

Martha's Vineyard 2010 Parent Survey Report



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Methodology

A 35-question, online survey was created by The Outcomes Project to gain information from Martha's Vineyard high school parents about their actions and opinions regarding underage alcohol and other drug use. This survey was administered on December 19th, 2009 and closed on March 9th, 2010. It was advertised through the local newspaper, on Edline, facebook, and e-mailed to parents on the Youth Task Force (YTF)'s mailing list.

An incentive was given for completion of this survey. When parents completed the survey, they were instructed to email their contact information to the YTF in order to be entered in a raffle drawing for a \$50.00 gift certificate to a restaurant of their choice.

Sample

Table 1. Demographics of Sample

Parent of a	Percentage*	Number
<i>Freshman (9th grader)</i>	39%	85
<i>Sophomore (10th grader)</i>	27%	58
<i>Junior (11th grader)</i>	30%	65
<i>Senior (12th grader)</i>	21%	46
<i>Total in Sample</i>	100%	217

**The percentages do not add to 100%, as parents may have children in more than one grade and parents were asked to report all the grades in which they had children.*

There are approximately 750 parents of high school students in Martha's Vineyard. The final sample of 217 survey respondents generates a return rate of 29%. However, many respondents did not complete the entire survey; they either did not finish the survey or skipped questions throughout. The total number of completed surveys was 171. Percentages given throughout the report are of those that answered the question.

Those who stated they were the parent of "None of the above" when given the options for grades in high school (9th-12th) were removed from the final sample and analysis, as this survey was only intended for parents of high school students. Twenty-five surveys were removed for this reason.

Findings

Supervision and Talking to Child

Supervision of Teens

Parents were asked questions regarding knowing where their teen is when they are not home and knowing when they come home. They were asked their perceptions of most Martha's Vineyard's parents' knowledge of their teen's whereabouts as well. The results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Supervision of Teens

Statement	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	N/A or Unsure
When my teen is not home, I or the other parent knows where he/she is and who he/she is with.	0%	0%	4%	38%	57%	1%
I know when my teen does not come home on time.	0%	1%	2%	18%	77%	2%
I think most MV parents know where their teens are and who they are with when not home.	0%	26%	44%	22%	0%	8%
I think most MV parents know when their teens do not come home on time.	0%	13%	50%	27%	1%	9%

Discussion with Child

Parents were asked how often they have talked with their teenager regarding not using alcohol or other drugs during the past 30 days and what they said. They were also asked how often they believe most Martha's Vineyard parents have talked to their teenager regarding not using alcohol or other drugs. Results are shown in Chart 1 as 'Actual' V. 'Perceived'. In addition, parents were asked what type of discussion they had with their teenager. These results are shown in Table 3.

Chart 1. Frequency of Conversation With Teen in Past 30 Days Regarding Not Using Alcohol or Other Drugs: Actual V. Perceived

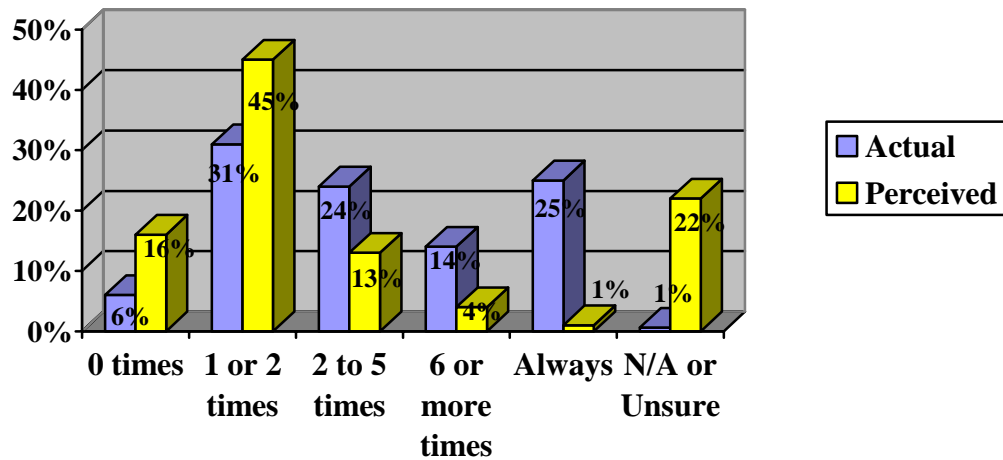


Table 3. Type of Discussion with Teenager Regarding Alcohol and Other Drug Use

Characteristic of discussion with teenager	Actual	Perception
Did not talk to teenager about drinking during past 30 days.	2%	17%
Told teenager that drinking is always bad and he/she should never try it.	3%	5%
Told teenager about the risks of underage drinking and expect him/her not to drink.	90%	42%
Told teenager that a few drinks on special occasions, is all right.	2%	16%
Told teenager that he/she will have to decide for him/herself how much to drink.	2%	21%

