



Alton Police Department, Drug Free Alton work together to prevent drunk driving by teens

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ALTON - The Alton Police Department is continuing their longstanding partnership with Drug Free Alton Coalition. The partnership between the police department and the coalition seeks to prevent underage drinking by engaging in well-rounded comprehensive approaches ranging from education to enforcement. One vital aspect of the partnership is conducting Driving Under the Influence mobile patrols that focus on teen impairment. The increased patrols are funded by The Drug Free Alton Coalition through a Department of Human Services grant in an effort to reduce the usage of drugs and alcohol among our youth.

“The Alton Police Department is focused on reducing youth intoxicated driving and other related offenses. Teenagers are inexperienced drivers and adding alcohol and/or narcotics to the mix is a deadly combination.” Our partnership with the community and Drug Free Alton allowed us to focus the patrols around school events and other times when teenage driving is at its peak.” said Alton Support Services Commander, Lt. Seth Stinnett.

During the holiday season, there is generally a spike in alcohol consumption, which can lead to teens having greater access and/or opportunity to engage in underage

drinking. We encourage adults to monitor their alcohol and send a “no use” message to their teens. “The increase in DUI mobile patrols is a way to keep our community safe. In fact, we hope to have no violations to report, particularly concerning teens driving under the influence,” said Melanie Nagel, Drug Free Alton Coordinator. “We publicize the details in the hopes that this will deter people from engaging in this dangerous behavior, as well as encourage parents to have a conversation with their teens about the risks of underage drinking,” Nagel added.

The Alton Police Department also urges adults to take extra care, particularly around the holidays, always designating a sober driver, taking a cab, and not letting friends drive drunk are simple steps to help avoid a tragic crash or an arrest for drunk driving. “Driving drunk is a deadly decision, and it is against the law. We will show zero tolerance to all drivers,” said Chief Simmons. “So remember, designate a sober driver and always buckle up.”

Driving Under the Influence carries heavy penalties and costs an average of \$16,000, even for a first offense. There is zero tolerance with minors. If minors register any amount of alcohol during a sobriety test; he/she will lose their license for 1 year.

For more information on Drug Free Alton Coalition efforts and/or facts about underage drinking and substance abuse; visit www.DrugFreeAlton.com. To join the efforts, please contact Melanie Nagel at 618-205-8131 or at mdnagel@chestnut.org.