

Underage drinking and adult binge drinking has become an increasing challenge in Lee County, Iowa. Lee County youth have increased social availability of alcoholic beverages. Obtaining alcohol from friends, associates, and family members, as well as the availability of alcohol at social gatherings such as graduation parties, reception, and other social events where alcohol is provided as part of the event. In 2012, approximately 50% of students in Lee County stated that it would not be difficult to obtain alcoholic beverages in their neighborhood as compared to only 40% of underage students in 2002.

Compliance checks were conducted on eighteen local businesses that are licensed to sell alcohol beverages. The checks were coordinated by the Lee County Sheriff's Department and Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services in Keokuk, Iowa. Checks will continue throughout Lee County with the help of funding provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Funding seeks to enhance the current substance abuse prevention infrastructure and supports selected local communities in implementing effective programs, policies, and practices to reduce substance abuse and its related problems.

The SPF SIG program was implemented in Lee County in 2011 and since then there has been a reported reduction in students who have had a drink in the past 30 days has reduced from 19.2% (2010) to 12.6% (2012) for all grades in Lee County and 43.3% (2010) to 26.4% (2012) for 11th grade students. Comparable data from the State shows similar results of surveyed students who have had a drink in the past 30 days has reduced from 15.8% (2010) to 11.4% (2012) for all grades in Iowa and 31.5% (2010) to 26.4% (2012) for 11th grade students in Iowa.

Local ordinances to reduce underage drinking and adult binge drinking within the City of Keokuk were somewhat productive throughout the phase of the grant. The current policy modifications have not been passed; however the Mayor of the City of Keokuk provided this quote to the SPF SIG Coordinator regarding the usefulness of having the current practices in policy form, "Some of the criteria that are being suggested are already in place but not in ordinance form. The suggestion that these criteria and some additional criteria be added to the ordinance would codify these guidelines presented by the SPF SIG Collaboration Council Members would make the law tighter and more enforceable." Community efforts such as these are what make the program successful.

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