Beliefs

Parental Influence

Parents were asked how much influence they believe they or their behaviors have over their teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol. They were also asked how much influence most Martha's Vineyard parents believe they or their behaviors have over their teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol. Results are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Influence on Child

Statement	Percent of parents that believe they have...		
	No influence	Neutral	Influence
How much influence parents believe they have over teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol.	8%	33%	58%
<i>Perception:</i> How much influence parents think most MV parents believe they have over their teens' decision whether or not to drink alcohol.	38%	44%	18%
How much influence parents believe their own behavior have over teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol.	4%	16%	80%
<i>Perception:</i> How much influence parents think most MV parents believe their behavior has over their teen's decision whether or not to drink alcohol	28%	35%	38%

Parental Beliefs

Parents were asked how much they agreed with statements regarding alcohol use on Martha's Vineyard. Those who marked 'strongly agree' and 'agree' are combined as well as those who marked 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Parental Beliefs Regarding Alcohol and Other Drug Use

Statement	<i>Percent of parents that ...</i>		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Alcohol use by high school students is a "normal rite of passage."	16%	19%	65%
Alcohol use by high school students is harmful.	88%	4%	8%
I support the police departments of MV in enforcing underage (under the age of 21) drinking laws.	92%	4%	4%
Schools should exclude a student from school activities (i.e. athletic events, prom, etc) for out-of-school alcohol use.	69%	10%	21%
There are clear rules in my house about not using alcohol or other drugs.	89%	5%	6%
If my teen was going to a friend's house for a social gathering, I would call the parents to inquire about adult supervision.	74%	12%	14%
If teens were coming to my home for a social gathering, I would feel comfortable if a parent called me about adult supervision.	94%	1%	5%
It is okay to allow teens to drink alcohol on special occasions (wedding, prom, graduation, etc.)	9%	9%	82%

Perception of Parental Beliefs

Parents were asked how much they believe the typical Martha's Vineyard parent agreed with statements regarding alcohol use on Martha's Vineyard. Those who marked 'strongly agree' and 'agree' are combined as well as those who marked 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'. Results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Perception of Parental Beliefs Regarding Alcohol and Other Drug Use

Statement	<i>Percent of parents that...</i>		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Alcohol use by high school students is a "normal rite of passage."	58%	32%	10%
Alcohol use by high school students is harmful.	42%	37%	22%
I support the police departments of MV in enforcing underage (under the age of 21) drinking laws.	43%	41%	17%
Schools should exclude a student from school activities (i.e. athletic events, prom, etc) for out-of-school alcohol use.	22%	43%	35%
There are clear rules in my house about not using alcohol or other drugs.	32%	48%	20%

If my teen was going to a friend's house for a social gathering, I would call the parents to inquire about adult supervision.	21%	9%	40%
If teens were coming to my home for a social gathering, I would feel comfortable if a parent called me about adult supervision.	41%	41%	19%
It is okay to allow teens to drink alcohol on special occasions (wedding, prom, graduation, etc.)	45%	33%	22%

Knowledge and of Current Massachusetts Laws Regarding Youth and Alcohol

Parents were given a lists of statements and asked which were current laws in Massachusetts. Those that marked 'true' are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Current laws in Massachusetts Pertaining to Underage Alcohol Use

Law	Number	Percentage
A parent may purchase alcohol for their child under the age of 21 at a restaurant.	3	2%
Only a parent or spouse may serve alcohol to someone under 21 years of age.*	21	14%
A person can be held financially responsible if their child or guest kills or injures another person after they permit their child or guest to drink alcohol in their home or on other property they control.*	148	98%
A parent may not serve alcohol to their own child in their own home.	80	54%
The legal drinking age in Massachusetts is 21 years of age. *	149	99%

