

NEWS RELEASE FROM: Oakland County Health Division  
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## April Is Alcohol Awareness Month

As part of April as Alcohol Awareness Month, the Oakland County Health Division, Office of Substance Abuse Services wants to remind the public of the issue of underage drinking and its dangerous consequences.

- Youth who start drinking before age 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse later in life than those who begin drinking at or after age 21.
- According to the Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth, 2008, 14.0% of 9th graders and 10.2% of 11th graders reported having their first drink of alcohol other than a few sips, before age 13.
- 9.2% of 7th graders reported having their first drink of alcohol other than a few sips, before age 11.

All parents and/or adults need to know how to help keep teens drug free. The following tips can help:

- Be clear and specific about your expectations regarding alcohol use.
- Talk openly with your child about the risks associated with drug and alcohol abuse.
- Take an active interest in your child's life. Know what your children are up to; where they spend their free time, and who their friends are.
- Look for the warning signs that your child may be using alcohol and intervene immediately.
- Lead by example. You are a role model for your child, and research shows that parents do play a significant role in a teen's decision to use drugs or alcohol.

To view additional resources on alcohol, underage drinking, and what you can do to help, please visit:

- [http://www.oakgov.com/health/assets/Documents/CHPIS/osas/resources\\_underage\\_drinking.pdf](http://www.oakgov.com/health/assets/Documents/CHPIS/osas/resources_underage_drinking.pdf)
- [http://www.oakgov.com/health/assets/Documents/fs\\_alcohol.pdf](http://www.oakgov.com/health/assets/Documents/fs_alcohol.pdf)
- [http://www.oakgov.com/health/assets/Documents/fs\\_what\\_can\\_i\\_do.pdf](http://www.oakgov.com/health/assets/Documents/fs_what_can_i_do.pdf)

For more information on preventing underage drinking, please contact Angie Gullekson, Public Health Educator, at 248-858-9598 or [gulleksona@oakgov.com](mailto:gulleksona@oakgov.com).