

Character Counts!

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Six Pillars of Character:

P.O. Box 418 Centreville, Maryland 21617 (410)758-6677 jcarter@qac.org
www.peopleofcharacter.org

Trustworthiness:

Be honest; Don't deceive, cheat, or steal; Be reliable - do what you say you'll do; Have the courage to do the right thing; Build a good reputation; Be loyal - stand by your family, friends, and country

Respect:

Treat others with respect - follow the Golden Rule; Be tolerant of differences; Use good manners, not bad language; Be considerate of the feelings of others; Don't threaten, hit, or hurt anyone; Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements

Responsibility:

Do what you are supposed to do; Persevere - keep on trying; Always do your best; Use self control; Be self-disciplined; Think before you act - consider the consequences; Be accountable for your choices.

Fairness:

Play by the rules; Take turns and share; Be open-minded; Listen to others; Don't take advantage of others; Don't blame others carelessly

Caring:

Be kind; Be compassionate and show you care; Express gratitude; Forgive others; Help people in need

Citizenship:

Do your share to make your school and community better; Cooperate; Get involved in community affairs; Stay informed - vote; Be a good neighbor; Obey laws and rules; Respect authority; Protect the environment

For more information on the Six Pillars of Character, please visit www.charactercounts.org

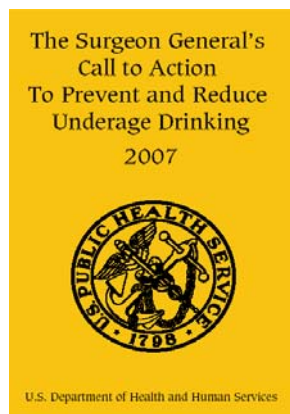
New Campaign to Address Underage Drinking in QAC

The Queen Anne's County Community Partnership for Children and Families, our local management board, has recently launched a campaign to reduce underage drinking across the county.

Local and national research has shown that both the short and long term effects of underage drinking are cause for serious concern. In fact, the data has been so alarming that in 2007, the Surgeon General issued a National Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking, stating, "The process of solving the public health problem of underage alcohol use begins with an examination of our own attitudes toward underage drinking and our recognition of the seriousness of its consequences for adolescents, their families, and society as a whole. Adolescent alcohol use is not an acceptable rite of passage but a serious threat to adolescent development and health, as the statistics related to adolescent impairment, injury, and death attest."

The Character Counts! Advisory Council fully supports this new campaign and believes the Six Pillars of Character set an excellent foundation for reducing underage drinking in our county. We are also hoping parents and community members will join us in this effort to save lives and improve the *quality of life* for all the citizens of Queen Anne's County.

A Good Read ...



The "Good Read" this month is actually for parents. In 2007, the Surgeon General issued a National Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking. The entire edition can be found at www.surgeongeneral.gov, including staggering statistics about the effects underage drinking has on individuals, families, and society as a whole. This document will serve as a foundation to understanding why our local management board is focusing their effort on reducing underage drinking in our county. More information will follow about the problems underage drinking causes and ways every citizen can play a part in keeping QAC teens safe.

Calendar of Events

January (Fairness)

26th—What Counts Forum
@ Centreville MS

February (Respect)

March (Responsibility)

23rd—Laws of Life
Ceremony
@ Chesapeake
College

April (Trustworthiness)

13th—LMB Silent Auction
@ Doc's Restaurant



Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 418
Centreville, MD 21617

Physical Address:
204 N. Commerce St
Centreville, MD 21617

Phone:
(410)758-6677

E-mail:
jcarter@gac.org

Website:
www.peopleofcharacter.org
www.growinguppositive.org

Social Hosting is ILLEGAL!

The Character Counts! Pillar of Citizenship encourages all citizens to become active and positive members of their communities.

In this light, the Community Partnership for Children and Families is looking to parents and local community members to help reduce underage drinking in Queen Anne's County.

Although it has long been accepted that underage drinking is a right of passage, recent research has shown that the short and long term effects of underage drinking are extremely damaging and dangerous to both the teens consuming the alcohol and the community in which they live.

MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) shares on their website, www.madd.org, "Of all the dangers your teen faces, underage drinking is among the worst. Whether teens are experimenting with beer, wine, or other liquor, alcohol presents a serious – and potentially deadly – threat. Compared with non-drinking classmates, teens who drink are more likely to

die in a car crash, get pregnant, flunk school, be sexually assaulted, become an alcoholic later in life, or take their own life through suicide.

The longer your child waits to start drinking, the safer he or she will stay."

In an effort to keep teens in Queen Anne's County safe, it is necessary to have the support of the community and eliminate **social hosting**.

Because it is often difficult to determine who actually supplied alcohol for underage teens, social host laws are a way to hold adults accountable for the events that take place on their property. These laws put the responsibility on the property owner to prevent underage drinking both in their immediate presence and when they are away.

These laws are meant to discourage parental approval of underage drinking in their homes by their own children *and* their children's friends, a topic that can often be a point of contention among

parents who do not allow their children to drink before they are 21 and those parents who do permit it.

For a first offense of social hosting in QAC, the fine is \$2,500 plus **\$2,500 PER MINOR** in possession of alcohol. **(\$2,500 x 10 underage drinkers = \$25,000!)**

A second offense will result in a \$5,000 fine plus **\$5,000 PER MINOR** in possession of alcohol. The State's Attorney is prepared to prosecute those who furnish alcohol to minors or allow minors to drink in their presence.

If you are aware of underage drinking parties in your neighborhood, please call 410-758-0770 to report a Party in Progress or 410-758-6666 to leave an anonymous tip.

Avoid social hosting and the fines that go with it!

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Everything you do
sends a message
about who you are
and what you value.
~Michael Josephson