**These are current laws in Massachusetts*

Support of Statements

Parents were asked their level of agreement on 5 statements regarding youth drug use. Results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Level of Agreement: Support, Resources, and Comfort Regarding Youth Drug Use

Statement	Percent of parents that...		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I support the current legal drinking age of 21 years old.	85%	0%	15%
I feel like I have enough information to talk with my child about alcohol and other drugs.	93%	0%	7%
I feel like I have enough information about how to get help if my child has a problem with alcohol or other drugs.	85%	0%	15%
I would be interested in learning more about teen alcohol and other drug use.	77%	0%	23%
I feel comfortable talking to my child about not using alcohol and other drugs.	99%	0%	1%

Youth Access to Substances

Parents were asked to indicate their level of agreement regarding ease of access for alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs among youth on Martha's Vineyard.

Table 9. Perception of Ease of Youth Access to Substances

Statement	Percent of parents that...		
	Agree	Do not know	Disagree
It is easy for youth on MV to get beer, wine, or hard liquor.	90%	6%	4%
It is easy for youth on MV to get marijuana.	94%	6%	0%
It is easy for youth on MV to get prescription drugs.	67%	23%	10%

Perception of Alcohol Access Points

Parents were asked if Martha's Vineyard High School students wanted to drink alcohol, where they could get it from most easily. Results are shown in Table 10, in rank order.

Table 10. Perception of Access Points of Alcohol

Place where parents believe students access alcohol	Number of parents that selected...
They get it from a friend who is 21 years of age or older	128
They get it from their mother or father (without their permission)	99
They get it from a friend or acquaintance's mother or father (without their permission)	66
They get it from a brother, sister, or other relative	62
They get it from a friend who is under 21 years of age	35
They ask a stranger to buy it for them	32
They get it from their mother or father (with their permission)	20
I don't know	10
They order and have it delivered from the liquor store	10
They get it from a friend or acquaintance's mother or father (with their permission)	8
They bought it themselves	5
<i>Other: Any way they can</i>	1
<i>Other: Break into seasonal homes</i>	1
<i>Other: Narrowing it down to three is unrealistic</i>	1
<i>Other: Their friends steal it from their parents</i>	1
They do not drink alcohol	0

Perception of Prescription Drugs and Marijuana Access

Parents were asked where they believe Martha's Vineyard high school students obtain prescription drugs and marijuana.

Table 11. Perception of where Martha's Vineyard high school students obtain prescription drugs and marijuana

Access Point	Prescription drugs	Marijuana
At home	30%	2%
At school	7%	7%
From friends	30%	41%
From a friend's house	7%	2%
Buy/purchase it	17%	41%
Other*	9%	7%

*Other

Prescription drugs

- 13 participants responded “Other”, 7 wrote in “All of the above”, 6 wrote in “No idea”

Marijuana

- 10 participants responded “Other”, 9 wrote in “All of the above”, 1 wrote in “No idea”

Prescription Drug Disposal

Parents were asked how they dispose of unused prescription medications.

Table 12. Method of Disposing Prescription Medications

Method	Percentage	Number
I throw them in the trash	27%	40
I flush them down the toilet or drain	29%	43
I return them to the pharmacy	1%	2
I put them in a sealed plastic bag with another substance (such as cat litter), crush them, seal the bag, then throw it in the trash*	5%	8
I do not have any unused prescription medications in my home	25%	38
I do not dispose of unused prescription medications	11%	16
Other	2%	4

* This is the Center for Disease Control recommended method of disposing unused prescription medications.

Parental Permission to Drink Alcohol

Allowance to Drink Alcohol in Home

Parents were asked how likely they were to allow their teen and their friends to drink alcohol in their home. A range was given where 1 was 'not at all likely' and 5 was 'very likely'. This same question was also asked regarding parent's perception of other parent's allowing their teen and friends to drink in their home. Those who marked '1' and '2' were grouped together in a category named 'Unlikely' and those who marked '4' and '5' were grouped together in a category named 'Likely'. Results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Parental Permission for Youth to Drink Alcohol in Home

	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely
How likely are you to allow your teen and their friends to drink in your home?	0%	1%	99%
How likely do you think most MV parents would be to allow their teen and their friends to drink in their home?	14%	41%	46%

Parents were asked if they provide alcohol to their own high school aged children and their friends to drink in their home in the past year. The results are reported below.

