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"Community - The Anti-Drug"

As a CTAD Coalition member and Chief of Police, I feel it is our responsibility to provide parents and students with information for them to make healthy decisions and choices. Our job is to not only enforce the laws but to provide education and resources in order to avoid some of the dangerous pitfalls that exist today for our youth. I have put together some helpful information on Fake ID's to help guide you on your student's journey towards adulthood.

Fake IDs and Parenting: What You Need to Know

A teen getting a fake identification card is nothing new. Although most states have made it more difficult to duplicate a driver's license since 9/11, young adults can purchase IDs with an older birth date to buy alcohol or get into a nightclub. What is new is that researchers have found that young adults with fake IDs are more likely to get into trouble with drugs and alcohol than their counterparts.

Fake IDs are primarily obtained for the purchase of alcohol by underage users. Teens and young adults with fake IDs are drastically more likely to binge drink. Binge drinking is a pattern of drinking that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels to 0.08, the legal limit in Illinois for a person over the age of 21. This typically occurs after 4 drinks for the average weight teen. These fake ID users are also more likely to smoke marijuana and use more dangerous hallucinogens and narcotics.

A fake ID is also correlated with getting arrested. An older study cites that 56 percent of fake ID holders used alcohol the previous week, compared to 14 percent of under-age students who didn't have fake IDs.

Statistics show that 7% of high school students and 14% of college freshmen have them. A third of college students will use a fake ID however, at least once. With these numbers, the "everybody else does it" argument often made by teens simply does not wash.

For students who do get false identification, it will set them back some money. Depending on where you live, it can cost \$150 or more. Sometimes club bouncers will ask for a kickback to not call the police when they spot a fake ID. And, of course, if your kid gets caught, there are court appearances and legal fees.

What to Do about Preventing the Procurement of a Fake ID

The first step to prevention is being firm and educating your child about fake IDs and that they are absolutely unacceptable and why. Also share information about the legal penalties for their use and possession. If you have a quality relationship with your teenager, promising punishment for obtaining a fake ID may be effective, but a relationship that is detached, problematic or lacking trust may not yield much results.

You may want to bond with other parents or groups to focus on decreasing the likelihood that kids search out a source for fake IDs to begin with. The bottom line in all of this is: parental guidance is the best defense.

What can you do to deter your child from getting a false ID? These four tips can help:

- Follow the money. Whether your child is in high school or college, if you're helping with expenses, you have the right to know where the money has gone. Ask your kid to produce receipts or bank statements every month. You can detect large expenses that could be the purchase of fake ID.
- Know your kids' friends. Make sure you invite them to family dinner or movie night so you can get an idea of who they are and their interests. Trust your instincts.
- Don't be afraid to keep tabs on your child. Ask your teen or young adult who lives at home with you to call frequently when they are out, especially if you suspect some of their friends are troubled. Over time, the troubled kids will find other friends who don't have so much parental involvement.
- Don't turn a blind eye to underage drinking. Although it's considered a rite of passage in some circles, drinking under the age of 21 is an illegal activity and can be the first step to problem drinking. Talk to your children about the effects of alcohol and make it known that you don't support underage drinking. In Illinois, using someone else's ID, possessing an ID with false information, or lending a friend or younger sibling an ID card is punishable with up to one year in jail or up to \$2500 in fines. Possessing a fraudulent ID is a felony punishable with up to three years and fines up to \$25,000.

Fake IDs don't have to be a part of the college or high school experience. Underage drinking could set your child up for addiction that lasts a lifetime. Hold your kid accountable and do what you can to discourage the use of a fake ID.

Sincerely,



Chief Ronald Price