

Underage Drinking Prevention

- My name is Freddie Simons and I am representing the Substance Abuse Services Council, established by code (2.2-2696) to advise the Governor and General Assembly on policies to coordinate efforts to control and reduce substance abuse.
- I am also the Director of Community Builders Network of Virginia which is a statewide advocacy organization with membership consisting of over 300 grass roots, faith-based and organizational members represented by 40 broad-based coalitions from throughout Virginia.
- The Network's purpose is to support the Healthy Development of children, youth and families in Virginia.

Virginia is rated as the number one state in the country, based on the Quality Counts 2007 national report, (<http://www2.edweek.org/rc/index.html>), for youth to experience success in the country. We celebrate our success and encourage the Senate Finance Committee to take the next step for our children, youth and families by supporting a statewide initiative to prevent/reduce underage alcohol consumption.

During 2004:

- **1,363 youth between the ages of 15 to 20 were ticketed driving impaired in VA. (2004)**
- **552 youth were injured during crashes by impaired driving (419 alcohol related). (2004)**
- **63 youth were killed in alcohol-related crashes. (2004)**

To assist in efforts by the Alcohol Beverage Control and the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Substance Abuse Services Council, the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards and the Community Builders Network requests \$2.4 million annually to support the first statewide, evidence-based implementation of prevention programs to target the reduction of underage drinking among our youth.

The prevention programs will:

- **Develop local strategy with the Community-Based Prevention Planning Council to identify specific needs in each locality.**
- **Identify specific evidenced –based prevention programs and implementation time-lines for each of the projects.**
- **Implement projects throughout the Commonwealth based on desired outcomes.**
- **Provide evaluation outcome data for each evidence-based project implemented.**

Funding and administration

The 40 Community Services Boards would be responsible for convening local Community-Based Prevention Planning Councils to identify and implement evidenced – based projects as well as collect and report outcome data.