- 98% (n=146) of parents stated that they have not allowed their high school student to drink alcohol in their home (excluding for religious purposes).
 - 2% (n=3) of parents stated they have provided alcohol to their own high school student.
- 99% (n=150) of parents stated they have not provided alcohol to other high school aged children
 - One parent stated they have provided alcohol to other high school aged children.

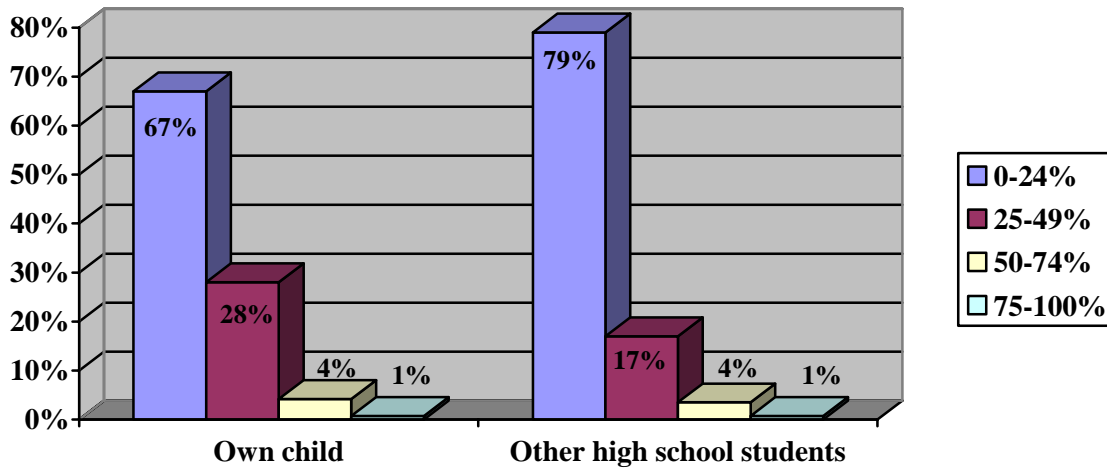
A separate question asked if parents allowed their high school student to drink in their home with them or other adults, even if it is just a small glass of wine or beer with dinner (not including for religious purposes).

- No parents indicated that they have allowed their child to drink alcohol in their home regularly; however 15 parents indicated they have occasionally.
- 90% (n=151) of parents said they never allowed their child to drink in their home.

Perception of Martha's Vineyard Parents Provision of Alcohol to Minors

Parents were asked in their opinion, in the past year, what percentage of Martha's Vineyard High School parents have provided alcohol to their own child and what percentage have provided alcohol to other high school students (other than their own child). Results are shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2. Perception of Percentage of Parents That Provide Alcohol to Youth



Purchasing Alcohol for Minor

Parents were asked if they would be willing to purchase alcohol for a person under the age of 21 who is not their own child if they were asked.

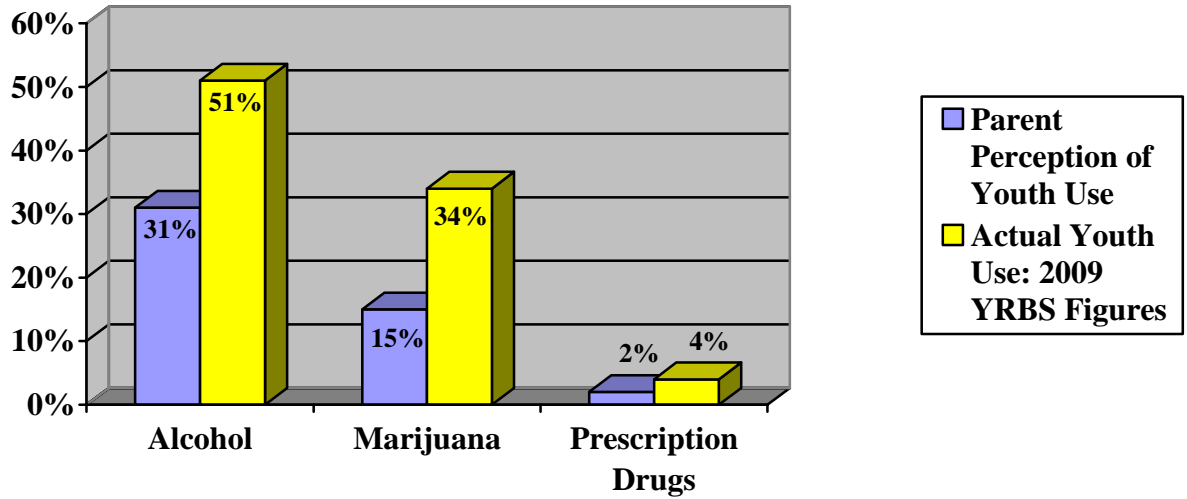
- 151 said 'no'
- 0 said 'yes'
- 0 said 'not sure'

