



MEDIA REQUESTS:
Janenne Irene Pung, PIO
231-547-7653
media@nwhealth.org
www.nwhealth.org

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Health Department of Northwest Michigan

Combatting under-age drinking
With prom approaching, SAFE in Northern Michigan youth release new videos

High school students from Antrim, Charlevoix, and Emmet counties are taking a stand against under-age drinking. In their own words – just prior to their high school proms – the youth are on camera telling their peers, “Don’t do it.” “It’s not worth it.”

Three new [public service announcements](#) (PSAs) were created by SAFE youth to discourage under-age drinking, with the students openly talking about the potential harmful consequences for under-age drinking. The most serious consequences pointed out by students include the risk of automobile accidents and criminal charges. They also mentioned how alcohol stunts brain growth and sidetracks teens from academic, athletic, and other extracurricular opportunities.

“It sets the wrong vibe.” “It’s really going to drag down life,” the students said. The new PSAs are part of a three-month, student-led campaign that runs from April 15-July 15. The videos are being featured through Connect TV, radio, local theaters, and digital ads.

“I have such respect for these students,” said Nichole Flickema, Project Coordinator for SAFE in Northern Michigan and Community Health Coordinator for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. “Even through the challenges of COVID-19, these youth from 10 different schools remain focused and determined to speak out against under-age drinking.”

The 30-second PSAs showcase students from each county, building on SAFE’s goal of creating environments free of substance abuse. The student-led organization exists to prevent youth substance use, increase community awareness, and create change through collaboration and education.

The new videos may be viewed at the SAFE in Northern Michigan website, at www.safeinnm.com. There are also PSAs on SAFE ways to deal with stress, educational materials on vaping, how teens conceal substance use, and students asking parents who use alcohol, medications, and other substances to lock them up in their homes. SAFE also sponsors youth events which are featured on its [Facebook page](#).

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Cutline: SAFE youth gather to write and film new video public service announcements (PSAs) on the consequences of under-age drinking. Youth from schools throughout Charlevoix, Emmet, and Antrim counties are involved.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.