

For Immediate Release
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Iowa AC4C goes to Iowa Capitol for Underage Drinking Prevention Day on the Hill

On Monday, February 16th the Alliance of Coalitions for Change, a state-wide collaboration to effect positive change in substance abuse, met with the state legislators to discuss their concerns about underage drinking in Iowa.

Twelve members of the KC STAAR Action Team, a collaboration between Keota, Pekin, Sigourney and Tri-County School Districts, parents and community members were among the 52 community coalitions, representing 75% of Iowa's rural and urban populations at this event.

The AC4C press conference was held on the main floor rotunda. Media, legislators and the public were encouraged to attend. Attendees heard from several speakers—a youth affected by his choice to use alcohol, a parent who started a youth center, a state trooper whose seen the devastating effects of alcohol on the roads, and a county attorney whose proactive community coalition pushed local leaders to enforce a “Social Host” law.

After the press release, the Action Team met with Representative Betty DeBoef and Senator Tom Reilly. They discussed the importance of a statewide “Social Host” law and closing loopholes in current alcohol legislation. The “Social Host” law would impose a fine to adults who provide a location for underage drinking, even if they did not provide the alcohol. Current law states it must wait until a minor is injured or killed before legal prosecution can begin.

This is a very important issue for Iowa legislators because:

- *Iowa ranks in the **top 10** states for past month underage alcohol use*
- *Iowa is in the **top 5** states for past month underage binge drinking*
- *The State of Iowa reports a binge drinking rate among youth, 12-17, that is **13% higher** than the national rate*

In Keokuk County:

- *42% of youth report trying an alcoholic beverage before the age of 15*
- *32% of Juniors report binge drinking in the last month*
- *85% of Juniors report it is easy or very easy to access alcoholic beverages*

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Pictured from Left to Right:

Lynne Zoulek, Wendy Leonard, Sean Erwin, Kerm Shettler, Trevor Draisey, Sharon Shettler, Jordan Alspach (sitting), Mary Krier, Demi Moore, Ryan Weber (sitting), Joanna Hodder, Lincoln Schmidt, and Representative Betty DeBoef