**APP Program Coordinator**

Substance Abuse Prevention Agency

**Problem/Strategy:** Your committee is addressing underage drinking. It is considering **law enforcement** **compliance checks** as a possible strategy to reduce commercial access to alcohol by minors.

**Description of the Community:**

Trenton is a suburban county with areas that are still rural. It has a diverse population of over 200,000. Most of its growth has been in the past ten years and services have not kept up with the growth in numbers and diversity. Because most of the residents are new to the area, there hasn’t been a corresponding increase in grassroots leadership or volunteerism.

There are 3 cities in Trenton, but most of the area falls within the unincorporated county. Public safety services include the Trenton Sheriff’s Department and two municipal police departments.

There is a Family Connection collaborative in Trenton that is in year two of a five year Drug Free Communities grant. Their action plan includes strategies related to underage drinking and marijuana use. They are currently working on their action plan for year three. There is a non-profit substance abuse prevention agency that evolved from a youth-serving non-profit agency. The agency has a youth action team.

The school system has 7 high schools,12 middle schools and 25 elementary schools. Most of the residents work outside their immediate neighborhoods and many work in the larger nearby urban area. Their commute in the mornings and afternoons averages 45 minutes to an hour.

Approximately 21% of high school students and 6% of middle school students report using alcohol in the past 30 days. They also report that they find it “easy to very easy” to access alcohol. Residents are passive about underage drinking.

**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* Your agency has offered voluntary TIPS (responsible vendor training) training before with very few vendors participating.
* TIPS does not allow any modifications to their training. You cannot add local or state information into the TIPS training.
* Compliance checks are only being done in unincorporated areas of the county, not within city limits.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* Training for sales clerks needs to be mandatory and required for new or renewing alcohol licensees.
* In order to be effective, compliance checks should be done at least four times a year.

**Epidemiologist**

Local Hospital System

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* According to your hospital system’s emergency room data, a majority of alcohol-related ER admissions are for people over 21.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* It’s difficult to recruit and retain volunteers who are skilled training facilitators.
* Who is going to take the lead on this initiative?

**Corporal**

Sheriff’s Department Community Outreach

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* Sheriff’s deputies conduct alcohol sales compliance twice a year, and about 35% of the sales clerks sell alcohol to the underage decoys.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* Sales clerks must know it’s illegal to sell alcohol to minors, but many sell it anyway.
* Would requiring owners to go through vendor training actually change the behavior of their sales clerks?

**Assistant Superintendent**

County School System

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* Health class is only required in the 9th grade in high school.
* The central office must approve surveys or campaigns that schools are asked to participate in, but school principals have the final say on whether they will allow campaigns in their buildings.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* Parents should have the most responsibility for assuring their children are not accessing or using alcohol.
* School counselors bring problems to the attention of parents and encourage them to get help, but they do not diagnose problems. Many parents are resentful when they are told their kids are showing signs of a problem.

**Parent & PTA Member**

High School PTA

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* PTA participation at the high school level is poor.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* Parents of high school students generally expect that their children will do some drinking, and many would prefer it to be at their homes so they won’t be driving under the influence.
* We need to do something specific around prom and graduation to discourage underage drinking.

**Business Owner & Chamber Rep**

Local Chamber of Commerce

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* Penalties for selling or serving alcohol to minors are minimal.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* If business owners don’t think the penalty for selling or serving alcohol to minors is significant, there is no incentive for them to train their clerks.
* The amount of revenue alcohol sales generate may be worth the chance that you would be caught selling to minors.

**DFC Coalition Executive Director**

Family Connection Collaborative

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* Your coalition has DFC funding that could be used to cover the cost of action plan strategies that address underage drinking.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* It takes some time to work with the county or cities to get new policies or laws passed.
* We need to get other people to the table before we decide this is something we should tackle. Who else needs to be involved?

**Coordinator, Child/Adolescent Unit**

Local Community Services Board

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that 12% of local youth report buying alcohol at retail locations.
* There are not many local treatment options available for teens.

**The point you are trying to get across:**

* The CSB doesn’t have anyone working in prevention, so there’s no one who could help with this initiative.
* Can prevention funding be used for early intervention services for youth so that more teens who are at risk for developing alcohol or other drug dependence could be helped before they are addicted?