



Fairfield County Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse—a tri-community effort including town, law enforcement, schools, parent groups, youth and other local organizations, collaborating, sharing ideas and working together

Positive Directions * 420 Post Road W Westport, CT 06880 * www.positivedirections.org
Partnership for Success Grant Director: Lauren Lanham * llanham@positivedirections.org

INFO BRIEF***WESTON***WESTPORT***&***WILTON

PRIORITY PROBLEM: UNDERAGE DRINKING

The coalition assessed the needs of the 3 towns and determined 3 risk factors: 1) **family norms**—parents were not sending a clear message about disapproval of teen alcohol use 2) **peer norms**—youth did not have realistic perception of teen alcohol use and 3) **retail availability**. These risk factors greatly contribute to underage drinking and to the risky behavior that can result from drinking alcohol.

Demographics (2011 CERC):	<u>Weston</u>	<u>Westport</u>	<u>Wilton</u>
Town population	10,142	26,249	17,973
Public school population	2559	5704	4361
Number of public schools	4	8	4

YOUTH SURVEY DATA

	<u>WESTON</u>	<u>WESTPORT</u>	<u>WILTON</u>			
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2011*</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2011</u>
Perception of great risk of harm of alcohol use	29%	39%	n/a	30%	16%	27%
Parental disapproval is reason NOT to drink	45%	68%	n/a	83%	63%	78%
Alcohol is very easy to get if I wanted to	53%	31%	n/a	47%	47%	44%
Past 30 day use of alcohol (ages 14-18)	42%	42%	57%	45%	43%	35%
HS students who believe MOST peers drink regularly	65%	52%	n/a	63%	52%	61%
Over-estimation in % points of perceived peer drinking	23	10	n/a	18	9	26

Note: Westport & Wilton youth to be surveyed in Fall 2014

*does not include grade 12

Focus on Parents – increase awareness regarding the negative effects of alcohol and other drugs on the developing teenage brain, increase awareness regarding responsibility/liability of underage drug and alcohol use in the home, increase resources available to help parents foster strong lines of communication with their children with the added understanding that parents are the MOST influential people in their children’s lives. **Strategies:** 3 surveys followed by results presentation, Westport (2008), Wilton (2011), Weston (2013) 10 speaker/educational events distributing 3000 pieces of printed material, e newsletters circulated to 1000 people/month, social norms campaign **You’re not the only one** – prom-time postcards sent to 2000 homes/year.

Focus on Youth (ages 12-18) – increase in accurate perception of peer alcohol use. **Strategies:** 3 surveys in Wilton & Westport (2011), Weston (2013), social norms campaign – in coordination with the schools’ guidance departments & health classes - posters in the 4 middle & 3 high schools (all 3 towns) promoting the message: **You’re not the only one** if you choose not to drink or use drugs.

Retail stores – increase compliance by providing retailers with a forum regarding liquor laws, fake ID identifying strategies and TIPS training.

Looking Ahead **Youth and Parents to be surveyed regularly **More programs that encourage family connections and communication as a pathway to prevention **Teen stress & anxiety from over-scheduling and pressure to succeed to be important part of the prevention conversation

Enable Underage Thinking