

Charlotte Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition

Position Statement on Underage Drinking

Underage Drinking: A Major Public Health Challenge

Alcohol use and abuse by children and adolescents is a long standing, major public health challenge in Mecklenburg County. Alcohol possession and use by young people raise issues of grave concern that threaten the health, productivity, safety and economic well-being of all citizens. The Charlotte Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition (CMDFC) believes that underage drinking can be prevented through advocacy and education that focuses on the nature and causes of underage drinking; youth access to alcohol and the community's attitude towards underage drinking. Community members, individually and collectively, have a responsibility to take action to support a comprehensive community based prevention and intervention strategy.

Policy Recommendations

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition recommends that policy makers, community organizations and individuals support the following policies and advocacy and education activities to reduce underage drinking among youth. Categories are prioritized.

1. Sustain a community collaborative committed to research based strategies that prevent and reduce underage drinking,
2. Change community norms regarding underage drinking,
3. Reduce access and availability to youth,
4. Intervene with youths at-risk of or with alcohol problems,
5. Restrict advertising and promotion to you,
6. Adopt and enforce laws that effectively pre