



# Did You Know?

May 2018

**Erie County's Social Host Law & Proposed Amendments:** In 2014, Erie County passed the Social Host Law, which aims to protect young people from the dangers of underage consumption of alcohol. Currently, the law holds adults accountable if they allow underage drinking or fail to bring it to a stop once they notice that it is taking place. Erie County Legislator Lynne Dixon has submitted a proposal to expand the law to apply to other drugs, including heroin, fentanyl and other opioids, anabolic steroids, cocaine and marijuana. The proposed law comes at just the right time, with prom and graduation seasons ahead of us.

## What You Should Know:

- **The penalties for violation of the Social Host Law include fines ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 and up to a year in jail, depending on if it is a repeat offense.**
- Drug availability and lack of parental supervision are known risk factors for initiation of substance use in teens. The Social Host Law serves as a protective factor against substance use by reducing availability and encouraging parents to be aware of their children's actions.
- A Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) study published in 2014 called The TEDS Report found that 74% of people surveyed who had been admitted into treatment for a substance use disorder began using alcohol and/or other drugs before the age of 17.
- The prefrontal cortex and its connections to other parts of the brain are not fully developed until a person is in their mid-20s, meaning that their abilities to make decisions, control emotions and manage impulses are not established. Substance use before this critical brain development is complete can affect those connections and functions long-term.

## What You Can Do:

- **Never allow underage drinking or teen substance use. If you suspect that teen substance use is occurring, you have a legal obligation to put a stop to the situation.**
- Help prevent substance use by educating teens on the risks of alcohol and other drug use, including impaired decision-making, injury, legal penalties and the development of a substance use disorder.
- For more information on the Social Host Law and the proposed amendments, visit [www2.erie.gov/legislature](http://www2.erie.gov/legislature).

**IGNORING IT = ALLOWING IT**

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