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Contact:
Michelle Hamilton
Program Coordinator II
860.448.4882 x305
mhamilton@ledgelighthd.org

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Town Hall Meeting Focuses on Effects of Underage Drinking

GROTON — The Groton Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition will hold a Groton town hall meeting on preventing underage drinking at Cutler Middle School on March 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Keynote Chris Brown, certified school psychologist and professional counselor, will give an interactive presentation entitled “Adolescent Brain Development and Alcohol.”

“There are good teenagers who have good parents and they still get involved with underage drinking because they don’t have accurate information about how risky it is,” says Brown. “The goal of this presentation is to provide the most accurate information to help parents and teens make healthy and safe choices.” The presentation focuses on current research on adolescent brain development, the risks of adolescent alcohol abuse and steps families can take to reduce the risks of substance abuse.

GASP Coalition Coordinator Michelle Hamilton wants parents to understand that there are risks of drinking alcohol in addition to drinking and driving. “Youth alcohol use can’t be seen as a rite of passage; it can damage an adolescent’s developing brain,” says Hamilton. “Parents are the biggest influence in children’s lives and setting specific rules and consequences surrounding alcohol use is the best way to keep children safe and healthy.”

This event is free and open to the community. Door prizes, including a Wii™ game console, will be raffled. RSVP for this event by calling Hamilton at 860-448-4882 ext. 305 or emailing mhamilton@ledgelighthd.org.

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Ledge Light Health District provides professionally managed comprehensive public health services designed to improve the quality of life and health and safety of its residents. The District service area consists of East Lyme, Groton, Ledyard, New London and Waterford, with a service population of over 120,000.

The Groton Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition was formed in July 1999 to address substance abuse in the Groton community among the youth population (12-18 years of age). The coalition represents a collaboration of dedicated local agencies,

parents, teens and other interested community members. The GASP Coalition is a Ledge Light Health District health education program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Drug Free Communities grant.