

**In this issue:**

- Open House Giveaway
- Rachel's Challenge
- Rise Above
- Bullying
- Social Host Law
- How Do Youth Get Alcohol?

## Open House Bag Giveaway



The Drug Abuse Prevention Council and Youth Services will again be giving out reusable shopping bags at all the school open houses. The theme this year is "Stay Connected." There will be various pieces of information about staying connected along with a few goodies. We hope to see you there.



## Rachel's Challenge at Windermere October 14th

For more information on youth and alcohol, check out the following websites:

- <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>
- [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)
- [www.teen-safe.org](http://www.teen-safe.org)
- [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov)
- [www.preventionworksct.org](http://www.preventionworksct.org)
- [www.housepartybill.org](http://www.housepartybill.org)
- [www.madd.org/under21](http://www.madd.org/under21)
- [www.mourningparentsact.org](http://www.mourningparentsact.org)
- [www.dontserveteens.gov](http://www.dontserveteens.gov)
- [www.alcoholfreechildren.org](http://www.alcoholfreechildren.org)
- [www.Alot2Lose.com](http://www.Alot2Lose.com)
- [www.thecoolspot.gov](http://www.thecoolspot.gov)
- [www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org)
- [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)
- [www.notmykid.org](http://www.notmykid.org)
- [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)



"I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion, then it will start a chain reaction of the same. People will never know how far a little kindness can go."  
~Rachel Scott

Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for **RACHEL'S CHALLENGE**, one of the most life-changing school programs in America.

Sponsored by Ellington Public Schools, Windermere Intermediate PTO, Youth Services and The Drug Abuse Prevention Council, **RACHEL'S CHALLENGE** will be presented to 5th and 6th grade students on October 14th. The program begins as an assembly for students but is intended to create a momentum that will be carried throughout the school year. On the evening of the 14th, a session for parents and community members will take place at 7 pm at Ellington High School. This is a powerful program not to be missed. For more information, visit their website at [www.rachelschallenge.org](http://www.rachelschallenge.org).

**Be sure to check out our websites!**

<http://youth.ellington-ct.gov> and <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

## Signs of Bullying in Children

- Torn, damaged or missing clothing, books, or belongings are clues to harassment.
- Unexplained injuries may signal physical harassment.
- Children may be fearful about attending school, walking to the bus, or they may lose interest in schoolwork.
- They may choose an unusual route to get to school.
- Emotional changes may be another sign of the stress of harassment; these changes include unexpected mood shifts or poor appetite, headaches and stomachaches. Children may even steal money from family members rather than admit harassment.

## Bullying Prevention Guidelines

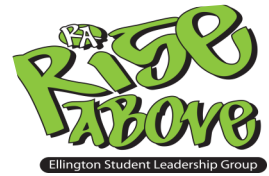
- Don't ignore the problem! Leaving kids alone to deal with bullying doesn't make them tougher-it makes them more vulnerable.
- Look for signs of harassment because children may be too emotionally overwhelmed.
- Work with teachers and schools directly.
- Talk to your children about how to protect themselves.
- Seek help from a mental health professional if necessary.

## Rise Above Student Leadership Group



Rise Above will be starting its 4th year as an active student leadership group at Ellington High School. The mission of Rise Above is to encourage positive choices by sponsoring a variety of activities and to act as role models for Ellington's student community.

Last year, with over 100 members, the group was able to sponsor several dodge ball tournaments, a comedy show at Funny Bone Comedy Club, and the EHS Talent Show. They also created a "Find Your Passion" poster campaign for middle school students. In addition, they ran the kids' games at Fair on the Green in May and sponsored a car wash for the Safe Grad party. Students at Ellington High School who are committed to making positive choices regarding substance abuse may join Rise Above. The first meeting will be in September and will be announced at the school. In addition, information will be available at Freshmen Orientation on August 27th. For more information on Rise Above, contact Debbie Stauffer at Ellington Youth Services at 860-870-3130 or [email dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov](mailto:dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov).



