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2012 estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

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SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE IMPACT EVALUATION: PHASE II FINDINGS 2013 ISSUE BRIEFING

KEY FINDINGS

High School Student Data

Youth are Aware of Social Host Ordinances. Based on data collected in three Ventura County high schools, youth are aware of the local ordinances and hear about them most often at school, and/or from family members and friends. About 15% of high school students also report hearing about social host laws online.

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Youth Support SHOs. More than one-third (35-40%) of all high school students surveyed thought that making people pay a fine is a good way to prevent underage drinking parties.

To learn more about Social Host Ordinances and what you can do to address underage drinking visit www.venturacountylimits.org/initiative/underage-drinking/social-host-laws

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Past 30-Day Alcohol Use is Decreasing. According to CHEKS survey data collected from 9th and 11th grade students in Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), Ventura Unified School District (VUSD), and also statewide, past 30-day alcohol use is on the decline. Most recent data available (2011-12) indicate that between 15%-25% of 9th graders and 27%-36% of 11th graders in the districts studied reported having any alcohol in the past 30 days, which is notably lower than in 2005-06.

Collection of Fines

Substantial sums have been collected as a result of SHO citations:

- In Ventura, $55,476 has been collected since the ordinance was passed in May, 2006. Of the 101 citations written to date, 78% have been paid in full.
- In Thousand Oaks, $122,343 has been collected since the ordinance was passed in May, 2006. Of the 101 citations written to date, 78% have been paid in full, are currently being paid-off via installments, or were worked off via community service option (available for minors only).

Media/Community Awareness

Along with implementing the SHOs, CHEKS sought to engage the public in a 2-year campaign to raise awareness about the hazards of underage drinking.

It’s Not as Easy to Obtain Alcohol. Most 9th and 11th grade students report that alcohol is “fairly easy” or “very easy” to obtain; however, the percentage of students who say this appears to be decreasing over time in both CVUSD and VUSD (as measured by CHEKS data). In contrast, this indicator has remained relatively stable statewide.

Party Size is Decreasing. Available enforcement data indicate that the size of parties where underage drinking occurs may be decreasing over time, as large parties with over 50 guests have been trending down since the adoption of the SHOs.

Media/Community Awareness

In Thousand Oaks, 70% reported no negative impacts resulting from the SHOs.

In the jurisdiction for which re-offense data were available, just 3% of the SHO offenders who received a citation were cited a second time over the six-year span.

In Ventura, California 1,697 parents and 2,000 parents in the past year through partnerships with CVUSD, Straight Up, and other community agencies, including Straight Up’s Reality Parties and Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Parent Project. In Thousand Oaks, nine local stations). In addition, messages about SHO are conveyed regularly via programs implemented by partner agencies, including Straight Up’s Reality Parties and Ventura County Sheriff’s Office Parent Project. In Thousand Oaks, $122,343 has been collected since the ordinance was passed in May, 2006. Of the 101 citations written to date, 78% have been paid in full.

In Ventura, $55,476 has been collected since the ordinance was passed in May, 2006. Of the 101 citations written to date, 78% have been paid in full.

Enforcement Data

- The number of SHO citations issued in Thousand Oaks has remained fairly constant over time, with an average of 17 per year, and a total of 101 SHO citations since passage in 2006.
- To date, a total of 96 SHO citations have been issued in the City of Ventura since 2007, with an average of 17 violations per year.
- The rate of party disturbance calls as a percentage of all calls for service increased very slightly in both jurisdictions since 2005, possibly as a result of SHO public awareness campaigns.

Erroneous data collected from 16-20 year olds convicted of an impaired driving offense consistently indicate that 3 out of 4 of them had their last drink before being arrested, at their own or someone else’s home. In addition:

- About half to two-thirds of convicted underaged DUI participants report that their last drink took place at a house party.
- 85%-97% (depending on the year examined) confirmed that “other underaged drinkers were in attendance.”
- About half of all high school students surveyed as part of the evaluation said they had heard about 1-5 parties during the past year where teens were drinking, and 18% reported hearing about 6-10 parties in the past month with drinking teens.
- 12% of 9th graders and 25% of 12th graders surveyed say teens get alcohol from parents with their parents’ permission.

Fines collected to date:

- Ventura: $55,476
- Thousand Oaks: $122,343

While numerous positive findings were evidenced in the current evaluation, local data still indicate a need for continued enforcement of underage drinking laws and sustained prevention efforts. The data below highlight the continued prevalence of underaged drinking parties, the dangers that ensue at these parties, and underage impaired driving statistics.

Underage Drinking at House Parties

- Surveys collected from 16-20 year olds convicted of an impaired driving offense consistently indicate that 3 out of 4 of them had their last drink before being arrested, at their own or someone else’s home.
- In Thousand Oaks, 70% reported no negative impacts resulting from the SHOs.

For example:

- 12% of 9th graders and 25% of 12th graders surveyed say teens get alcohol from parents with their parents’ permission.

Harmful Behaviors at House Parties

High school students surveyed as part of the current evaluation were asked about events that occurred at the most recent party they had attended where teens were reportedly drinking. Findings indicate that underage drinking parties can foster an environment leading to a series of negative consequences:

- 40% indicated that illegal or prescription drugs were being used in addition to alcohol.
- Over one-third reported that “people were out of control.”
- 2 out of 5 indicated that someone had passed out.
- Only 1 in 3 reported that the party was safe for all participants.

Underage Impaired Driving

Six percent of all impaired drivers sentenced to the County’s DUI Program are under 21. Survey data from those underaged DUI participants reveal that not all young people who drink at home start at home:”

- Underage County DUI Program participants who leave home parties drive 10 miles on average before being arrested.
- Half of the impaired underage drivers have 1 or more passengers in their cars at time of arrest.
- 1 in 5 of these impaired underage drivers crashed – often sustaining injuries to themselves or others.

