



Northeast Community Challenge Coalition
P.O. Box 42387, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242
Tel: 513-489-2587 ~ Fax: 513 489-2597
Email: necce@cinci.rr.com Web: www.necchealthycommunity.org

NECC Community Board

- Alcoholism Council
- All Saints School
- American Red Cross
- Archbishop Moeller High School
- Area Health Professionals
- Area Law Enforcement
- Area Preschools
- Area Schools' Parent Associations
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters Assn. of Cincinnati
- Blue Ash Air National Guard
- Blue Ash Business Association
- Blue Ash, City of
- Blue Ash Lions
- Blue Ash/Montgomery Rotary
- Blue Ash Woman's Club
- Blue Ash YMCA
- Catholic Social Services
- Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy
- Community Press Newspapers
- Council on Child Abuse
- Dan Beard Council, B.S.A.
- D.A.R.E.
- Faith Organizations
- Great Rivers Girl Scout Council
- Hazelwood Civic Association
- Jewish Family Service
- MADD
- Montgomery, City of
- Montgomery Kiwanis
- Montgomery Woman's Club Inc.
- NECC Youth Coalition
- Operation Give Back
- Sycamore Community Schools
- Sycamore Senior Center
- Sycamore Township
- Symmes Township
- TriHealth
- UC Raymond Walters College
- Ursuline Academy
- Youth Services

For Immediate Release
April 2, 2010

Dr. Leslie Elrod, 936-7125
 Nancy Rolfert, 310-9293

**Town Hall Meeting to Address Underage Drinking:
 A Call to Action by the US Surgeon General**

Alcohol use among teens is the number one public health risk issue facing youth today, according to Nancy Rolfert, co-chair of a Tuesday, April 13, Town Hall Meeting conducted by the Northeast Community Challenge (NECC) Coalition. The Coalition is one of hundreds of coalitions nationwide that was awarded a stipend by the U.S. Department of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to conduct a Town Hall Meeting.

The meeting is a local response to the U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action to Reduce and Prevent Underage Drinking. The meeting is at 7 p.m. in the Blue Ash Municipal Building, 4343 Cooper Rd., Blue Ash. Registration will be at 6:45 p.m. Kathy Lehr, moderator on CET Focus, Channel 48, will facilitate the event.

The Town Hall Meeting will alert the community to the social, legal and health risks of underage drinking. NECC Youth Coalition representatives will provide suggestions to empower the community to take action.

Expert panelists will address the trends and the impact of underage drinking. Panel participants will include Dee Mason, Founder/CEO of Working Partners: Engaging Workplaces as Key Elements in Prevention; Sarah Oerther, MSN, M.E.D., CSPI, RN, Cincinnati Children's Drug and Poison Control Information Center, Det. Robb White, Task Force Officer with the FBI's Regional Computer Forensic Lab, and Chris Tuell, Ed.D., LPCC, LICDC, Clinical Coordinator of Addiction Services, Lindner Center of Hope. Other experts will be available to answer questions from the audience.

Underage drinking cost Ohioans \$ 3.2 billion in 2007, or \$2, 866 per year for each youth in the State, according to Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. This places Ohio as 9th highest among the 50 states for the cost per youth of underage drinking.

In 2007, underage drinkers consumed 22.6 percent of all alcohol sold in Ohio, totaling \$1.1 billion in sales.

First Lady Frances Strickland, a governor's spouse's representative to the Leadership to Keep Children Alcohol Free, and former Ohio First Lady, Hope Taft, encourage all Ohioans to unite in working on this important issue impacting our children.

"Alcohol rarely gets the same attention as other drugs," said Debbie Miller, vice-president of NECC. "However, education through strategies provided by the NECC Coalition and the Town Hall Meeting will increase awareness of the dangers of underage alcohol use." Alcohol use endangers our youth, and it will take community awareness and involvement to help with preventing and reducing underage drinking and related risk behaviors, she said.

"The Town Hall meeting will educate and inform businesses, parents, faith-based organizations, educators, health professionals, community leaders and other community members about changing attitudes and alcohol use."

Youth don't only interact in a family, added Dr. Leslie Elrod, Town Hall Meeting co-chair. "Youth are a vital part of our community." To help them grow to become good citizens, everyone in the community needs to be on the same page, said Elrod

The NECC Coalition has worked since 1983 to address this issue by developing and implementing strategies for preventing underage drinking. The Town Hall Meeting, held during Alcohol Awareness Month, will launch the Coalition's annual campaign to prevent and reduce underage drinking and related risk behaviors.

The NECC Coalition encompasses the communities of Blue Ash, Montgomery, Sycamore Township and Symmes Township. For more information contact the NECC Coalition at necce@cinci.rr.com or call 489-2587.