

# Georgia RASS Program Talking Points

## The Problem: Underage Drinking

Alcohol is the most commonly used drug among our Nation's young people, surpassing tobacco and illicit drugs.

- Alcohol can cloud judgment and interfere with developing social skills and academic achievement.
- Adolescents who abuse alcohol may remember **10%** less of what they have learned than those who don't drink.

GA Underage Drinking Facts<sup>1</sup>:

- Underage drinking cost the citizens of Georgia **\$1.7 billion** in 2007.
- During 2007, an estimated **56** traffic fatalities and **2,700** nonfatal traffic injuries involved an underage drinking driver.

Settlement Verdicts:

- **\$39 million-** *National Restaurant Chain*
- Customer consumed free/ discounted drinks and then drove his car into a motorcycle, severely injuring the couple riding it.
- **\$1.6 million-** *Food Store Chain-* Defendant sold alcohol to a minor who became intoxicated and was involved in a wreck, killing an 18 year-old minor.
- **\$1 million-** *Food Store Chain* - 16 year old girl was a passenger in a vehicle when the driver (a minor under the influence of alcohol) lost control of his car and hit a telephone pole. A food store employee failed to seek identification from the driver when purchasing alcohol.

## Solution: Reduce Availability of Alcohol to Minors

The most documented principle in alcohol use prevention is this: **Make it harder for young people to get alcohol, and they will drink less.** Research shows that educating owners and managers of retail establishments is a key component to reducing availability.

The 3 hour RASS Workshops are intended to be a comprehensive training for owners, managers and licensees.

- RASS provides retailers with everything they need to implement best alcohol policy practices in their establishment.
- Jurisdictions that have implemented mandatory RASS workshops have seen an increase in compliance by retailers.
- RASS provides alcohol retailers with the ability to assess penalties in a more uniform manner based upon objective criteria.
- Some insurance companies will offer reductions on their liquor liability premiums for insureds whose managers or licensees have attended RASS workshops.
- the practices taught in RASS workshops, when implemented, reduce their risk of liability from expensive lawsuits that result from intoxicated patrons

## Several jurisdictions in Georgia require RASS training for owners & licensees in one form or another

- **Cobb County** has the longest history of mandatory RASS requirements, requiring all licensees since 2002 to attend a RASS workshop prior to obtaining an alcohol license.
- **Douglas County** followed suit in 2003, but requires licensees to attend RASS workshops every 2 years and also mandates yearly employee training. *Evindi, Inc. has been an approved provider for both jurisdictions since.*

Hall County			
Youth alcohol use within the last 30 days <sup>2</sup>		Youth strongly agree: "it's easy to get alcohol" <sup>2</sup>	
6 <sup>th</sup> graders	3.7%	6 <sup>th</sup> graders	9.5%
8 <sup>th</sup> graders	9.9%	8 <sup>th</sup> graders	18.2%
10 <sup>th</sup> graders	14.6%	10 <sup>th</sup> graders	35.0%
12 <sup>th</sup> graders	22.9%	12 <sup>th</sup> graders	41.3%

<sup>1</sup> Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) with funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), November 2009

<sup>2</sup> 2010 Georgia Student Health Survey, Georgia Department of Education

<sup>3</sup> Statistics are from the 2009/2010 Annual Evaluation Report for the Cobb and Douglas Alcohol Policy Program from Kennesaw State University.

RASS Workshop Participant Feedback <sup>3</sup>	
Survey Question	% who agree or strongly agree
The information presented will benefit my business	99.2%
The materials will be helpful to me	99.2%
I would recommend this workshop to others	98.3%

Mandated RASS in Cobb County -DOR Compliance Rates-	
2006	71%
2007	77%
2008	82%
2009	86%
2010	90%

The Georgia RASS Program is made possible by a grant from the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety.