



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Youth See Corner Stores as Critical Community Allies

Colusa County – This fall, young people in Colusa 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 Colusa 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.

Colusa 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 Country Stop and Shop N' Save in Colusa. Youth placed flyers and stickers by alcohol merchandise to remind customers not to provide alcohol to minors. Youth also engaged other stores in Colusa 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 County Stop, Shop N' Save, Sav Mor, Colusa Quick Serve Market, Kwik Stop, and Jackpot Food Mart. 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.

“Doing this project has been a helpful way to work with our community partners and learn about how they create a safer community in their stores.”- Ethan Rasmussen Colusa County Friday Night Live Youth Chapter member

Colusa 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](#)

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