Perception of Substance Use

Perception of Child's Use

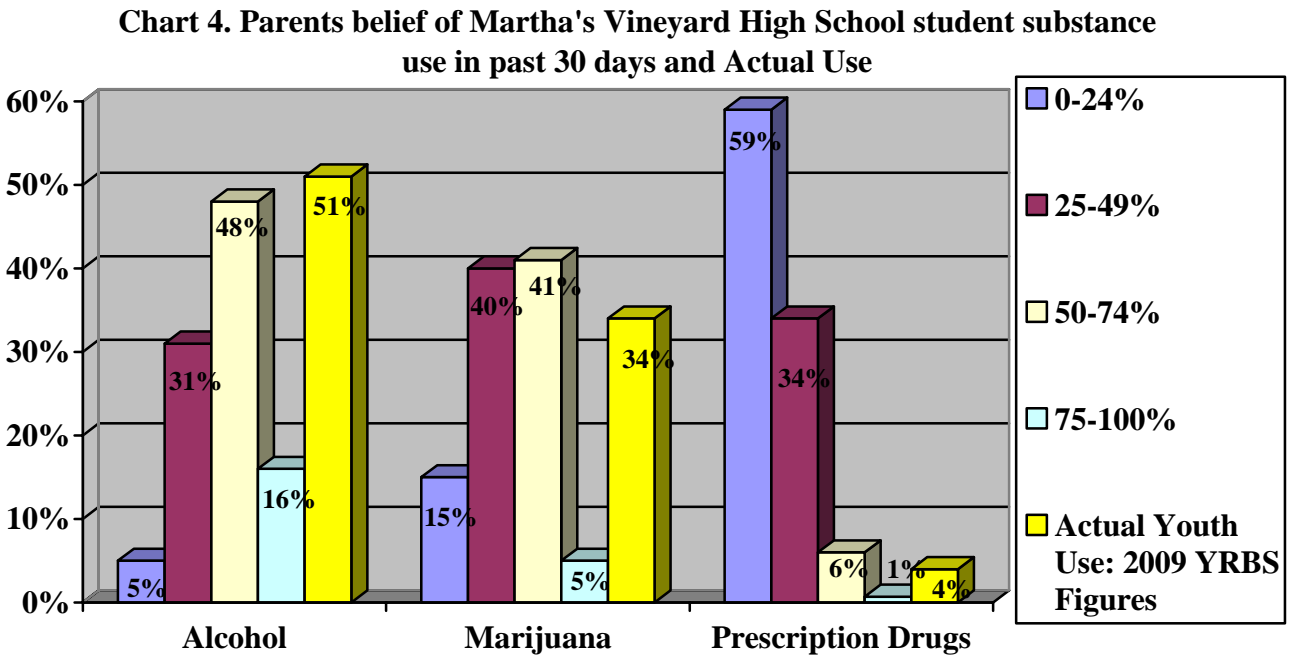
Parents were asked if they believe their high school student has used the following drugs in the past 30 days. The results are shown in Chart 3. Actual MVHS student alcohol and drug use rates within the past 30 days are from the 2009 YRBS.

Chart 3. Perception of Own Child's Alcohol and Drug Use Compared With Actual MVHS Alcohol and Drug Use in Past 30 Days



Perception of Martha's Vineyard High School Use

Parents were also asked, in their opinion, what percentage of all Martha's Vineyard High School students have used substances in the past 30 days. They were given four option ranges. The results are shown in Chart 4. Actual MVHS student alcohol and drug use rates within the past 30 days are from the 2009 YRBS.



Parental Disapproval of Substances

- 96% (n=148) of parents think it is ‘wrong’ or ‘very wrong’ for high school students to drink beer, wine, or hard liquor.
- 99% (n=151) of parents think it is ‘wrong’ or ‘very wrong’ for high school students to smoke cigarettes.
- 96% (n=147) of parents think it is ‘wrong’ or ‘very wrong’ for high school students to smoke marijuana.

