

2 alcohol rests in '05 der age 20

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porarily put her in a coma. She has been sober for 19 years. Today, her non-profit organization empowers middle and high school students to be proud of being drug free.

What should parents do to protect their children from the dangers of alcohol?

Cleveland said that parents must learn to talk with their kids about alcohol use. She said studies have found that parental expectations remain the most effective deterrent to alcohol, sex and drug use, even into college. She also noted that parents are the most trusted and widely-sought source of health information among college students.

McIlvaine encouraged parents to tell their children, "Call us anytime of night, no questions asked" so that they would be comfortable asking for a safe ride home to get away from a bad situation. He said that he's provided a ride home twice to his two oldest children since making the offer.

The event was sponsored by the Historic Triangle Substance Abuse Coalition, the Williamsburg Community Health Foundation and the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration.

Sober facts about teen alcohol use

By Mary Vause

WILLIAMSBURG — Tuesday's town hall meeting on underage drinking revealed a community grappling with teen alcohol abuse.

About 50 people gathered at James Blair Middle School viewed a 20-minute film about the dangers of teen and co-ed drinking. It included fifth-graders sharing drinking stories, and a desparate 911 call on behalf of a college student who had already died of alcohol poisoning. The video drove home the fact that many parents are completely unaware of their children's drinking. It also warned of the dangers of providing alcohol for children in the home.

Dr. William McIlvaine of the Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles knew the deceased boy well — he was a friend of McIlvaine's children. Now the doctor travels the country as a speaker, teaching crowds of teens and parents about the dangers of alcohol abuse. He had spoken with 300 WJC students earlier in the day.

Included in his sobering alcohol statistics:

- 40% of people who start drinking before 21 have alcohol dependence at some point.

- The human brain is not fully developed until age 24, making teen alcohol abuse developmentally dangerous.

- Vomiting within 90 minutes of one's last drink could be a sign of alcohol poisoning.

- Many bottles of liquor contain lethal doses of alcohol.

- Women may be especially

body composition.

The community panel consisted of high school student Christine Bottles, college health educator Sandi Cleveland, Police Chief Emmett Harmon, Commonwealth's Attorney Mike McGinty, executive director Sandy Fagan of Bacon Street and Jan Brown, founder of the recovery organization Spiritworks.

Bottles warned parents that even the "good kids" are drinking, including National Honor Society students and athletes at her school.

Cleveland called alcohol the number one health risk facing college students. She said that alcohol has been associated with 1,700 deaths and 700,000 assaults among co-eds. She also showed a chart that demonstrated the drastic increase in alcohol consumption during the first six weeks of freshman year. A study found a 40% decrease in the number of abstainers during that time. The number of binge drinkers doubled, and the number of frequent heavy drinkers increased nearly tripled.

Moderator Stephanie Harris, a reporter for WAVY-TV 10, wryly noted that older college men often call the first few months of the fall semester the "honeymoon period" because they know it is an opportunity to take advantage of freshmen women who are drinking heavily for the first time.

"The vast majority of calls we respond to arise from substance abuse issues," Harmon pointed out. "The majority of