



## ***Community Message to Parents 2017***



It should come as no surprise to anyone that there has been an uptick in illicit activity amongst our student population. These activities have involved students as young as the early middle school years. It is part of a national trend which is clearly present here in Glen Rock. These activities take place in school, in public, on-line, and in private homes. While school officials and the police are actively engaged in monitoring activity taking place in our schools and in public, monitoring on-line activity and what may occur inside private homes rests with parents and guardians.

**FACT:** To investigate what is occurring on-line and in private homes, the police most often need to obtain subpoenas and warrants. In most cases a crime must take place before the police can act, which means it is already too late. Constitutional constraints and the rules of due process place strict limits on the police response. Constitutional protections apply to both adults and juveniles.

**FACT:** School officials may only respond to illicit activity occurring outside of the school when that activity negatively impacts the smooth operations of the school and/or disrupts the learning environment for students.

**FACT:** Parents and guardians have no such limits on their authority!

**We ask that you not just share this information with the young adults in your life, but that you use it to engage in an on-going, meaningful dialogue with them. Remember the old adage: *An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.***

### **Substance abuse:**

The possession of any illegal substances other than marijuana is a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree crime, one that carries more serious consequences and a criminal record. Beyond probation and fines, the penalties would include a mandatory DEDR penalty (Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction) fee of \$500.00 and court costs. The penalties apply regardless of whether your child is found in a vehicle, the woods, a house, or a park. In addition, such offenses can result in the suspension of a driver's license for up to two years. Those found guilty who have attained the age of 18 will have this conviction stay with them through adulthood.

Possession of marijuana is a Disorderly Persons offense which still carries a record for possession of an unlawful substance. Even in those states which have legalized the use of recreational marijuana, such use by underage individuals is still prohibited.

Marijuana is now commonly smoked using battery powered e-cigarettes. E-Cigs can be doctored for use with cannabis products that produce an odorless vapor. Tobacco oil can be replaced with cannabis oils in e-cigarettes and smoked without fear of detection. This has occurred in our schools and may very well have occurred in your home.

Parents and students alike should be aware that heroin abuse has become common place throughout our region in epidemic proportions. It is a national epidemic. Glen Rock is not immune to this problem; addiction knows no limits. It is as much of a problem here as anywhere else. LSD [**lysergic acid diethylamide**], widely associated with the counterculture of the 1960's, has also made a recent resurgence.

If a police officer stops a motor vehicle where narcotics are found the officer may lawfully place all the occupants of the vehicle under arrest for possession of a controlled dangerous substance(s). The narcotics would be placed into evidence and the vehicle could be impounded. All the occupants would be transported to the police station and issued a complaint summons (if age 18 or older) or a Juvenile Delinquency Complaint (minor under 18 years) under

the N.J. Criminal Code for possession of a controlled dangerous substance.

For prevention and treatment of substance abuse visit [www.bergenhealth.org](http://www.bergenhealth.org).

### **Alcohol:**

The drinking age in the United States is 21. **No 'if's – No 'and's – No 'but's**. Possession and consumption of alcohol by underage persons is against the law. Included with this letter is a GRPD fact sheet titled "Underage Drinking and the Law". Parents and guardians should review this with their young adults and set clear ground rules and consequences.

....and yes, *where possible*, the Glen Rock Police Department will aggressively pursue charges against individuals who make alcohol available to underage persons.

### **Underage House Parties:**

As a parent the law permits you to serve alcohol **only to your child on your own property**. If any other minor is being served, **you can be arrested**. In addition, you can then be sued in civil court for substantial monetary damages by the parents of the minors to whom you or your child provided alcohol. This can occur **whether or not you are supervising the party being held on your property**. Many unsupervised or poorly supervised parties have resulted in alcohol and substance abuse, extensive property damage, theft and sexual assaults.

If you decide to go away and leave your teen home alone, you are responsible for their actions and the actions of those who show up at your home, even if uninvited. We strongly suggest that an adult family member, friend or neighbor agree to keep track of what your teen is doing in your absence. The school and police cannot do it for you. If the point comes that the police become involved it is already too late. If you learn that your teen is at a potentially unsupervised house party, **GO TO THE HOUSE AND GET THEM!** You do not need a warrant.

### **Sexting:**

It has come to our attention that some students have engaged in sexting as part of social interactions-using smartphones, email and social media to send naked or semi-naked pictures as well as real or simulated sexual acts. Often, teens are participating in the sharing of provocative images of themselves and others without realizing the potential consequences. These actions have legal and psychosocial implications that can follow them through the rest of their lives. If you have not checked the content of your teen's smartphone, social media or other electronic devices recently, now is the time.

***Help your child to have the courage to say "NO!" and make decisions which will lead to a productive and self-respecting life of success.***

Thank you very much for your anticipated cooperation in this important matter.

**Bruce Packer**  
Mayor

**Bryon Torsiello**  
President – Glen Rock Board of Education

**Dr. Paula Valenti**  
Superintendent of Schools

**William Huisking**  
Councilman – Public Safety

**Art Pazan**  
Councilman – Public Safety

**Kristine Morieko**  
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**Cheryl Sara**  
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**Stephanie Carosella**  
Hamilton School HSA



## Glen Rock Police Department **UNDERAGE DRINKING AND THE LAW**

**The drinking age in the United States is 21.** Under *New Jersey State Law* a person less than 21 years of age may not purchase, possess or consume alcoholic beverages in any public place. A person under 18 who violates this law will be charged as a juvenile delinquent. A person 18 to 20 who violates this law will be charged as an adult with a ***disorderly persons offense***. The fine for an adult violating this law is not less than \$500. If the offense is committed in a motor vehicle a 6-month driver's license suspension will also be imposed.

Glen Rock Borough Ordinance 154-6 extends this prohibition to private property, including the offender's own home. A person violating this ordinance is subject to a fine of \$100 to \$250 for the first offense and a fine of \$350 for any subsequent offense. In addition, the court may suspend or postpone for 6 months the offenders driving privileges.

*As a responsible citizen you should be aware of the laws that apply to adults who provide or serve alcohol to minors:*

### **LAWS AND PENALTIES**

- New Jersey Statute 2C:33-17 makes it a ***disorderly persons*** offense to offer, serve or make alcohol available to minors. It is also a criminal offense to entice or encourage a minor to drink alcohol. The law states that a minor may only consume an alcoholic beverage in the presence of and with the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, or during a religious observance. The penalty for this is a fine up to \$1,000 and up to 180 days in jail.
- Even though there is an exception for parents, you should be aware that serving or providing intoxicating substances to a minor may also be prosecuted under other criminal statutes, for example, ***child endangerment*** (such as cases where the underage drinker harms himself or another), which can result in a State prison sentence of up to 10 years and a fine up to \$150,000.
- It is a ***disorderly persons offense*** for any person to make property (such as their house, apartment, business, motel room or any other place owned, leased or managed) available to, or in the care of, another person with the purpose that alcoholic beverages will be consumed there by minors. The penalty is a fine up to \$1,000 and up to 180 days in jail.
- It is a ***disorderly persons offense*** to sell an alcoholic beverage to a minor, or to purchase an alcoholic beverage for an underage person. The penalty is a fine up to \$1000 and up to 180 days in jail.
- Any person who serves alcohol resulting in intoxication is also ***civilly liable*** for injuries caused by the intoxicated person's negligence.

**Let's all pledge ourselves to work together and help to curb underage drinking in our community.**