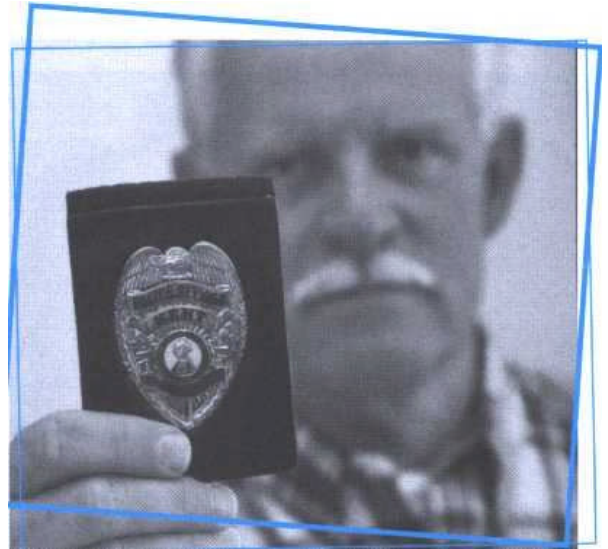


Kent Police Department, Kent,
WA
Located 18 miles south of
Seattle,
with a population of 85,000 and
125 commissioned officers.



*Are you trying to buy
alcohol from a clerk - or a cop?*

Reducing Underage Drinking – a Community Effort

While enforcement of laws against alcohol sales to minors is extremely important, it is more likely to occur and to be sustained if community norms against underage drinking are strengthened and publicized. Parallel family, community and law enforcement expectations keep our youth alcohol-free and reduce alcohol-involved injuries and crimes.

The Kent community, the city, and its police leadership are driven by our genuine care and interest in making a positive difference for youth. We have a long-standing commitment to youth, to peer to peer education, and to youth as public policy advocates. We've been listening to what youth are saying . . . and they want to be sheltered from alcohol abuse and its life-altering consequences.

The Kent *ROUNDTABLE* ► *A coalition of youth, parents and concerned leaders who also happen to work with schools and local, regional and statewide agencies.*

The initial purpose was to energize ourselves to assure the sustainability of on-going programs during an interruption in funding. Hard won strategies to reduce underage drinking were attained during four years of OJJDP / WA State DASA* grant funding. Here is what happened in Kent when the grant funding ended.

*DSHS/DASA Department of Social and Health Services - Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse

Kent convened a community meeting to discuss the impacts of underage drinking. Forty interested volunteers selected one of four standing committees (one was chaired by a high school student). The synergy was contagious.

ENFORCEMENT

- Compliance Checks

Compliance checks are an effective tool for law enforcement. Targeting the supply end, police can partner with the Liquor Control Board and work with underage youth operatives to attempt to purchase alcohol at retail locations and on-premise establishments. An officer watches the transaction take place as the youth operative attempts to purchase an alcohol item from a clerk or wait staff. As soon as the transaction is made, the officer makes contact with the employee and gives the individual a criminal citation. The LCB agent also makes contact and writes the owner of the business a violation. Compliance check operations should be implemented consistently and frequently. Our numbers show the more often compliance checks are conducted and publicized, the lower the sales rates will be.

- Briefing Training

Offer trainings to patrol officers during briefing. It is a great avenue to get your message conveyed to line staff officers that underage drinking is not acceptable. Have youth do the training or Liquor Control Board agents.

- Walk-Through's

Officers can do walk through's of establishments during shifts. Their presence will decrease the likelihood of underage drinkers being present in the establishment and will increase the likelihood that staff will follow the alcohol serving laws.

EDUCATION

- School Forums

Who is your audience? Are you targeting the supply end or the demand end? If it's the demand end, then schools are your best friend. Work with your school district to get in the classrooms and present vital information on how alcohol affects youth. Health classes are a good venue for these presentations. Ensure they are interactive and keep young people's interest. You can partner law enforcement with prosecutors, prevention specialist, LCB agents, and Department of Licensing to give an overall panel presentation from the different perspectives of underage drinking prevention.

- Youth As Advocates

What better audience to present to youth than their peers? Work with community youth groups and students to develop presentations they can give to their peers in their classrooms and at

community events. Use youth to present to officers during briefing training. They aren't only the best teachers for their peers, but they learn about the consequences of underage drinking at the same time.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

- Use media to promote activities

When it comes to efforts aimed at reducing underage drinking, the media will pick up your releases . . . it's a story that sells, especially if local teens are lost in alcohol-involved crashes. Use them to publicize all of the activities that are taking place to reduce alcohol availability to minors. Publish the names of locations that sell during compliance checks, include those names in press releases. Show what education efforts are taking place on a monthly basis. Use the media to change social and community norms surrounding alcohol. With the priority placed on underage drinking education and enforcement, and the funds associated with these efforts, the media will be interested in what's taking place!

- Inform Your Audience of the Laws



These cards and window clings distributed to stores both encourage responsible sales and partner with premises against adults supplying alcohol to minors.



ADJUDICATION

- Complimentary Protocols

Perhaps the first place to start when looking at underage drinking enforcement is at the operation level. Encourage all adjudication functions (police, prosecution, liquor enforcement, courts, probation and juvenile services) to set up complimentary protocols that clearly identify the steps to take to consistently enforce and adjudicate the laws.

The Kent Police Department has subsequently received another two years of funding to change the mindset of parents, youth, and especially law enforcement, that alcohol is a rite of passage into adulthood.

SUGGESTED ACTION: Who among your members might take on an issue we see as vital to a national community standard that underage drinking and its devastating consequences is unacceptable?

We see a need for a national strategy which would set clear expectations on underage drinking for law enforcement agencies. To that end, we would like IACP to work with CALEA to develop a model policy on enforcing underage drinking laws.

Under separate cover: Underage Drinking PSAs, locally developed with Comcast.

IACP Teen Drinking and Driving Website