



# Did You Know?

April 2018

**Alcohol Awareness Month – Underage Drinking:** April is Alcohol Awareness Month, and it's also a good time to start thinking about the ways in which teens choose to celebrate events such as prom and graduation. With alcohol being the most commonly abused substance among young people in the U.S., it is imperative that we recognize the potential consequences of underage drinking.

## What You Should Know:

- A young person's brain is not fully developed until they are well into their 20's. Consuming alcohol before this time can permanently alter the brain's chemistry and increase risk for memory problems and Substance Use Disorders later in life.
- In 2014, Erie County enacted a Social Host Law that holds adults accountable if they allow underage drinkers to consume alcohol on their property. The penalties include fines ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 and up to a year in jail.
- If a person under the age of 21 chooses to drink and drive, they are subject to the Zero Tolerance Law in New York State. This means that an underage drinker who drives with a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) between 0.02% and 0.07% can face fines and have their license suspended or revoked. Even one standard drink can easily bring a young person above that level.

## What You Can Do:

- Provide a safe, alcohol-free environment for teens to have fun, especially after events like prom or graduation. If they are celebrating elsewhere, check in with them often and let them know you care about their health and safety.
- Talk to teens about how pressure from their friends and peers can influence the decisions they make. Encourage them to weigh the consequences of their actions and think about how unhealthy or unsafe decisions might impact themselves and others.
- Remind teens that posts on social media are never permanently deleted. With cell phones and cameras always at hand, a single lapse in judgement has the potential to negatively affect a person's life over and over again.



Information obtained from: [www2.erie.gov](http://www2.erie.gov); [www.dmv.ny.gov](http://www.dmv.ny.gov); [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov); [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

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The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc., publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs -- America's #1 public health problem. ECCPASA • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • [www.eccpasa.org](http://www.eccpasa.org)