



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Minor Drinking – Major Problems

A Town Hall Meeting to Celebrate Family Day and Prevent Underage Drinking in Laguna Beach

Laguna Beach, CA - Due to the life-threatening concerns about the dangers of underage drinking, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – Orange County/Community Alliance Network, Mothers Against Drunk Driving – Orange County, and the Laguna Beach Presbyterian Church are hosting a Town Hall Meeting called Minor Drinking – Major Problems. This Town Hall will be held at the Laguna Beach Presbyterian Church on Monday, September 27, 2010 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. This event will include a celebration of Family Day which is a national movement to inform parents that the parental engagement fostered during frequent family dinners is an effective tool to help keep kids alcohol and drug free. According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) report titled, *The Importance of Family Dinners IV*, frequent family dining is associated with lower rates of underage drinking. Compared to teens who eat five or more family dinners per week with their families, those who have fewer than three family dinners per week report almost twice as likely to have used alcohol. Consequently, the more often kids eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to drink or use drugs.

The purpose of the Town Hall Meeting is to increase community awareness on the issue of underage drinking and extreme drinking, discuss how underage drinking affects the community, and develop solutions and strategies to reduce the problem. The meeting will provide an opportunity for parents, teachers, officials, youth, and other community members to learn how this dangerous activity is impacting our schools, families and communities, and provide an opportunity for all to voice their concerns and suggest ideas for preventing young people from using alcohol.

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) shows that Orange County is no exception to the high prevalence of underage drinking. The 2008 CHKS report for Laguna Beach Unified School District states that 39% of 9th graders and 47% of 11th graders reported having drunk alcohol within the past 30 days. Even more alarming are that 37% of 9th graders and 54% of 11th graders reported being very drunk or sick after drinking. This high prevalence of underage drinking goes along with many consequences such as forgetting what happened and passing out, emotional problems, trouble with the police, death by alcohol poisoning, risky sexual behavior, injuries, suicide, and drunk driving.

WHAT: Minor Drinking – Major Problems
Underage Drinking Town Hall Meeting
WHEN: Monday, September 27, 2010 – 6:30-8:00pm
WHERE: Laguna Beach Presbyterian Church
415 Forest Ave
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

For more information on the event, please contact Terah Glass at 949.595.2288 x318 or tglass@canoc.org.

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