Robert Kalamaras
Chief of Police

Fairfield Police Department

Continually Striving to Make Fairfield Safer
Honor - Professionalism - Excellence

100 Reef Road
Fairfield, CT 06824

FAIRFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT ON UNDERAGE DRINKING AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN THE COMMUNITY

In collaboration with Pediatric Healthcare Associates (PHA) and Fairfield Public Schools

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2024

FAIRFIELD, CT – The Fairfield Police Department, in collaboration with Pediatric Healthcare Associates (PHA) and Fairfield Public Schools, is dedicated to ensuring that our community remains a safe and positive environment for young people. Recently, we have seen a troubling rise in underage drinking at private gatherings around town, with reports of parents either allowing or even providing alcohol to minors. Adding to this concern, Pediatric Healthcare Associates in Fairfield has observed an alarming increase in cases of underage drinking reported by families, including hospitalizations, underscoring the serious health and safety risks associated with early alcohol use.

The team at PHA emphasizes that alcohol consumption can have significant, long-lasting effects on developing brains, often leading to increased risk-taking behaviors, impaired judgment, and potential substance dependency later in life. As healthcare providers dedicated to the well-being of our youth, PHA joins us in urging parents and guardians to create clear boundaries around alcohol use and to reinforce positive, healthy behaviors.

“As pediatricians, we recognize the serious risks of alcohol use among youth and urge everyone in our community—parents, guardians, and all adults—to help protect our children,” said Pediatric Healthcare Associates. “By encouraging healthy activities, staying alert to signs of substance abuse, and speaking up when necessary, we can safeguard their futures.”

Under Connecticut General Statutes, any adult who knowingly or recklessly permits minors to possess or consume alcohol on their property can face severe consequences, including substantial fines and possible jail time. Providing alcohol to minors carries even more serious penalties. Additionally, Connecticut’s Social Host Law holds property owners responsible even if they are unaware of the alcohol consumption by minors on their premises, and they may also be liable for any injuries or accidents resulting from such gatherings.

“The safety and well-being of our young people is our highest priority,” said Chief Robert Kalamaras. “Connecticut’s underage drinking laws are in place to protect youth from the risks associated with alcohol, including impaired judgment and behaviors that can lead to further harm. We ask every community member to partner with us by respecting these laws and reinforcing responsible behaviors at home and in social settings.”

The Fairfield Police Department remains dedicated to maintaining a safe community, protecting life and property, reducing crime and the fear of crime and to performing its function in a manner which promotes public trust and confidence. The Department strives to achieve its mission through the core values of Professionalism, Honor and Excellence.

The Fairfield Police Department also fully supports Fairfield Public Schools in their mission to promote healthy, safe lifestyles for students. We recognize the challenges they face, including recent incidents of alcohol consumption by adults at school events, and we stand ready to assist with enforcement action as needed to help keep school grounds safe and family-centered. Working together with our healthcare providers and educational institutions, we can foster an environment that reflects the positive values we want to instill in our youth.

While some parents may believe allowing minors to drink at home offers a controlled environment, Connecticut's Social Host Law exists to protect young people from the serious consequences of early alcohol use. As parents and guardians, our primary role is to prioritize our children's safety over acting as their "friend." Allowing minors to drink, even under supervision, sends a confusing message about responsible behavior and can encourage risky choices. By setting clear boundaries and modeling responsible behavior, we can guide our children toward safer, healthier decision-making.

We thank the Fairfield community, Pediatric Healthcare Associates, and Fairfield Public Schools for their ongoing cooperation and support in creating a safe, respectful, and family-friendly environment across our town.

Contact: Sergeant Michael Stahl
Phone: (203) 254-4844
Email: mstahl@fairfieldct.org

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