These findings shed a negative light on the belief that underage drinking at home is safer than elsewhere. Unfortunately, the set-up and supervision, a party in a private home may be quite dangerous for youth and the community.

CONTINUED PREVENTION EFFORTS

...large parties with over 50 guests have been trending down since the adoption of the SHOs.
**Alcohol-Related Trend Data**

Past 30-Day Alcohol Use is Decreasing. According to CHKS survey data collected from 9th and 11th grade students in Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD), Ventura Unified School District (VUSD), and also statewide, past 30-day alcohol use is on the decline. Most recent data available (2011-12) indicate that between 15-25% of 9th graders and 27-36% of 11th graders in the districts studied reported having any alcohol in the past 30 days, which is notably lower than in 2005-06.

- **Students who say this appears to be decreasing over time in both CVUSD and VUSD**: 44% in 2005-06, 36% in 2011-12.
- **Students who say this appears to be decreasing statewide**: 44% in 2005-06, 33% in 2011-12.

*It’s Not as Easy to Obtain Alcohol.* The rate of party disturbance calls as a result of SHO public awareness campaigns. In the jurisdiction for which re-offense data were available, just 3% of the SHO offenders who received a citation were cited a second time over the six-year span.

In the jurisdiction for which re-offense data were available, 85%-97% (depending on the year examined) confirmed that other underage drinkers were in attendance.

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**Harmful Behaviors at House Parties**

- Six percent of all impaired drivers sentenced to the County’s DUI Program participants report that their last drink took place at a house party.
- About one-third reported that “people were out of control.”
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**Underage Driving in Ventura County**

- All 18-20 year olds convicted of an impaired driving offense consistently indicate that 3 out of 4 of them had their last drink, before being arrested, at their own or someone else’s home.
- About half to two-thirds of convicted underage DUI Program participants report that they last drink took place at a house party.
- Most recent data available (2011-12) indicate that between 15-25% of 9th graders and 27-36% of 11th graders in the districts studied reported having any alcohol in the past 30 days, which is notably lower than in 2005-06.

**Collective of Fines**

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**Media/Community Awareness**

- Along with implementation of the SHOs came strategies for public awareness and educational outreach. Information obtained from interviews indicate that VCBI aimed to enhance the public’s awareness through the development of campaigns including print-ad, billboards, online ads, brochures, flyers, posters, and door-hangers. In addition to media placements, a variety of print materials have been provided by VCBH to other county-funded prevention contacts serving on underage drinking prevention, and to other partners (e.g., law enforcement) for distribution.

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- 66% of law enforcement surveyed reported that there are never instances where they are reluctant to issue citations.
- 60% said the level of the penalty was just right.
- 70% reported no negative impacts resulting from the SHOs.

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SUMMARY
Findings from SHO evaluation studies indicate that positive strides are being made:
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- More young people are aware of SHOs
- Youth support the use of Social Host laws and prevention efforts
- Party size appears to be decreasing
- Law enforcement are enforcing the ordinances and find the law useful in addressing underage drinking
- Very few party hosts (3%) are cited more than once for a SHO violation

However, prevention efforts must continue and, in some areas, need to be significantly enhanced.

Adolescents continue to acknowledge that alcohol is generally easy to obtain, and they most often get it from relatives, parents, and friends over 21. Most teens have attended parties where underage drinking occurs by the time they leave high school, and many have witnessed or have participated in a range of high-risk behaviors.

To learn more about Social Host Ordinances and what you can do to address underage drinking, visit www.venturacountylimits.org/initiative/underage-drinking/social-host-laws

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Youth Support SHOs. More than one-third (35-40%) of all high school students surveyed thought that making people pay a fine is a good way to prevent underage drinking parties.

KEY FINDINGS

More than one-third of all high school students surveyed thought that making people pay a fine is a good way to prevent underage drinking parties.

Many have Direct Experience with SHOs. Almost 10% of 9th graders and 15% of 12th graders reported having been at a party where a fine was issued. One in five 9th graders and one-third of 12th graders reported that they knew someone who had received a SHO fine.

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- Very few party hosts (3%) are cited more than once for a SHO violation

However, prevention efforts must continue and, in some areas, need to be significantly enhanced.

Adolescents continue to acknowledge that alcohol is generally easy to obtain, and they most often get it from relatives, parents, and friends over 21. Most teens have attended parties where underage drinking occurs by the time they leave high school, and many have witnessed or have participated in a range of high-risk behaviors.

Social Host Ordinance Impact Evaluation: Phase II Findings 2013 Issue Briefing

To learn more about Social Host Ordinances and what you can do to address underage drinking, visit www.venturacountylimits.org/initiative/underage-drinking/social-host-laws

Social Host Ordinances (SHOs) in Ventura County are local laws with civil penalties (fines) providing law enforcement a tool for addressing underage drinking in home party settings, and to deter those who may host a loud or unruly party. In September 2007, Ventura County became one of the first counties in the nation to have seamless coverage of SHOs across all municipalities, including the unincorporated areas of the County. In 2009, a Phase I evaluation focused primarily on law enforcement in several municipalities, and their views and experiences with administrative penalties in connection with disturbance calls with underage drinking. More recently, EVALCORP Research & Consulting conducted a follow-up Phase II evaluation to examine longer-term, local impacts of implementation and enforcement efforts since Social Host policies were adopted in 2006 and 2007.

More than one-third of all high school students surveyed thought that making people pay a fine is a good way to prevent underage drinking parties.

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