Perception of Risk of Harm

Parents were asked how much they think Martha's Vineyard High School students risk harming themselves if they use any of the following substances.

Table 14. Parent Perception of Risk of Harm of Youth Substance Use

Drug	“Great Risk”	“Moderate Risk”
Smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day	97%	3%
Try marijuana once or twice	27%	43%
Smoke marijuana regularly	79%	17%
Take one or two drinks of an alcohol beverage (beer, wine or liquor) nearly every day	94%	5%
Occasionally taking prescription drugs without a doctor's orders	91%	8%

Beliefs About Allowing High School Students to Drink Alcohol at Home

Parents were asked what statement best reflects how they feel about allowing high school students to drink alcohol at home. Parents were allowed to select more than one response. Results are reported in Table 15.

Table 15. Beliefs about Allowing High School Students to Drink Alcohol at Home

Statement	Number of Parents	Percentage of Parents
It is never a problem to allow high school students to drink alcohol at home.	0	0%
It is okay to allow high school students to drink alcohol at home if it is part of a cultural or family ritual.	47	22%
It is okay to allow high school students to drink alcohol at home if an adult supervises them.	4	2%
It is okay to allow high school student to drink alcohol at home, but only if it is your own child.	8	4%
It is never okay to allow high school students to drink alcohol at home.	99	46%

Knowledge of Youth Task Force

- 89% (n= 162) have previously heard of the YTF
- 66% (n= 121) have seen YTF Campaign materials.
 - Those who have seen campaign materials were asked what they have seen and where they have seen them. 217 parents listed locations and items. For the exact list of what survey participants answered for this question please see pages 4-7 of the frequency report.

Table 16. Locations and items of YTF materials

Location	Item
Doctors office	Pens
Schools	Flyers
Emails	Safe home pledge
Newspapers	Flyers/ letters mailed to home
Meetings	Details/ results of previous surveys
Facebook	Magnets
Grocery store	Pencils
WTS	Mouse pad
Teen center	Lanyard
Juvenile court	Posters
Hospital	Book markers
Jim's liquor store	Liquor store stickers
	Tee shirt
	Book covers
	Prom promotional bags

Parents were asked to identify the focus of the Youth Task Force. The results are shown in Table 17. A more detailed list of results are shown in Appendix A on page 18.

Table 17. Parents Perception of the Focus of Youth Task Force

Area	Number of parents
After school programming	10
Youth substance abuse prevention	165
Teen pregnancy prevention	7
Youth violence prevention	13
Faith based	1
Gang prevention	3

Limitations

This survey attempted to target high school parents (grades 9-12) on Martha's Vineyard. A total of 217 parents completed the survey. While this number is impressive, it is important to remember that the findings from this survey may not be representative of Martha's Vineyard high school parents as a whole as it represents 29% of the high school parent population.

The sample included in this report was non-random as parents self-selected to take this online survey. It is unknown why parents may have chosen to take/not take this survey.

Summary

Most Martha's Vineyard parents who completed this survey appear to be a strong protective factor for Martha's Vineyard youth. Most have talked to their children about not using alcohol or other drugs in the past 30 days. Most believe they have an influence over their children's decision whether or not to drink alcohol. Almost all parents are aware of the legal minimum drinking age of 21 and the social host liability law in Massachusetts. Survey respondents thought that marijuana and alcohol were the easiest drugs for youth to access on Martha's Vineyard. When asked where they believe high school students obtain alcohol from, the three greatest access points given were friends 21 or older, children's own parents and friend's parents. Almost all parents said they were unlikely to allow their teen and their teen's friends to drink in their home. Also, almost all parents indicated they have not allowed their child to drink in their home or have provided alcohol to their own child or their child's friends.

There are many misperceptions about other Martha's Vineyard parents' beliefs and behavior. Parents underestimated how often other parents talk to their teenagers about not using alcohol or other drugs and how much influence other parents believe they have over their teenager's use of alcohol. Many parents had misperceptions regarding parents' beliefs about alcohol such as rite of passage and having clear rules about not using alcohol or drugs.

Parents also had misperceptions about their own child's substance use and the percentage of MVHS students who use alcohol, marijuana and prescription drugs. Lastly, most survey respondents have heard of the Youth Task Force, correctly identified the focus of YTF and have seen campaign materials.

