

# An Important Nationwide Program

Dear School Administrator:

As your school's leader, you face the responsibility of guiding your school and its students toward success in academia and beyond. Primary among your goals are taking an active role to ensure that students meet standards and helping them gain the skills they need in school and in life.

Underage drinking presents an enormous public health issue to all Americans! New research suggests that adolescents who drink show higher rates of academic problems and poorer performance in school. On a local community level, underage drinking can also have a profound impact on you and the success of your school and its students.

Nearly everyone knows that it is against the law in the United States for young people under age 21 to drink alcohol. But you may not be aware that to uphold the law and to prevent underage drinking, some state and local governments are limiting youth access to alcohol by passing social host liability laws.

***Social hosting is providing and/or serving alcohol to a young person who is under the minimum age of 21. Social hosting can take place in a party-like atmosphere or by any adult simply providing alcohol to teenagers and their peers for them to drink. It can even extend to parents and homeowners who are not on the premises and/or did not provide the alcohol.***

**You and your school could be held accountable if:**

- **Your school's programs are associated with underage drinking in any way.**
- **Students take part in underage drinking at any school event, such as the prom, homecoming, or sports events.**

**Not in Our House: A Nationwide Initiative on Underage Drinking and Social Hosting** is a program developed to raise awareness of illegal underage drinking and social host laws in communities throughout the United States. Generously sponsored by the International Institute for Alcohol Awareness (IIAA) and The Century Council, funded by America's leading distillers, this community-wide initiative comprises targeted materials that are being distributed not only to school administrators, but also to teachers, athletic directors and coaches, parent/community coordinators and PTA/PTO presidents, students, and parents. The program's classroom component, a communications skills program, has been mailed to 9th- and 10th-grade teachers in your school. The national standards-based lessons and activities within challenge students' oral and written communication skills, and help them transform their newfound knowledge into advocacy.

The enclosed program guide provides everything you need to take a leadership role in implementing this program in your school and creating partnerships within your community. We hope that, by working with others to eliminate social hosting and underage access to alcohol, you can protect students in your school from harming themselves and their futures.

