

Marshall County Family Resource Network, Inc.



www.marshallcountyfrn.com

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Marshall County Reports Strong Success in Reducing Alcohol Sales to Minors in 2009

MOUNDSVILLE, WV – After a dismal 2008 in terms of selling alcohol to minors in spot checks by police, Marshall County retailers have shown dramatic improvement in 2009.

In alcohol-law compliance checks over the course of several months in the spring and early summer, only 11 percent of retailers sold alcohol to an undercover minor working with police. That compares to a 94 percent buy rate in 2008. Only five businesses have sold to minors. During last year's compliance checks, alcohol was sold to minors 45 times out of 48 attempts. This year's success is the strongest evidence so far that the communitywide effort to reduce youth access to alcohol, spearheaded by the Marshall County Anti-Drug Coalition, has been working.

“These compliance checks are needed to help eliminate youth access to alcohol,” said Latrisha Whitelatch, substance abuse prevention director at the Marshall County Family Resource Network in Moundsville. “We’re proud of the Marshall County retailers who have been much more alert to the problem of underage drinking. For those who have sold to minors, we offer free training that will help them in the future.”

The lower sell rate to minors is the result of the Marshall County Family Resource Network and the Marshall County Anti-Drug Coalition's increased effort to reduce youth access to alcohol. One of those initiatives has been the Training for Intervention ProcedureS (TIPS) program. The two-and-a-half-hour TIPS program is offered free of charge by the Marshall County Family Resource Network to Marshall County companies and their employees. TIPS is designed to prevent intoxication, drunk driving and underage drinking by enhancing the fundamental “people skills” of servers, sellers and consumers of alcohol and may benefit you by reducing insurance premiums, improving customer service while decreasing penalties from alcohol violations and improving staff professionalism. It has trained 67 people in Marshall County since 2007.

This year's compliance checks were carried out by the Marshall County Sheriff's Office. The sheriff's office worked with the Marshall County Prosecutor's Office, the Marshall County Magistrate's Office and West Virginia Alcohol and Beverage Control. The Marshall County Family Resource Network and the Marshall County Anti-Drug Coalition administers the compliance-check process. The compliance checks are funded by a SPF SIG Implementation Grant from the WV Governor's Office and the WV Partnership to Promote Community Well-Being and the Purdue Pharma Asset Forfeiture Funds: Drug-Free West Virginia Grant Program. The grants are administered by the Marshall County Family Resource Network. The compliance checks began in April and will continue through the fall.

The next TIPS training is July 20. Another is scheduled Aug. 20. To register, please call Theresa Parsons at the Marshall County Family Resource Network at (304) 845-3300 or email spfsigcoordinator@comcast.net.

