

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol Alcohol Screening in Dorchester County Public School Subcommittee

The goal of the Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol, School Dance Subcommittee is to assist the Dorchester County Public High Schools in preventing underage drinking at school activities and dances. The further goal of the Subcommittee is to form collaboration between the community, law enforcement and the public school system.

The subcommittee's plan includes: school/board of education support; trained chaperones and volunteers; financial assistance to enable school administrators and security officers to conduct alcohol screenings; assist with the formulation of clear and concise consequences for positive screenings; purchase of portable breathalyzer testing ("PBT") devices for each of the Dorchester County Public Schools; crowd management techniques; procedure to be in compliance with and in conjunction to the Discipline Philosophy, Policy, Procedures of the Dorchester County Board of Education to maintain drug free zones at school activities/dances.

Initial Plan for PBT Screenings:

1. Letter directed to the high school students and their parents/guardians will be given to the students one week prior to when the school dance tickets will go on sale. The student must bring back a letter signed by the student and their parent/guardian acknowledging that they are aware a PBT device will be available to school administrators and the school resource officer. The returned letter will also provide for emergency contact information, including the emergency contact's telephone number, in the off chance that the parent/guardian is unavailable should the school administrators and/or the school resource officer attempt to contact them. The students will also be acknowledging that they may be subjected to a PBT screening if there is suspicion that they are under the influence of alcohol while they are attending the school dance. If the student receives permission for a guest to attend the school activity/dance, that guest will also be required to sign the notification letter. The alcohol consumption does not have to have occurred on the school premises. The letter will also outline the sanctions for positive PBT results;
2. Announcements to be made at both public high schools during the week of the school activity/dance that the school is in a drug free zone and if there is a suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, he/she may be subjected to a PBT screening;
3. Coordination between CMCA and Marlene Feldman so that a press release and picture will be submitted to the newspapers of local circulation with Subcommittee member(s), law enforcement officer(s) and school board representative(s) announcing drug and alcohol free policy for school events and what consequences are for suspicious behavior at the school activities two weeks prior to school activities/dance;

4. Public Service Announcement on the local radio stations inviting parents to attend an informational meeting after letters have been sent home. This information meeting will allow for discussion concerning the PBT policy and opportunity for CMCA, school board representative(s), law enforcement officer(s) and high school administrators to answer any questions or concerns of the students and/or parents/guardians;
5. Coordination between CMCA and the high school art departments to produce a banner(s) to be displayed at the entrances of the high schools reminding the students that they are entering a drug and alcohol free zone and may be subject to alcohol screening;
6. A clear and concise plan for PBT screenings to eliminate profiling or unfairness. Plan will include law enforcement training for school administrators, volunteers, chaperones and teachers. Law enforcement training will give school administrators, volunteers, chaperones and teachers tools on how to recognize suspicious behavior and the procedural steps to intervene. School administrators will also give procedural information and steps to be taken to properly address concerns of suspicious behavior by a student and/or the student's guest;
7. A clear and concise plan for the Principal, Vice Principal and/or School Resource Officer to follow if they question a student and/or their guest for suspicious behavior where alcohol may be a concern. Possible procedural steps are attached hereto as Addendum A;
8. The Subcommittee requests the Board of Education include with in the initial letter what disciplinary procedures will be followed by the school administrators and the Board of Education if a student is required to leave a school activity/dance as a result of the suspicion of, or confirmation that the student was, in fact, under the influence of alcohol during the school activity/dance;
9. These plans will create collaboration between the Subcommittee, school administrators, volunteers, chaperones and law enforcement officers during school activities/dances;
10. If requested, additional funding from Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol grant will be available to have extra law enforcement officers inside and outside school activities/dances and funds to purchase PBT devices with disposable tubes;
11. It is the mission of the Subcommittee that these plans and procedures be in place for the 2004 Proms at both of the public high schools;
12. It is not the intent of the Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol to increase the number of school suspensions and/or expulsion referrals. The mission of the Committee is to make students responsible for their actions and provide a safe environment for all students during school activities/dances.

Respectively submitted,

Amy Craig, Communities Mobility for Change on Alcohol

- Chairperson for School Dance Subcommittee

Nancy Shockley, Director, Local Management Board

ADDENDUM A

1. If a student/guest refuses to submit to a PBT and a call to their parent/guardian results in no response, then the designated emergency contact will be contacted. The emergency contact will then be required to come to the school to pick up the student/guest and the student/guest will be required to leave the school activity/dance and the student/guest will not be allowed to return to the activity/dance. The emergency contact will sign a release form acknowledging that the student/guest has been released by school administration to their custody;
2. If a student/guest agrees to submit to a PBT, however, a call to their parent/guardian results in no response, then the designated emergency contact will be contacted. The emergency contact will then be required to come to the school to pick up the student/guest and the student/guest will be required to leave the school activity/dance and the student/guest will not be allowed to return to the activity/dance. The emergency contact will sign a release form acknowledging that the student/guest has been released by school administration to their custody;
3. If a student/guest refuses to submit to a PBT and a call to their parent/guardian results in their agreement that their child(ren) should submit, however, the parent/guardian is unable to come to the school, then the PBT screening will be conducted while the parent/guardian is still on the phone. If the student/guest tests negative as to alcohol consumption, then the student/guest will be allowed to return to the school activity/dance. If the student/guest tests positive as to alcohol consumption, then the parent/guardian will have to make arrangements to get to the school to pick up their child(ren) and the student/guest will not be allowed to return to the activity/dance;
4. If a student/guest refuses to submit to a PBT and a call to their parent/guardian results in their agreement that their child(ren) should submit to the PBT and the parent/guardian comes to the school, then a positive testing would result in the student/guest being required to leave the school activity/dance and the student/guest will not be allowed to return to the activity/dance;
5. If a student/guest agrees to submit to a PBT, however, the parent/guardian arrives at the school and does not agree to their child(ren) submitting to the PBT, the parent/guardian will then be required to take their child(ren) from the school activity/dance and the student/guest will not be allowed to return to the activity/dance;
6. If a student/guest agrees to submit to a PBT and their parent/guardian comes to the school and agrees to the submitting to the PBT, and the results are positive, the parent/guardian will then be required to take their child(ren) from the school activity/dance and the student/guest will not be allowed to return to the activity/dance;
7. If at any point the student/guest refuses to submit to the PBT screening, regardless of their parent/guardian's consent to the screening, the student/guest will be required to leave the school premises with their parent/guardian and will not be allowed to return to the school activity/dance.