



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2024

Kevin Shields

kshields@countyofcolusaca.gov

(530) 458-0520

Local Youth See Corner Stores as Critical Community Allies

Colusa County – This fall, young people in Pierce High School Friday Night Live (FNL) will launch a campaign to tackle underage drinking in Colusa County. Friday Night Live builds partnerships for positive and healthy youth development, engaging youth as active community leaders and resources to create positive changes on essential issues. Underage alcohol consumption is a persistent and severe public health challenge, resulting in thousands of deaths yearly through motor vehicle crashes, violence, suicide, alcohol poisoning, and other causes. Although underage drinking rates are declining, 23% of high school students consumed alcohol in the last 30 days, and an additional 14% rode with a driver who had been drinking (CDC, 2022). California young people in Pierce High School are on a mission to promote the continued decline in underage drinking rates.

The youth in FNL believe it will take a community effort to build a safer and healthier Colusa County. With support from the California Friday Night Live Partnership (CFNLP) and a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), students will utilize environmental prevention strategies and youth-led initiatives to educate and develop partnerships with local merchants across the county to decrease the access of alcohol to minors. While the minimum legal drinking age is 21, present-day social norms and access to alcohol continue to perpetuate the problem of underage drinking, posing a significant risk to Colusa County youth.

Pierce High School chapter members will embark on a youth-driven initiative to reduce underage access to alcohol by conducting store assessments, providing merchant education on preventative safety measures to restrict access for youth under 21, and working with retailers to inform customers of the consequences of alcohol sales to minors. Youth participated in a Spread the word campaign with local retailers at Chevron and Arbuckle Food Center. Youth placed flyers and stickers by alcohol merchandise to remind customers not to provide alcohol to minors. Youth also engaged other stores in Arbuckle to take the retailer Not on My Watch Merchant Pledge to be a supporter of preventing underage drinking. The retailers that signed a Not on my Watch Pledge are Chevron, Arbuckle Food Center and Sinclair. Youth also held a parent pledge for Not on My Watch Campaign in the community asking parents to commit to not providing alcohol to minors gaining 57 signatures. Through the year-long campaign, youth in FNL will receive training on data collection, environmental prevention, the health risks of underage drinking, public speaking, and leadership development in various valuable lifelong skills.

*“This project was a great way for me to see how working with our community partners, to see how much they care, and how together we can make our community a safer place.” –Emma Trueblood
Pierce High School Chapter Members*

Pierce High School members will join young people in forty-five chapters across California in a collaborative effort to reduce alcohol access for minors and mitigate the damages caused to communities by underage drinking. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

For more information about Friday Night Live, visit fridaynightlive.org.

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Underage Drinking](#)

###