the current tax rate was established almost 30 years ago and is not designed to rise with inflation. In fact, it represented a *reduction* in the existing tax rate when it was adopted in 1981. As a result, Vermont loses substantial revenue each year. They suggest that, given the current fiscal problems faced by the state, it seems like a good time to revisit this issue.

### Parent Tip

Check out these great websites

[www.common sense media.org](http://www.common sense media.org)  
[screenit.com](http://screenit.com)

For advice and information on the content of age-appropriate movies, video games and other media

#### DO YOU HAVE

OPINIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS ?

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## National Motivational Speaker from Youth to Youth Visits Wilmington



Above, Ty Sells with Pride members. On May 4th students from TVHS, TVMS, Readsboro and Stamford attended an assembly with motivational speaker, Ty Sells from the Youth-to-Youth organization. The event was sponsored jointly by the TVHS Pride/SADD group and DVCP. Ty travels around the country entertaining and motivating young people to lead drug-free lives, to think about how they treat others who are “different” and to examine the consequences of making decisions based on what is considered “cool”. He conveys his messages with humor and tells familiar stories that young people can relate to. As a result, he’s very well received by the young people he addresses.



### THE WINNERS!

On May 14th the TVHS Leadership Project hosted the first annual Superstars competition at TVHS. Representatives from law enforcement, the Rotary Club, the TVMS staff and friends, the TVHS staff and TVHS students formed teams. The students fared much better than the adults and took the top prizes. The TVHS Junior/Senior team took home the championship trophy and the TVMS team was runner-up. A great time was had by all.



### THE RUNNERS UP!

## Deerfield Valley Community Partnership

### Steering Committee

- Karen Molina
- Bob Edwards
- Arlene Palmiter
- Judith Fellows
- Lynn Redd
- Ronda Lackey

### DVCP Coordinator

- Cindy Hayford

### SPF-SIG Grant Project Director

- Andy Hauty

### Grant Evaluator

- Anne O'Sullivan

### Grants Fiscal Agent

- Windham Southwest Supervisory Union

### Student Assistance Counselors

- Dawn Borys-TVHS
- Kristen Trudeau-TVMS

### Leadership Coordinators

- Suzanne Mears-TVMS
- Dennis Heberlein -TVHS

### Prevention Curriculum

- Jennifer Nilsen



*DVCP meets on the third Monday of the month except in July & August. Dinner is served at 5:30 Meeting Starts at 6:00*

**COME JOIN US IN SEPTEMBER EVERYONE'S WELCOME!!!**

*(Please RSVP) 464-1698*

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We're on the Web!  
[www.dvcp.org](http://www.dvcp.org)



## *From the Coordinator's Desk...*

*Dear Neighbors,*

*If you've been wondering what all those CONFAB signs you've seen around town were about, we've achieved our goal of getting your attention and starting a conversation. I apologize for any inconvenience or difficulty the signs may have caused individuals or town officials. I wasn't aware that we were doing anything illegal and as soon as I was informed of that, we removed all the materials.*

*The word "confab" means to have a conversation or chat. The CONFAB initiative is a social norms campaign designed to raise awareness about underage drinking and providing alcohol to minors in the Deerfield Valley. It was implemented by community members in Wilmington, Whitingham & Dover.*

*While I'm sorry the placement of these signs caused some inconvenience, I am frankly much more concerned about the fact that 87% of our high school juniors and seniors report that it's easy to get alcohol in our community and that of the almost one quarter of 8th graders who drank in the last 30 days, 40% report that someone in our community gave them the alcohol (YRBS, 2009). Furthermore, I'm distressed when I think about the number of young people who have died from alcohol-related accidents over the years.*

*My hope is that you have all been made aware of the magnitude of the underage drinking problem in our community and that the conversation will now continue...not about the signs but about what we as a community can do to address this problem. If we all do our part, we can improve the health of our young people and make the Deerfield Valley a safer place in which to grow up.*

*Cindy*

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DVCP  
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