

Many Minnewaska high school students are choosing NOT to drink alcohol

Minnewaska students are rallying to reduce underage drinking among their peers. Against Substance Abuse in Pope County (ASAP) has begun a social norms media campaign that is designed to empower Minnewaska students to make healthy choices and encourage their friends to do the same.

According to the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey, 71% of Minnewaska 9th and 11th grade students do NOT drink alcohol in a typical month. This Social Norm, although true, comes as a surprise to many students. The survey found that most students misperceive that norm; drastically over-estimating the rate and amount of alcohol their peers are drinking. In fact, 63% of these same students think that MOST of their peers drink monthly or more often.

Correcting misperceptions is a powerful tool in preventing underage drinking. A survey of over 5000 high school students throughout Minnesota (P&I PCN 2013 survey) revealed that students who think their peers do NOT drink monthly or more often, are 5 times LESS LIKELY to drink monthly themselves. The ASAP media campaign is designed to expose the actual norms in our community in an effort to grow the goodness that already exists and encourage more students to make healthy choices.

For more information, please contact Laura Backhaus at Pope County Public Health, 320-634-7835.