Contact Information

For more information or questions about this report please contact:

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Appendix A.

Question: If you have seen campaign materials, what have you seen and where have you seen them?

List of actual responses

a mailing home about safe houses.
Agricultural Fair and Facebook
All available, at recent HS princ. coffee; Safe Home materials mailed home (certificate hangs on our refrig.)
All of them as I am on the task force.
around the elementary school, ag fair, different island activities
articles in the newspaper
At a presentation at the OB School
At school, health fair, and at ytf meetings-lots of materials
At the High School and the Tisbury School.
At the school
at WTS
boat, pens, and flyers
Can't remember exactly, but signed the pledge after seeing.
Completed the contract for our high school students, etc... Also a teacher at the OBS so hear it on two levels :)
Details of previous surveys.
dr office schools
e-mail material
E-Mail, Mail, News Paper
e-mails, Newspaper
Edgartown School
Edgartown school & high school
emails, newspapers, meetings
excellent
Facebook, Internet
Flyer/letter ...I think was mailed to home
Flyers, emails,
Got a mailing
Got them in mail, materials to join & presentation
grocery store, mailings to my home
Haven't seen anything at the HS but have seen them at the elementary schools.
I attended a meeting at the West Tisbury school last year. It was related to under age drinking.
I believe all their campaigns, and suggestions to parents, etc...I have attended meetings.
I got them through the mail
I have taken the pledge with my son and daughter. I have also seen them in the high school.

I received info from my child's school - when she was in 8th grade. Attended one meeting. Since then I've received some info through the (p.o.) mail and email. Also read an article in the newspaper about the YTF.

I think in my mail box

I was actually part of the group when it first started.

I'm on the steering com

In island papers/juvenile court/teen center

In mail

In newspapers. schools. libraries

In schools, around the community and at YTF meetings

in schools, primarily.

In the local news paper and flyers at the school.

in the mail in regards to substance abuse

Island stores; Our Market in OB

Letter and information that was sent home

library book marks @ OB Elementary Sch & posters in OB middle school halls

Liquor store stickers, prior surveys

lots of stuff at the West Tisbury School presentation last year.

mail; school

mailed to me

mailing and magnets

material was received in the mail.

MV Safe Home committment documents sent to my home

MV Times and safe house certificate in mail.

News paper

newspaper and direct mail

newspaper, mailings

newspaper, school hallways, around the house since we got some at a few different events

newspaper, school mailings

Newspapers

on school property stickers on 6 pack at your market

Pencils and mouse pad at the skating rink. (there was more material but that's all I can recall.)

pencils,pens,landyards, book covers

pens,landyards, book covers

pens. My children

post office mailings

posters

posters at schools

posters - hand outs at middle school meetings

Posters at Cronigs

posters at schools pencils at meetings

Posters at the Edgartown School

Posters at the hospital; posters at Jim's Package store
Posters in local businesses
posters in schools and other public buildings
Posters, in the papers and the Tee Shirt that my son wears!
Posters, MV Hospital, package stores Pencils, pens, lanyards
posters, pens in schools
Posters, Schools, retail, establishments
Presentation at the West Tisbury School
Prom Promotional Bags, Newspaper Ads
Safe Home Pledge, Beach Ball, Chap stick
school, community, YTF meetings
schools, library
Schools, newspapers,
schools, SSA. hospital, newspaper
seen some things about gay and lesbian info and also the drinking info
sign in windows, advertisements
Sticker shock at local liquor stores ;newspaper ads and articles
t meetings/in the newspaper
t-shirts and on line
T-shirts and printed on bags.
Tee shirts
the 9/10 middle schoolers fact, which frankly is bull shit.
The Mail the HS sent..... I signed the pledge that I would not serve underage children in my home
the posters about all the cool things to do that don't involve drugs or alcohol, but do not remember
exactly where I have seen them
The YTF Safe Home Pledge - which we signed & displayed.
they seem false, i know kids who do drugs and the numbers are way higher.

through my childs school info and in the local papers
through the school and online
through the school system
Through the schools, the tshirts, and the flyers
went to a chat and chowder last year
Went to a YTF meeting at WT school 3 years ago.
went to meeting at wt school last spring.received ytf mailings
West Tisbury School presentation
wts