

# THE FACTS: SUPPORTING DATA

- **Alcohol is the #1 drug of choice among children and adolescents**<sup>1</sup>
  - ✓ Youth use alcohol 10 times more than all illegal drugs combined
- **Total estimated Cobb youth ages 12-20 used alcohol in the past 30 days**<sup>2</sup>
  - ✓ 29 percent or 21,042 youth
    - 5 percent, ages 12-13
    - 18 percent, ages 14-15
    - 32 percent, ages 16-17
    - 52 percent, ages 18-20
- **Parents dramatically underestimate teenage binge\* drinking**<sup>3</sup>
  - ✓ 33 percent teens binged in the past month
  - ✓ 3 percent of parents believe their teen has binged in the past month
- **Alcohol is the top threat to youth health and safety**<sup>4</sup>
  - ✓ Contributing to the top 3 causes of death for youth under age 21 each year
    - 6,000 alcohol-related injuries (car crashes, burns, drownings, etc.)
    - 1,500 homicides
    - 300 suicides
  - ✓ Contributing to as many as two thirds of all youth sexual assaults and date rapes<sup>5</sup>
  - ✓ Contributing to unprotected consensual sex
  - ✓ Resulting in unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS
  - ✓ Contributing to injuries from fights, crashes, falls and burns
  - ✓ Contributing to alcohol abuse and addiction
- **Serious second-hand effects of underage drinking**
  - ✓ 50 percent of alcohol-related traffic fatalities with drinking driver under 21, deaths are persons other than the drinking driver<sup>6</sup>
  - ✓ 50 percent of criminal cases (assault, traffic, theft, fraud, sex crime, etc.) in the juvenile justice system, involve alcohol; representing 4,017 cases, 6,107 offenses and 2,832 youth in Cobb County<sup>7</sup>
  - ✓ \$1.5 billion in costs to Georgia citizens attributed to underage drinking in 2005<sup>8</sup>
- **Private home parties are the primary source by which youth obtain alcohol**<sup>9</sup>
  - ✓ Frequently lacking adult supervision
  - ✓ Often a source for other drug use, risky sexual behaviors, violence, and vandalism
  - ✓ Younger youth are often “broken-in” (encouraged to get very intoxicated), by older youth
  - ✓ 1 in 12 parents of teens said they allowed friends of their own teens to drink in their home under their supervision<sup>10</sup>
  - ✓ 49 percent of Cobb 10th graders say their friends use alcohol at home or at a friends house<sup>11</sup>

\*binge = 5+ drinks per drinking occasion

<sup>1</sup> National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2003

<sup>2</sup> National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2003 & U.S. Census, 2000

<sup>3</sup> Peter D. Hart Research Associates, 1999 & Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1997

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004

<sup>5</sup> American Medical Association, Office of Alcohol & Drug Abuse, 2000

<sup>6</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2003

<sup>7</sup> Cobb County Juvenile Court Annual Report, 2006 and U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2003

<sup>8</sup> Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, 2006

<sup>9</sup> Public Health Reports, 106: 459-464, “Where & how adolescents obtain alcoholic beverages”, Wagenaar et al, 1993

<sup>10</sup> American Medical Association, “Teenage Drinking: Key Findings”, 2005

<sup>11</sup> Georgia Student Health Survey, 2006

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