October 2012 – LIVE REAL Mentor Listserv Email

Hello LIVE REAL Mentors,

An interesting article by Marino Eccher was featured in The Forum this morning as the first in a four-part series called “Deadly Decisions” highlighting concerns related to alcohol misuse and abuse, particularly as it relates to drunken driving. In the article, Eccher highlights the increasing rates of drunken-driving crashes, injuries, and deaths in North Dakota, as well as the binge and underage drinking rates. Eccher also reports that the rates of alcohol-impaired driving deaths have increased in ND by about 25% over the past decade (in stark contrast to the rest of the nation, which has experienced a 25% decrease in deaths). Fargo police chief, Keith Ternes, is quoted, saying “What we have here is an incredible level of acceptance when we talk about impaired driving... People, generally speaking, don’t see this as the incredibly hazardous issue that it is.”

As LIVE REAL Mentors, you know that alcohol-related harm has huge impacts on both individuals and communities, and drunken driving is tied intricately to an overall culture that supports high-risk use of alcohol. At NDSU, we are working hard to create an environment that supports low-risk drinking decisions in order to decrease rates of alcohol-related harm. The good news is less than 1% of NDSU students report getting arrested for DUI and the number of students who report they have driven a car while under the influence has decreased from 48.8% in 2001 to 26.6% in 2010 (taken from the 2010 CORE Alcohol and Drug Survey results). However, we still recognize this as a major area of concern and NDSU is taking steps to continue reducing this number. Read on for information about what NDSU is doing and how you, as a LIVE REAL Mentor, can be a part of the solution.

- NDSU is partnering with local authorities to announce upcoming sobriety checkpoints to faculty, staff, and students. These announcements are intended to bring awareness to the need for individuals to plan ahead and arrange for safe rides, thereby deterring drunken driving.
- As noted in the article, legislative efforts related to drunken driving prevention are likely to come up during the next legislative session. As informed, active citizens, be sure to connect with your legislators to express your thoughts about these measures!
- Talk about career implications with your friends, advisees, and colleagues: results of the 2010 survey of employers of NDSU graduates indicated 57% of employers conduct criminal background checks on all positions and over half of employers would not hire or would hesitate to hire an individual with a DUI on his or her record.
- Don’t be a bystander! If you observe someone driving erratically or are aware that someone intends to drive after drinking, do something! Don’t hesitate to call authorities – this will help keep everyone safe.
- Make a plan and encourage others to do so, as well. Being a LIVE REAL Mentor means modeling appropriate behavior and reinforcing low-risk decisions, including the important decision to plan ahead for a safe ride home. Encourage those around you to use a BAC calculator to plan how to keep their BAC under a .05% and to select a designated driver who won’t be drinking at all.

Thanks for all you do to help keep the “herd” safe! Have a happy homecoming, everyone!

Announcements & Events:

2012 Town Hall Meeting:
Join us for a **Town Hall Meeting on Monday, October 29th from 7:00-8:30 p.m.** at the NDSU Alumni Center to discuss the issue of high-risk drinking and other drug use with fellow community stakeholders, campus leaders and elected officials. This facilitated discussion will include an overview of the problems associated with high-risk drinking and other drug use in North Dakota and discussion of possible solutions to curb this problem. Prior to the meeting, **attendees are invited to join us at 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments and networking with fellow stakeholders.** Please RSVP to Nancy Mueller at 231-8379 or via e-mail at Nancy.Mueller@ndsu.edu by Friday, October 19th

**Upcoming LIVE REAL Mentor Sessions:**

- **LIVE REAL Mentor Marijuana Session:** Wednesday, October 17th, Noon - 1:00 p.m., Rose Room, Memorial Union
- **LIVE REAL Mentor Advanced Session:** Thursday, November 15th, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., Mandan Room, Memorial Union  *(Please RSVP to Erika.Beseler@ndsu.edu by November 8th)*