

Dear Parent,

Recent media coverage of events involving Redwood students engaged in underage and binge drinking at house parties has focused attention on an ongoing problem undermining the safety and health of all of our students. We want to offer three positive steps that you can take as a parent or caregiver to address this issue in your home and community.

· **Learn about your town's Social Host Accountability Ordinance (SHAO).**

In 2008, Marin County completed its countywide adoption of the Social Host Accountability Ordinance (SHAO) to reinforce the message that underage and binge drinking will not be tolerated anywhere in Marin County. Both legally defensible and enforceable among all cities and towns, this ordinance not only brings to the forefront the main source of underage drinking in Marin County – house parties – but it will hold accountable anyone who allows this type of behavior. For more information about the social host ordinance in your city or town, please contact your Town Clerk or, after a 4/17/09 update, visit the website of Marin County Health and Human Services at www.co.marin.ca.us/prevention.

Talk to each other

Find out where other parents stand on this issue. There are a number of local and neighborhood opportunities for parents to come together and discuss underage and binge drinking. Parent involvement can range from hosting a parent coffee to signing a pledge card or providing an email address to receive updates on this topic. The Youth Leadership Institute has a range of opportunities to get involved. Go to: www.yli.org or call 455-1676 x 236 for more information.

· **Talk to your kids**

Currently underway in the Tamalpais Union High School District is the “Be the influence” project. Encourage your child to take the Self Assessment that is being administered as part of this project. To learn more about the Self Assessment please contact Gary Najarian, Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Coordinator with the Marin County Division of Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Programs at 499-4230 or gnajarian@co.marin.ca.us.

The conversation you have with your child about alcohol is most important! Please visit www.timetotalk.org for guidelines on how to begin this discussion. For advice regarding your child hosting or attending teen parties visit www.redwoodptsa.org/activities/parented/flyers/070329-teenparties.pdf.

**** If you think a student might be in a high risk situation or in danger of hurting themselves or anyone else, please call the Redwood Anonymous Tip Line at 945 3693**

Sincerely,
Susan Livingston PTSA President & Elyse Boyar VP Alcohol & Drug Education