



**Cobb Community Parents in Action**



**Cobb Underage Drinking Task Force**

**For more information, call 404-223-9812**

*Sources from Page 2*

- \*1 and 2 Cobb County Board of Health Youth Survey ©1999
- \*3 Youth and Alcohol: A National Survey, in a report to the Surgeon General

# The Parent NETWORK

YOU HOLD THE KEY

*“To support and empower parents to reclaim primary responsibility for raising healthy children; through education, advocacy and networking.”*

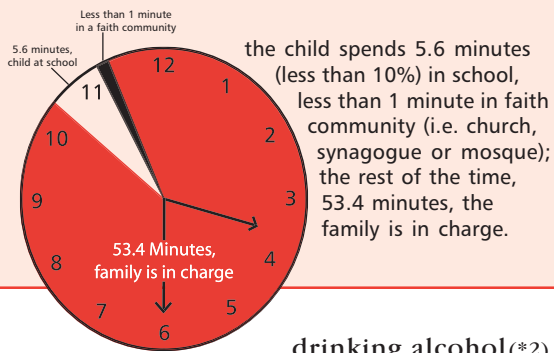
MISSION STATEMENT

# It's Time For Parents To Step Forward!

## WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Statistics show that kids most frequently use alcohol and other drugs, and participate in dangerous behaviors such as violence and sexual activity, during times when parents are in charge...on

If a child's life from birth to age 18 were represented by one hour:



week nights and during the weekends... and these dangerous activities most frequently occur in places that parents control. Surveys show that 46.7% of Cobb middle school youth report drinking alcohol (\*1), 69.3% of Cobb high school youth report drinking alcohol(\*2) and that almost 75% of 7th graders who drink alcohol obtain it from their parents (with or without their knowledge)(\*3). Parents are "in-charge" but not alone. One effort underway is to unite parents and concerned adults with the support of a Parent Network!

\* See Back Page for Sources

## Parent Networks

### WHAT ARE THEY?

Parent Networks are groups of parents who communicate with each other on a regular basis.

Our children understand networking. They stay in touch; they know each other's telephone numbers; they find out what's going on; and they plan activities together. It's time parents did the same!

Parents need to learn the names of their children's friends. They need to get to know the parents and guardians of those friends. However, parents often hesitate to call each other.

Parent Networks remove that hesitation. They encourage parents to get in touch, to become friends, to share ideas

1. Know where your child will be. Obtain an address and phone number. Agree that you will be called if the location is changed.

Reinforce that under no circumstances should your child allow someone who has been drinking or using other drugs to drive them anywhere!

## Guidelines For Attending A Party Or Visiting Friends

2. Personally contact the parents of the party giver to offer assistance and support, verify the occasion and their knowledge of it, make sure they will be present and be certain that alcohol and other drugs will not be permitted.
3. Agree beforehand on a curfew and be awake when your child arrives home. Make a point to greet your child at the door every time. If your child expects that, it will give him/her a good excuse to say "NO".
4. Verify overnight arrangements whether planned or spontaneous.
5. Know how your child will get to and from the party. Arrange that you or a specific person can be called if they need a ride home. Discuss the possible situations which might necessitate this.
6. If your child attends a party where alcohol or other drugs is either served by the parents or allowed, it is important to phone and discuss your feelings with the parents, discuss the legal ramifications with them and share this information with other parents.
7. When you are out of town, inform your neighbors of your absence. Request they contact you or a responsible adult - even the police - if a party occurs. Let the parents of your child's friends know of your absence. Cooperation is both essential and productive.
8. Express thanks and support to parents and students who give parties within these guidelines.

YOU HOLD THE KEY

## Guidelines For Giving a Party Or Having Friends Over

1. Plan in advance. Check party plans with your child and know who the guests will be. Limited numbers and written invitations can curb the "open party" situation. Set definite time limits, obeying community curfews.
2. Set ground rules ahead of time. Children want guidelines, so let them know your expectations. Good rules include no use of alcohol or other drugs, no leaving the party and then returning, no "crashers", and designation of off-limit rooms in your house.
3. Parents must be at the party. No parents, no party. The responsible adult(s) at a party must be visible and aware. If things should get out of hand despite your precautions, do not hesitate to call the local police for assistance.
4. Know your responsibilities. Remember, it is illegal to provide drugs, or serve alcohol to anyone under the age of 21. We are liable to both criminal charges and for monetary damages in case of a civil lawsuit where alcohol or other drugs are used by youth under age 21 on our own private property.
5. Notify your neighbors that a party is being given and will be supervised.
6. Should you become aware (after the fact) of anyone's use of alcohol or other drugs at the party, notify their parents.

YOU HOLD THE KEY

## Discipline is a Labor of Love!

Some ways to provide discipline...

- *Insist on knowing where your children are at all times, who their friends are and what they do.*
- *Insist that your children (and adults in your family) always tell the truth.*
- *Expect your children to contribute to family life through regular chores.*
- *Share your family traditions, regularly.*
- *Model personal self-discipline.*
- *Provide opportunity for your children to demonstrate self-discipline, and then reward for positive reinforcement.*
- *Determine and apply specific, appropriate consequences for your family's clearly communicated expectations for children's behavior.*

## KIDS Kids and Friends!

One of the strongest pressures facing youth is the need for group acceptance. Many parents talk to their children about appropriate guidelines in this area, yet continue to feel helpless. Review the following guidelines and discuss them with your family and friends. Decide what standards you expect to be followed, and then let your child know what those standards are and the consequences for meeting and/or violating them - it's up to YOU!

## & FRIENDS

***"Parents are there to protect their children from harm at the hands of the world - and the world from harm at the hands of their children."***

*Richard Corbett (17th Century poet)*

Everyday parents and caregivers work hard to meet the growing challenges facing families in today's society. It's tougher than ever to be an effective parent. It's a job few of us can do alone. That's why we continue to focus on creative ways to help families help their children. We hope you will find *The Parent Network* an effective tool for your "parenting kit" and that you will use it to its full potential. It really is up to YOU, get involved - pick up the phone today!

about rules and standards and to help each other as parents. The goal is keeping our kids safe!

### HOW DO I BEGIN?

Just pick up the phone. Call the parents of one or more of your children's friends. With their help, work up a list of parents whose children know your children, through school, sports teams, musical

groups, church, synagogue or mosque, neighborhoods, etc. Find out the family rules that you and other parents share.

Through networking as parents you will have the opportunity to become a significant force in the community and the life of all its children.

### WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP?

Put together your own Parent Network.

Friend's Name	Parent or Adult Contact	Home Phone Number	Work/Cell Phone Number
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

PUT TOGETHER YOUR OWN PERSONAL

# Parent Network Telephone List

## Emergency Telephone Numbers

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Police: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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