



## Summary of Results for Stratford PFS: 2010-2014

## “Talk Early, Talk Often” to Prevent Underage Drinking

The Town of Stratford Youth and Family Advisory Board and its Partnerships For Success (PFS) Committee mobilizes youth and community partners to create a safe, healthy and drug-free environment where youth and families thrive. They work to reduce underage drinking among Stratford youth ages 12-17 by raising community awareness about the problems linked with underage drinking and limited youth access to alcohol. Stratford, Connecticut, population 51,384, is a densely developed and racially diverse suburb situated on Long Island Sound.

### RISK FACTORS & OVERALL GOALS

In 2010, the following risk factors were determined would have the greatest success and most impact were:

- ◆ Peer norms
- ◆ Low perception of harm

The overall goals of Stratford’s PFS were to:

1. Reduce underage drinking in the Stratford youth population.
2. Raise community awareness about the problems associated with underage drinking
3. Limit youth access to alcohol.

### STRATEGIES & FUNDING

In order to meet the overall goals, the environmental strategies focused on:

- ◆ Enforcement:
  - \* regular compliance checks on local retail merchants and on premise establishments.
  - \* police surveillance at youth “hot spots” and school events, e.g. prom and graduation.
- ◆ Social Marketing:
  - \* Web presence and advertisements that focused on social host law messaging and “Talk Early, Talk Often.”
- ◆ Education:
  - \* Information provided at community festivals, Town Hall meetings, school open houses, PTA meetings, health fairs and after school programs.

Stratford received a total of \$345,000 from January 2010 to June 2015 to implement these strategies.

Stratford's PFS	2008 Baseline	2011 (Year 3)	2014 (Year 5)	Improved Outcome
Performance Targets				
Past 30 day use	33%	28%	28%	✓
Past two-week binge use	20%	19%	16%	✓
Perception of Parental Disapproval of Drinking	69%	83%	89%	✓
Perception of Risk of Harm of Drinking	64%	67%	78%	✓
Other Measures				
Rode in a car with someone who was drinking	39%	37%	37%	✓
Drove after drinking (in past 12 months)	8%	6%	8%	
Have closest friends who drink alcohol once a week or more	44%	45%	43%	✓
Attended one or more parties in the past year where other kids the same age were drinking	52%	50%	48%	✓

### EVALUATION METHODS

#### Our data shows:

- ◆ 30-day past use among youth has remained the same.
- ◆ 16% reduction in past two-week binge use.
- ◆ 7% increase in perception of parental disapproval.
- ◆ 16% increase in perception of risk of harm of drinking.

A local evaluator conducted program evaluations examining both process and outcomes. Overall impact has been measured by short term (1 to 3 years) and long term (3 to 5 years) outcomes.

- ◆ Quantitative data— surveys for Stratford parents and from outside sources, e.g. RYASAP and Governor's Prevention Partnership.
- ◆ Qualitative data— open-ended survey questions, interviews, meeting notes, and town hall conversations.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Key accomplishments achieved:

- ◆ Conducted bi-annual compliance checks in the community.
- ◆ Provided TIPS training for on premise and off-premise permittees to ensure that local retailers and servers comply with the laws.
- ◆ Implemented an underage drinking prevention forum for all 9th graders and their parents.
- ◆ Collaborated with MADD, Stratford Public Schools and Stratford Police Department to implement presentations and school assemblies to provide education and skills to the community, parents and youth.
- ◆ Produced a five-part webisode series, "What's In Your Cup?", for parents and youth about the social and legal consequences of underage drinking.
- ◆ Engaged youth in the community with programs and projects, as well as attended events that influenced positive youth development, e.g. volunteering at fundraisers, four-day MADD Power Camp and an overnight retreat.
- ◆ Supported community service, youth leadership and positive adult and peer relationships through mini-grants.
- ◆ Recognized individuals (youth and adults), businesses, and organizations that are making a positive impact on the quality of life in Stratford.

Don't be FOOLED  
by underage drinking  
by  
Talk Early Talk Often

Movin' On Up

Are YOU  
ready for middle  
school?



## CONCLUSION

The Town of Stratford has significantly increased its capacity by strengthening relationships with other community organizations, as well as recruiting more members to increase and improve momentum within the Coalition.

Overall, Stratford has been able to shift the trend of underage drinking rates in the community. Indicators, such as past 30-day use, perception of risk of harm and parental disapproval of use all strongly impact the substance abuse rates among youth.



### Did you know?

72% of Stratford youth (in 7-12 grade) report they are not drinking alcohol.

### Tips for Parents

- ✓ Talk *early* and *often* to your kids about how underage drinking is illegal & unacceptable.
- ✓ When they're out with friends, stay in touch with your kids by phone and text.
- ✓ Know your teen's friends and their friends' parents.
- ✓ Secure alcohol in your home so it isn't available to teens.
- ✓ Brainstorm with your teen about how to say "no" and who to contact if they need help out of a situation.

## NEXT STEPS

The Town of Stratford Youth and Family Advisory Board was awarded a federal Drug Free Communities grant to increase community collaboration and reduce youth substance use, including underage drinking. This five-year grant totaling \$625,000 will continue to utilize the Strategic Prevention Framework prevention planning process to bring environmental change that focuses on changing norms, adopting and enforcing regulations, and reducing the availability and access of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, and other drugs.