**APP Program Coordinator**

Substance Abuse Prevention Agency

**Problem/Strategy:** Your committee is addressing underage drinking. It is considering **a Safe Homes project** as a possible strategy to reduce underage drinking.

**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 alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* A Safe Homes project recruits parents who encourage & invite neighborhood latch key youth to come over to their homes after school, agree to supervise youth when they congregate at their homes, and pledge to not allow alcohol or other drugs to be part of any youth function they are involved in. Usually, there is a publication or website with the names of all families that are participating.

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

* This is a very labor-intensive strategy.

**Epidemiologist**

Local Hospital System

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* The APP survey shows that alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* 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:**

* The hospital system has a media department that might be able to help with graphics.
* 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 alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* There are over 100 COPS (Community Oriented Police Services) and Neighborhood Crime Watch communities in the county.

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

* Some neighborhoods don’t have any parents or other adults at home when kids get out of school.

**Assistant Superintendent**

County School System

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* 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.

**Parent & PTA Member**

High School PTA

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* 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 alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* Penalties for selling or serving alcohol to minors are minimal.

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

* Maybe we could get businesses in the different communities to offer discounts or other incentives for families that participate in this initiative.

**DFC Coalition Executive Director**

Family Connection Collaborative

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* 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:**

* We need to get other people to the table before we decide this is something we should tackle. Who else needs to be involved?
* Is this considered an evidence-based strategy?

**Coordinator, Child/Adolescent Unit**

Local Community Services Board

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**What you know:**

* The APP survey shows that alcohol use by teens is highest at the high school level.
* 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?