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Taney County Health Department



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FIRST ANNUAL SAFE AND SOBER AFTER PROM EVENT
Underage Drinking Prevention Awareness Campaign

Prom is a highlight for many high school students and memories of the special event last a lifetime. The idea of making prom memorable and safe prompted the Underage Drinking Prevention Coalition to plan the first Safe and Sober After Prom Event. Over 350 students from Branson and Forsyth high schools participated in this first ever event in Taney County. After prom, the students were treated to a movie of their choice and snacks, provided by the IMAX Entertainment Complex.

Both high schools provided several educational opportunities leading up to the event. An assembly, sponsored by the Kurt Larsen Law Firm, shared real life stories of consequences related to drinking, driving, and underage drinking. Posters and t-shirts were designed for the event by the students. Parents also took part in the event. Students choosing to attend the after prom event voluntarily signed a contract agreeing to stay drug and alcohol free on prom night. Parents were given information about the legal consequences of providing alcohol to a minor and were asked to sign the contract that supported their child's decision to be drug and alcohol free.

Kara Miller, health educator with Taney County Health Department and chairman of the Underage Drinking Prevention Coalition, said, "For a first time event the response was awesome and we are encouraged by the number of young adults who made the decision to participate." The coalition will continue to work on prevention and education and welcome the community to become involved in this very important life changing issue. Miller said, "The coalition is most grateful to the management and staff at the IMAX who made this event possible and successful their generosity."

April is designated as Alcohol Awareness Month to bring attention to the risks associated with all aspects of alcohol use. In addition to the after prom event, members of the Dream Big Club, recorded public service messages (PSA) that aired on KRZK/KOMC radio stations, warning of the risks, and dangers associated with underage drinking. The Dream Big Club is a student organization that promotes awareness and education about the risks of using alcohol, drugs, or tobacco through positive peer pressure. Patricia Civiello, health educator with the Taney County Health Department leads the group at Branson High School said, "The students have been looking for an opportunity to record the PSA's for a long time." They take the issue of preventing underage drinking, drug and tobacco use very seriously. Club members want to do their part to inform fellow students of the risks and consequences related to these issues. Civiello said, "They do a great job."

For more information about the Underage Drinking Prevention Coalition, contact Kara Miller at the Taney County Health Department 334-4544 ext 225.
