

# Communities preparing to celebrate Western New York

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, a national public health awareness campaign sponsored by the National Council for Alcoholism and Drug Dependence. Alcohol Awareness Month was created to increase awareness and understanding of the causes and treatment of one of our nation's top public health problems: alcoholism.

Alcohol is the most used substance by youth and adults in the U.S. According to the National Institute of Health's 2020 Monitoring the Future survey, 55.3% of high school seniors used alcohol in the past year.

Established in 1987, Alcohol Awareness Month allows communities to focus on spreading awareness and reducing the stigma associated with alcohol addiction.

ITAC – It Takes A Community drug and alcohol prevention coalition – is using this awareness campaign to highlight the need for education and prevention of underage alcohol consumption through a marketing campaign and partnering with neighboring coalitions, like the Alden Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition and FOCUS, For Our Community Unity and Support Coalition.

The campaign will be visible on billboards, lawn signs and stickers placed on takeout containers. The message is one of “celebrating” our communities and sending a strong “thank you” message for not serving minors during the months of June, July and August, a season of many celebrations. This campaign was a result of a grant that the three coalitions submitted a request for and received from the Western Regional Addiction Resource Collaborative.

Our messaging campaign supports the Erie County social host law that Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz signed as an amendment to local law 2 (2014), the county social host law, which now has been strengthened to include the known abuse of drugs on a property as a violation of the law along with known underage drinking. The amended law targets individuals who are 21 years of age or older and knowingly allow the consumption of alcohol or drugs by a minor in their home or other privately owned property.

Thank you for partnering with us as we celebrate you and your part in keeping our youth and communities healthy and safe.

