

## Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership Launches Campaign to Reduce Underage Drinking

Research shows that Throggs Neck teens past 30 day use of alcohol is higher than the NYC rate`. TNCAP's campaign hopes to change that.

**April 1, 2013, Bronx, NY** . . . Using social media, real teens' stories, graphic images and an interactive website for parents and teens, the Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership (TNCAP) is committed to increasing the number of underage youth in our community who choose **not** to drink. "**The Risk is Real**" campaign provides parents with facts and tips which encourages them to talk with their teens about the harmful effects of under-age drinking.

"We are often led to believe that underage drinking is a 'rite of passage,' but research shows that youth who start drinking before the age of 15 are *four times* more likely to have alcohol dependency," says Frances Maturo, Executive Director of the Archdiocese of New York Drug Abuse Prevention Program (ADAPP), sponsor of TNCAP. "We want parents to talk to their kids early and often and this campaign helps parents learn the risk and how to avoid them."

Janit Bliss, Coordinator of Community Programs, at ADAPP adds, "A youth survey we conducted in 2011 shows drinking increases by 30% from 9<sup>th</sup> grade (22%) to 11<sup>th</sup> grade (51%). In addition, the majority of 11<sup>th</sup> grade youth report their parents do not see this as a problem." That's just unacceptable. Our goal is to educate parents and teens about what really happens as a result of youth drinking, and teach them to 'think before they take a drink.'

The campaign is funded by a Prevention First! grant from the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. Local teens, parents and TNCAP coalition members participated in focus groups to help create the campaign themes and share their stories. Dozens of local businesses, clubs and restaurants are participating by posting campaign materials onsite. "**The Risk Is Real**" message will also be visible on posters located in schools and throughout the community and at bus stops.

"The messages really hit home for me," says a 10<sup>th</sup>-grade Throggs Neck student. "There is a lot of pressure to drink, and I have friends who used to get in trouble or accidents because of it. It ruins their chances for college and everything they're going for. The campaign shows why it's dangerous and that lots of kids have fun without drinking."

A Throggs Neck parent of three adds, "I think it's up to us to tell our kids how drinking can have serious results for them. My own son mixed alcohol with an energy drink and didn't even realize how sick that would make him. It was very scary. There's a drinking age for a reason; teenagers don't have the decision-making skills yet. The campaign posters are strong reminders, and the website is something I can show my kids to say 'it's just not okay.'"

"**The Risk is Real**" campaign website streams videos of real kids and their true stories of underage drinking. It also provides local statistics, parent tips and facts. Access the website at [www.theriskisreal.org](http://www.theriskisreal.org). To develop the campaign, TNCAP partnered with *Connect with Kids (CWK)*, a leading social marketing, media and educational resource that specializes in youth issues.



### Contact:

Joanne Timmins, LCSWR, Community Organizer  
Archdiocese of NY Drug Abuse Prevention Program (ADAPP)  
2789 Schurz Avenue, Bronx, NY 10465  
Work # 718-904-1333, ext 28 Fax # 718-823-2177