

PRESS RELEASE

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VOLUNTEERS EDUCATE, ADVOCATE AGAINST UNDERAGE SALES OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSON, Michigan (June 14, 2016) – Coalition volunteers are out to buck the stereotype of minors buying alcohol and tobacco. This summer, they'll provide area retailers with information on how to stop underage purchases. It's an educational effort spearheaded by the Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (JCSAPC).

“One of the Coalition’s main goals is preventing the access and availability of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs to underage youth in the county,” said Ravenn Moore, JCSAPC Coordinator. “Coalition volunteers are out every summer to educate and provide resources to local stores to help them keep underage youth from buying these substances.”

In Jackson County, JCSAPC volunteers will visit 149 tobacco retailers and 133 alcohol vendors. Each retailer will receive a one-on-one visit from Coalition volunteers discouraging alcohol and tobacco sales to minors. Retailers will also be informed of actions to take if someone underage tries to buy and the consequences of selling. Packets will include: legal age-limit signs; the new Michigan license identification information; materials to educate their employees about the proper sale of tobacco and alcohol; and information on fines and policies regarding the sale of alcohol and tobacco to underage youth. The packets are free of charge to retailers.

In 2014, 9.1 percent of tobacco retailers sold to youth in the Mid-South Region (includes Jackson) and 18% statewide, according to the Michigan Department of Community Health Youth Tobacco Sales Rate, Synar report. This statistic underscores the need to educate the community on the risks of selling tobacco and alcohol to minors. The penalty for Michigan exceeding the 20% retailer sales rate is a loss of up to 40 percent or \$21.7 million of its Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant funds.

“JCSAPC appreciates the continued support of alcohol and tobacco retailers and the community to uphold the integrity of state and federal laws,” said Moore. “At the end of the day we are all working to have a safe and healthy community free of substance abuse.”

For more information about:

- Resources in Jackson County include: providing smoking cessation resources to include the Michigan Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669), smoke-free worksite regulation and alcohol and tobacco prevention programming.”
- *Jackson County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition* and its activities, please contact Ravenn Moore at (517) 205-7425 or via email at ravenn.moore@allegiancehealth.org

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