



May 27, 2009

Dear Lawrence City Commissioners:

Underage drinking is not a harmless rite of passage. It is illegal and dangerous. The New Tradition Coalition of Lawrence is committed to providing parents and the community with factual data, education and resources to reduce the incidence of underage drinking and related tragedies. Effective law enforcement is a proven strategy to reduce underage drinking.

During this legislative session, wording was updated in the alcohol and underage drinking social host law. (House bill 2165). The new version of the law will take effect July 1, 2009 in Kansas. Lawrence and other communities in the state will be required to update their local ordinances to reflect this change.

The New Tradition Coalition of Lawrence, consisting of individuals from law enforcement, substance abuse prevention, parents, community members and public health would like to encourage the commission when they undergo this update to consider strengthening the ordinance to assist our community in addressing and enforcing underage drinking laws.

Social host ordinances are a powerful law enforcement tool that allows officers to crack down on parties and gatherings where alcohol is served to minors. They hold a person (of any age) who allows underage drinking to occur, to be held criminally liable. In addition, fines collected help to offset law enforcement and prosecution expenses.

We recognize that underage drinking is a significant problem in Lawrence. As a college town, we have an extraordinary number of youth at risk. We urge you, our key leaders, to support strengthening our social hosting ordinance. By reinforcing our existing law, we will raise public awareness of the issue and build a stronger and safer community.

Sincerely,

Nancy Renfro & Mininder Kaur, Co-Chairs

*The New Tradition Coalition of Lawrence*

<http://thenewtraditioncoalition.blogspot.com>

## WHAT IS THE NEW TRADITION COALITION?

Parenting may be one of the toughest jobs in the world. But you don't have to do it alone. When a community forms a united front on an issue like underage drinking, children get the consistency they need and parents feel supported in making the right, and sometimes tough, decisions.

The Lawrence community can break the tradition of underage drinking by uniting together and giving our kids a common message.

The *New Tradition Coalition* puts Lawrence parents (and other individuals who work with youth) on the same page regarding youth substance abuse, through online discussion and support.

Go to our website to get facts, provide comments on articles and connect with other parents.

[http://  
thenewtraditioncoalition.blogspot.com/](http://thenewtraditioncoalition.blogspot.com/)

**42.4% of Lawrence 12th graders reported that it would be very easy to get alcohol.**

*-2008 KS Communities That Care Student Survey*

## WHAT ARE WE DOING?

### Our Goals for 2009 include:

- 1) Increase communication and education about underage drinking and youth substance abuse among parents and other individuals or professionals working with youth
- 2) Create and maintain a safe place for discussion & conversation about underage drinking and youth substance abuse through an online website/blog
- 3) Promote the coalition and the website/blog

The coalition has representation from multiple sectors of the community, including law enforcement, schools, businesses, faith based organizations, parents, social service providers and the media.

**The average age when Lawrence youth begin to drink alcohol regularly (1-2x a month) is 14.**

*-2008 KS Communities That Care Student Survey*

## GET INVOLVED

### Please join us!

Youth, parents, teachers, business partners, health professionals, concerned individuals, anyone interested in *making a difference* is encouraged to jump on board and become a part of the coalition. There are no membership requirements or dues, just the desire and willingness to make a positive impact on the issue of underage drinking and substance abuse prevention in Lawrence.

This group meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. at the DCCCA offices located at 3312 Clinton Parkway in Lawrence, Kansas.

For more information, contact  
[thenewtraditioncoalition@gmail.com](mailto:thenewtraditioncoalition@gmail.com) or  
Jen Brinkerhoff @ 841-4138.

**68% of Lawrence 12th graders reported they would not be caught by their parents if they drank alcohol.**

*2008 KS Communities That Care Student Survey*

## WHO WE ARE

We are committed to providing parents and the community with factual data, education and resources to reduce the incidence of underage drinking and related tragedies.

**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."  
- Margaret Mead, Anthropologist**

### The New Tradition Coalition of Lawrence

3312 Clinton Parkway  
Lawrence, KS 66047  
<http://thenewtraditioncoalition.blogspot.com>  
[thenewtraditioncoalition@gmail.com](mailto:thenewtraditioncoalition@gmail.com)



### Our mission:

Empower  
Lawrence to  
support alcohol  
and drug-free  
lifestyles for  
its youth