

**Georgia Underage Drinking (UAD) Prevention Initiative Releases
2007 Georgia Underage Drinking Needs Assessment/Prevalence Report
and Recommendations to
Combat Underage Drinking in Georgia**

The Council on Alcohol and Drugs' Georgia Underage Drinking (UAD) Prevention Initiative today released its 2007 Georgia Underage Drinking Needs Assessment/Prevalence Report and Recommendations to combat underage drinking in Georgia.

Underage drinking and its associated consequences represent a serious and growing threat to the health and well-being of youth. In recognition of this phenomenon/crisis, the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health, Office of Prevention Services and Programs funded the Georgia Underage Drinking (UAD) Prevention Initiative in response to the U.S. Surgeon General's National Call to Action on Underage Drinking. An initial component of this Initiative was a Needs Assessment/Prevalence Study to determine the nature and extent of underage drinking in Georgia and to identify unmet needs associated with underage drinking.

Highlights of the findings and a review of the literature on underage drinking reveal the following:

- Annual costs associated with underage drinking in Georgia are estimated to be \$1.5 billion, which includes annual costs of medical care and loss of work estimated at \$524 million (PIRE, 2004).
- More than one-fifth (21%) of Georgia high school students had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row in the past 30 days. With regard to frequency and consumption, no significant difference in drinking behavior was observed between genders (Kanny, 2006).
- More than one-fourth (27%) of Georgia high school students had their first drink (other than a few sips) before age 13. Nearly as many rode in a vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking in the past 30 days, and 9% of Georgia high school students drove a vehicle when they had been drinking in the past 30 days (CDC, 2006).

A number of Recommendations found in the Report suggest changes to Georgia laws that concern underage drinking. An additional Recommendation speaks to the reformation of a statewide coalition to prevent underage drinking (see pp. 5-1 through 5-7 of the Report).

To obtain a copy of the Needs Assessment and find out more about UAD in Georgia you can visit The Council's Web site at www.livedrugfree.org