



City of Everett
Office of the Mayor
Carlo DeMaria, Jr.
484 Broadway
EVERETT, MASSACHUSETTS 02149

PRESS RELEASE

Monday, May 15, 2017

Mayor Carlo DeMaria reminds Parents of the Social Host Law

The end of the school year brings many celebrations and excitement for students and families in Everett. In just a few short weeks we'll celebrate the graduating Class of 2017 and students will be attending prom and other year-end parties. As a community it is important to honor these traditions and make them memorable events while also a safe and supportive time.

Working with the Everett Community Health Partnership – Substance Abuse Coalition, which includes youth, parents, school and community members, city departments and others, I want to encourage Everett teens to enjoy and celebrate the end of the school year safely and responsibly – without the use of alcohol and/or other drugs. We are asking all parents/guardians to take a few minutes to discuss the risks associated with underage drinking and other drug use. This is important because children care about what their parents think. A top reason youth start to use alcohol is because they think “everyone is doing it” but this is not true. As reported on the 2015 Student Health Survey in Everett, 83% of EHS students don't currently drink alcohol, an increase from 77% in 2013.

It is important for everyone in the community to understand the laws regarding selling or furnishing alcohol to those under 21 in Massachusetts, more commonly referred to as the Social Host Law (MGL ch. 138 § 34). We want parents to know that it is illegal to allow underage drinking in their homes, even if they are not home, or in other rented spaces where underage drinking may occur.

Additionally, it is illegal in Massachusetts to buy alcohol for someone under the age of 21, this includes selling, delivering, supplying, giving, ordering at a bar, or otherwise furnishing alcohol to someone under the age of 21. Criminal charges can be filed, and include a fine of \$2000 and imprisonment up to a year. There can also be other civil judgments upwards of a \$1 million.

Remind your child(ren) that alcohol-related crashes remain a leading cause of death in this country, especially for teens. Talk with them about the risks, pointing out that use of alcohol and other drugs is frequently coupled with risky and potentially destructive behaviors, such as physical and emotional violence, sexual mistakes or misjudgments, unintentional injuries (drowning and falls) and overdose. Heavy drinking is especially dangerous for teenagers, as their brains are still developing, and alcohol-related damage incurred at a young age can have long-term effects.

Don't underestimate your power to influence healthy decisions and behaviors. Set clear and realistic expectations regarding underage drinking and drug use: it is dangerous, it can have serious permanent consequences and is against the law. You can make a difference in our community by talking to your child(ren) about underage drinking and substance abuse and by promoting healthy decision-making and having good communication with them.

Together we can work to keep Everett a safe and supportive place for Everett youth!

For additional information on the Social Host Law and how to talk about alcohol and other drugs with your children, please visit everettparents.org and <http://socialhost.drugfree.org/>.

The Everett Community Health Partnership – Substance Abuse Coalition is a collaboration between the City of Everett and Cambridge Health Alliance's Department of Community Health. Since 2003 the Coalition has been committed to bringing together and mobilizing the diverse community of Everett to address issues associated with substance abuse while promoting positive health and well-being.

###

For additional press information please contact:

Tom Philbin

Director of Communications

City of Everett

484 Broadway

Everett, MA 02149

617-309-8038

Tom.Philbin@ci.everett.ma.us