

Dear Community Member:

You are probably wondering, “What is **MOST FL**?” Well, let us tell you. **MOST FL** is a social norms marketing campaign around the issue of underage alcohol consumption in our community. By focusing on identifying and changing the misperceptions of others, we can begin to notice the ways in which our own perceptions are skewed. For example, MOST youth in Forest Lake Area High report making good choices regarding drug and alcohol use. The perception among youth (and many adults), however, is that most youth **are** drinking alcohol. When we challenge this perception with facts, it empowers youth to become part of the majority - they feel less pressure to conform to negative social norms because they know MOST youth are making good choices. Which brings us to the statistic on the other side – *79% of FLHS Students DON'T drink alcohol at a party in a typical month.*

It's clear we have work to do – **21% is unacceptable**. Research supports the negative impact of early alcohol use. For example, the brain is still developing and is very vulnerable. The earlier kids start, the more likely it is to become problematic. Alcohol use, combined with an immature judgment center in the brain, can lead to all kinds of bad decisions. These are just a few of the many reasons why this issue is an important one. So, why **MOST**?

For years we've focused our efforts on trying to fix the “problem” of underage drinking with modest results. Even our media outlets tend to hone in on “problem youth” further fueling misperceptions, and likely contributing to the problem. The fact of the matter is, our data tells a very different story – that the majority of our kids are doing the right thing. So, our goal is to focus on what's RIGHT with our youth and community, because by focusing on and celebrating what's right, we have the energy to fix what's wrong.

So glad you stopped by today. We are passionate about creating a healthy community for our young people, but it takes everyone to make it happen – schools, youth, parents, grandparents, business owners, faith community folks, law enforcement...**EVERYONE**. We'd love for you to get involved. Interested in learning more? Give us a call - we'd be happy to speak with you. For now, be watching for MOST FL messaging...coming to a, business, school or community near you!

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Meet the rest of the team:

- Steve Massey, Forest Lake Area High School
- Ashley LaValle, Forest Lake Police Department, Community Liaison Officer
- Jon Glader, Forest Lake Police Department, School Resource Officer
- Sarah Chatwin, Lakes Area Community Television
- Alex Bulmer, Big Apple Bagels
- Kristy Elkerton, FLAS Community Education Youth Programs
- Ashley Mitchell, Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau
- Susan Young, City of Forest Lake - City Council
- Andria Flaherty, Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau
- Cathy Mackiewicz, Washington County Department of Public Health
- Colleen Eddy, Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
- Rose Hauge, CONNECT DFC Grant Coordinator
- Stev Stegner, Rapid Press Printing and Copy Center
- Nan LaNasa, Parent & Rapid Press Printing and Copy Center
- Forest Lake Youth Advisory Board – Community Education/Lakes Area Youth Service Bureau