

High Desert Community Change Program

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Topics of Special Interest

Don't get O' Busted
Celebrate St. Patrick
safely.

National Marijuana use
among Teens

Barstow SAFE Coalition
member spot light

Volunteer Opportunities

Assess local retail
outlets where
synthetic drugs are
sold

Become a
spokesperson

Give community
presentations

Help raise awareness
about alcohol and
other drug prevention
campaigns

Don't get O'BUSTED-Prevent Underage Drinking

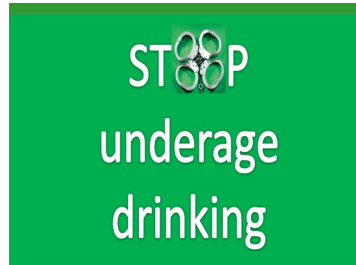
St. Patrick's Day is fast approaching.

While not an official holiday in the United States, it is widely celebrated throughout the country. And according to the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, it ranks as one of the deadliest holidays in terms of drunken driving deaths.

NHTSA analyses show alcohol-impaired crashes claimed a life every 53 minutes in 2011. On St Patrick's Day alone, more than a third of fatalities from motor vehicle crashes – 34 percent – were connected to drunk driving. The national average for alcohol impaired fatalities in 2011 was 31 percent. Given the behavior of adults, members of the SAFE Coalition in Barstow and the

High Desert Community Coalition in Victorville suspect that many youth will consider celebrating the St. Patrick's Day holiday with alcohol as well.

That's why members of both coalitions plan to walk neighborhoods in their



communities before St. Patrick's Day to remind parents and youth alike of the Social Host laws now on the books. Adults and/or minors in Barstow and Victorville can be cited and face fines for hosting a party

where underage drinking occurs. Fines range from \$100 to \$1,500, plus cost recovery.

- To report an underage drinking party in Barstow, call the **Barstow Police Department** at **(760) 256-2211**.

- To report an underage drinking party in Victorville, call the **Sheriff's Dispatch** at **(760) 245-4211**.

Celebrate life during this St. Patrick's Day by preventing underage drinking. Not only is it illegal, it's an extremely high-risk behavior that goes far beyond the possibility of being cited. The risks, beyond drunken driving, include physical and sexual assault, alcohol poisoning and alcohol-related injuries or death.

Marijuana Trends Among Teens Nationwide and in Colorado

- **There are now more "medical marijuana" dispensaries in California and Denver than there are Starbucks** – True Compassion (2011)
- **Drivers who test positive for marijuana or self report using marijuana are more than twice as likely as other drivers to be involved in motor vehicle crashes** – Epidemiological Reviews (2012) of nine studies
- **19% of teens admitted to driving after smoking marijuana** – Liberty Mutual/SAAD Survey (2012)
- **34% of teen drivers who admitted to driving while high said it made them a better driver** – Liberty Mutual/SAAD Survey (2012)
- **More kids said they have smoked marijuana (23%) than cigarettes (18%)** – Youth Risk Behavior Study (CDC -2011)
- **74% of Denver-area teens in treatment said they used somebody else's medical marijuana an average of 50 times** – The Impact of Legalization on Colorado's Youth (2012)

Barstow SAFE Coalition Member Spotlight

Barstow High School senior Nicole Gutierrez first learned of the Substance Abuse-Free Environment (SAFE) Coalition when the group sponsored a community forum on underage drinking last September. She'd been asked to be one of the featured speakers.

During that forum, Nicole said she wanted adults who are role models for youth to help them plan more ways to celebrate that are fun and safe throughout the year. She had also shared concerns about the use of synthetic drugs and marijuana by youth.

After the forum, Nicole became a member of SAFE. And just recently she was elected to co-chair the group, along with Barstow High School Principal Derrick Delton. She now helps to facilitate coalition meetings and has also become a member of a countywide coalition network known as Communities United.

Nicole is currently helping the coalition to research the effects of butane hash oil, also known as "marijuana wax." She also has learned about the impact alcohol and drugs have on the developing brains of teenagers.

Involved in a number of school organizations, Nicole would like to help the coalition develop partnerships with other youth. In addition to her responsibilities with the coalition, she also serves as treasurer of the Barstow Youth Advisory Council and co-captain of the Cheer Squad. Nicole also is a member of the Associated Student Body and the Aztec Band.



Nicole Gutierrez

"I am excited to serve on the SAFE Coalition's Executive Committee. My fellow teen coalition member, Justina Crigler, and I are working hard to provide a youth voice on the coalition, and we are working to recruit other young people to join us. It is important for youth and adults to engage in ongoing dialog to create a positive change in our community. We want young people to feel empowered to make their voices heard," Nicole said.

When she isn't busy with the coalition and her many other extra-curricular activities, Nicole enjoys watching movies, going quad riding in the desert with her family, and spending time with her grandparents. When asked about her future goals, Nicole enthusiastically shared that she wants to attend Barstow College and then transfer to a university to pursue a career as a pediatrician. From an early age she has believed in volunteering and has offered her services at the Senior Citizens' Center, Boys & Girls Club, Desert Manna, Holiday Meals, Cops and Kids programs, and Relay For Life. As a former Teen Miss Barstow, Nicole is also competing for the title of Miss Barstow.

The SAFE Coalition is a group of local parents, business people, educators, health professionals and others advocating for effective solutions to reduce problems related to alcohol and other drugs in Barstow. Membership is open to the public. For more information on how to become involved in the SAFE Coalition, email SAFEBarstow@Gmail.com.



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Community Coalition Meetings

Substance Abuse-Free Environment (SAFE) Coalition meetings are held at 3 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the Career Center at Barstow High School. The mission of the SAFE Coalition is to reduce the use of drugs and alcohol, especially among youth, in an effort to create an environment that is free of harmful substance use in the City of Barstow and the surrounding communities. Meetings are open to the public.

The next High Desert Community Coalition (HDCC) meeting will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 10th at the Hook Community Center in Victorville. The focus of the HDCC is to address alcohol and other drug issues affecting the health and safety of communities throughout the High Desert region.

New members are always welcome and encouraged to attend meetings.
For more information about coalition meetings and activities, call (760) 843-7003, ext. 145.



The Institute for Public Strategies is contracted with the County of San Bernardino Department of Behavioral Health.