## Bullying Doesn't Just Happen to Little Kids

### Some Facts About Bullying/Harassment

- 1 in 7 children is a bully or the target of a bully, according to the National Association of School Psychologists.
- A study published in the November 2005 issue of the Journal of Early Adolescence by SAGE Publications, found significant associations between peer harassment of students in middle school and a variety of problem behaviors, such as alcohol abuse, once these students reach high school.
- Bullying can be physical, verbal or emotional. It's used to get and keep power over another person. It usually happens where adults can't see or hear it. Besides the obvious kinds of bullying, like hitting, shoving and pinching, all of these things are bullying, too: teasing, calling names, making fun of or putting someone down, mean looks or rude gestures, starting rumors about someone, or forcing someone to do things. A lot of bullies have been mistreated themselves.
- Technological advances in communication present new opportunities for bullying through emails, instant or text messaging and chat rooms. Both boys and girls can be targets of physical and non-physical humiliation or rejection. Girls, in particular, may be victimized by rumors, sexual comments or social exclusion.
- Children may be too frightened to talk about the problem. Parents should be alert to the early warning signs of harassment, including changes in the child's appearance or behavior.

Source: [www.lifespan.org](http://www.lifespan.org)

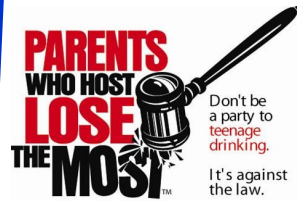
Deborah Stauffer, Prevention Coordinator~ Ellington Drug Abuse Prevention Council/Ellington Youth Services~ 31 Arbor Way, Ellington, Connecticut 06029 ~ Telephone: 860-870-3130

~ Email: [dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov](mailto:dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov)

Website-<http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>



## Social Host Law & Liability



A “social host” is an individual who provides alcoholic beverages to guests in his or her home. “Social Host” liability is based on the rationale that the server of alcohol has an obligation to the public at large to serve alcohol in a safe and responsible manner. In Connecticut as of June 2006, it became illegal for a property owner to permit anyone under 21 to possess alcohol on their property. Parents who allow drinking in their homes by individuals other than their own children with the thought it keeps them safer, open up their liability for civil and criminal penalties. If a youth is injured or killed, or leaves that house and injures himself/herself or someone else, the homeowner can be held liable. In addition to that, their homeowner’s insurance can be canceled. This liability can be held even if the parent is unaware of the party taking place and is not home.

Some parents continue to host parties, authorities say—perhaps because they are ignorant of the law, but more often because they believe that condoning parties in their homes will prevent their sons and daughters from seeking out unsupervised gatherings elsewhere. No matter how diligent a parent is, teens are astute at bending the rules so that the opportunity for recklessness that ends in tragedy always exists. Adults who sanction or sponsor “controlled” house parties are violating the rights of all other parents who rightfully expect other adults not to facilitate dangerous activities involving their children.

*In addition, underage attendees of parties can be ticketed and fined—even if they were not drinking. A first offense is punishable by a fine of \$136, payable by mail. This is considered an infraction, however, by mailing in the fine it admits guilt and notification then goes to the DMV resulting in a license suspension of 30 days if the offense is on private property and 60 days for public property. For more info on the law, go to [www.housepartybill.org](http://www.housepartybill.org)*

## How Do Youth Get Alcohol?

According to the 2009 Student Survey of Ellington students in grades 6 through 12, 49% of students in grades 6 through 8 and 80% of students in grades 9 through 12 think alcohol is easy to obtain. Of the students who drank alcohol, almost 30% obtained it from their siblings or a friend 21 years of age or older. This is an increase of almost 6% from the 2005 survey.

Of the Ellington students who drank alcohol, 37.6% obtained it from their parents without permission and 29.4% obtained it from parents WITH permission. Both percentages are down from the 2005 survey. So while underage youth are getting alcohol less from their houses, they have sought more from legal peers and siblings in recent years. This problem is not just in Ellington. Nationally, 65% of youth get alcohol from friends and family.

*While it is difficult to reach the 21 year old and older population, it is not impossible. Parents with adult children can remind them of the dangers AND penalties to both them and their younger friends and siblings if they purchase alcohol for them.*

**Connecticut Statute Sec. 30-86 prohibits anyone giving or delivering liquor to a minor and is punishable by up to 18 months in prison and/or a fine up to \$1,000.**

**DON'T SERVE ALCOHOL TO TEENS.**

*It's unsafe. It's illegal. It's irresponsible.*



[WWW.DONTSERVETEENS.GOV](http://WWW.DONTSERVETEENS.GOV)

*Teen Safe*

*Learn how to keep your teen safe in just 15 minutes.*

**[www.teen-safe.org](http://www.teen-safe.org)**

This is an excellent website designed by Dr. John R. Knight, M.D. of the Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Children’s Hospital in Boston.