

A Press Release should be handed out in the press packet to the media attending the event and be sent out the day of the event. Media that do not attend can then take the information and quotes from the release and still do a story. If you choose to use the following press release, insert your own information where there are italics and underlining before submitting release to the media.

If the Attorney General is speaking at your forum, then you can use the following quote in your press release:

Attorney General Steve Rowe spoke at this forum. He told participants that “Alcohol use by children has profound and devastating consequences. Heavy alcohol use negatively affects developing brains and leads to greatly increased chances of alcohol addiction.” Rowe is participating in the forums because he believes that “Underage drinking affects us all – it affects our economy, workforce and communities. We must come together as one community to change the environment that supports a child’s decision to drink. These forums are the first step toward this change.”

If the First Lady is speaking at your forum, then you can use the following quote in your press release:

First Lady Karen Baldacci spoke to the community at this meeting. She told participants that “Town Hall meetings are Maine’s community’s response to the US Surgeon General’s “Call to Action” to prevent underage drinking. It’s important for communities throughout Maine to come together with solutions to prevent underage drinking.”

If the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety is speaking at your forum, then you can use the following quote in your press release:

Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety, Anne Jordan spoke to the community at this meeting. She told participants that “Underage drinking is a very serious problem here in Maine-each week I receive reports from my Troopers across the state of arrests for illegal possession, underage youths drinking and driving and tragically, underage people being arrested for OUI. I am sure that similar reports are filed each week in police Departments and Sheriff’s agencies across the state.”

If the Acting Director of the Office of Substance Abuse is speaking at your forum, then you can use the following quote in your press release:

Acting Director of the Office of Substance Abuse, Guy Cousins spoke to the community at this meeting. He told participants that “Underage drinking today is everyone’s problem. Underage drinking needs everyone to become part of the solution. The question you need to ask yourself is, “do you want to be part of the problem or part of the solution?””

Your Logo or Letterhead

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date you send release

CONTACT: your name

PHONE: your number

EMAIL: your email

A Community Call to Action on Preventing Underage Drinking: No matter who you are, there is something you can do to help.

Community name in *City, State*, has joined the national movement to discuss and raise awareness about the issue of underage drinking. Dozens of towns in Maine and hundreds of communities around the country are holding Town Hall meetings this spring to further the Surgeon General's Call to Action on this issue.

This Town Hall meeting (*include what you are calling it locally*) was part of this nationwide response to the Call to Action to increase understanding of underage drinking, and to encourage communities, including parents, young people, teachers, law enforcement and elected officials to come together to discuss the role they play in creating solutions to the underage drinking problem.

"State level quote here"

In Maine, among eighth graders, about 1 in 13 (7.7 percent) reported being drunk at least once in the past two weeks. Nearly 1 in 5 (19.7 percent) 10th graders and about 3 out of every 10 12th graders (29.4 percent) reported being drunk at least once in the last month (2006 MYDAUS Survey).

In 2007, Surgeon General Kenneth Moritsugu called on communities to come together with his *Count Me In* Call to Action because no matter who you are, there is something you can do to prevent underage drinking. The Surgeon General wanted to focus national attention on this enduring problem and on new, disturbing research which indicates that the developing adolescent brain may be particularly susceptible to long term negative consequences from alcohol use.

Early drinking can cause later alcohol problems. Of adults who started drinking before age 15, around 40% say they have the signs of alcohol dependence. That rate is four times higher than for adults who didn't drink until they were age 21. Simply put, kids who drink before age 15 are 5 times more likely to have alcohol problems when they're adults. (Surgeon General's Call to Action)

Alcohol can be harmful to people of any age, but it takes a greater toll on brain development in those under 21 than in any other age group. Findings show that adults would have to consume twice as many drinks to suffer the same damage as teens and that even some heavy drinking injures young brains.

Underage drinking continues to be the number one drug problem in this state, contributing to teen depression, suicide, academic failure, and violence, including sexual assault and homicide. Underage drinking is a serious problem in our community – ADD LOCAL MYDAUS DATA OR LOCAL STORIES THAT ILLUSTRATE PROBLEM (stores selling to minors, parties busted, etc.).

It is a community problem that will need a community response.

“Quote from your own organization representative or well-known local person regarding the challenges/opportunities that you perceive are ahead of you.”

Your organization, in collaboration with the Office of Substance Abuse, as well as the Federal Government’s Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Prevention of Underage Drinking, is sponsoring the event.

Make sure somewhere in the release you include who the local speakers were and what they discussed.

Partners in the statewide effort include the Office of Substance Abuse, DHHS, the Governor’s Office and First Lady, the Attorney General’s office, the Department of Public Safety, and the Maine Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse.

For more information regarding reducing underage drinking in our community, contact *your local contact person and phone number.*

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