



# Brown County Chemical Health Action Team

This action team works throughout Brown County to support educational programs, activities and policies that increase awareness of addiction and misuse of legal substances, and also address the use of illegal substances.

## 2025 Accomplishments

### Brown County Approval of Social Host Ordinance

- After two years of planning, coordination and communication, the Chemical Health Action Team proudly witnessed the Brown County Commissioners unanimously approve a Social Host Ordinance (SHO) for all of Brown County at their May commission meeting. The team worked to develop the Social Host Ordinance as part of an effort to discourage underage possession and consumption of alcohol, marijuana and other controlled substances, as studies indicate that such ordinances are among the most effective and recommended ways to reduce underage drinking.

The Social Host Ordinance makes it unlawful for individuals (social hosts) to provide a place for underage drinking to occur on a premises under the host's control. The host is held responsible regardless of who provided the alcohol. An ordinance violation is a misdemeanor offense with a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.

**Brown County Social Host Ordinance**  
A Community Solution to Reduce Underage Drinking

**What is a social host ordinance?**  
A social host ordinance makes it unlawful for individuals (social hosts) to provide a place for underage drinking to occur on a premises under the host's control. The host is held responsible regardless of who provided the alcohol. An ordinance violation is a misdemeanor offense with a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.

**Studies indicate that social host ordinances are among the most effective and recommended ways to reduce underage drinking.**

**UNDERAGE DRINKING IN BROWN COUNTY IS LEADING TO SERIOUS HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSEQUENCES FOR EVERYONE.**

According to the 2022 Minnesota Student Survey, our Brown County youth consume more alcohol and binge drink at higher rates compared to other counties in the state.

Percentage of students drinking one or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage in the last 30 days		Percentage of students binge drinking (4 or more drinks in a row for females or 5 or more for males) within one sitting	
<b>Brown Co. Students</b>	<b>25% of 11th graders 14% of 12th graders</b>	<b>Brown Co. Students</b>	<b>11% of 11th graders 8% of 12th graders</b>
<b>MN (all other) Students</b>	<b>17% of 11th graders 7% of 12th graders</b>	<b>MN (all other) Students</b>	<b>7% of 11th graders 2% of 12th graders</b>

**63%** of students in 8th-12th grade said house parties are occurring where youth under 21 are drinking alcohol a few times a month on the weekend.

**“The majority of house parties are happening in the country.”**  
— Brown County student survey comment

**Fights, abuse, injury, illness, death**

- ✓ Verbal fights
- ✓ Physical fights
- ✓ Vandalism
- ✓ Bleeding out
- ✓ Alcohol poisoning
- ✓ Physical injury
- ✓ Verbal or emotional abuse
- ✓ Sexual Assault
- ✓ Property damage
- ✓ Toxic/Alcohol crash
- ✓ Getting in underage situations
- ✓ Getting arrested
- ✓ Death

### Message to Promote Safe Prom Celebrations

- In the spring, the team created a graphic for high schools in New Ulm and Sleepy Eye, encouraging students to celebrate safely during prom. Schools shared the messaging on screens throughout their buildings.

**PROMise** to celebrate safely.  
Your choices today impact your tomorrow!

**MOST** Brown County students choose NOT to drink alcohol or vape in a typical month.

Date based on 100,000 2022 Minnesota Student Survey

### Cannabis Resources for Parents

- In the fall, the team helped promote resources on the website and social media for parents and caregivers to start conversations with kids about cannabis use. The resources include local and statewide tools, facts about cannabis and youth brain development, and tips for prevention and support.

While Minnesota legalized non-medical cannabis for adults age 21 and older in 2023, cannabis remains illegal for youth — and its effects on the developing brain can be significant. Teens today are navigating a world where cannabis is more visible and socially accepted than ever before. Open, honest conversations with a trusted adult willing to listen and guide can help them make informed, healthy choices.

**The Cannabis Conversation**  
How to start the conversation with your teen about cannabis

**Resources for Parents**

- The Cannabis Conversation with Teens — English
- The Cannabis Conversation with Teens — Spanish
- Cannabis Starg Guide — English
- Cannabis Starg Guide — Spanish
- Cannabis Safety Wallet Card — English
- Cannabis Safety Wallet Card — Spanish

**Cannabis in Minnesota: What Parents Should Know**

In 2023, Minnesota legalized non-medical cannabis for adults age 21 and older. As dispensaries begin opening across the state in 2025, now is a critical time for parents and caregivers to talk with their teens about cannabis use. While legal for adults, cannabis remains illegal for youth — and its effects on the developing brain can be significant.

Teens today are navigating a world where cannabis is more visible and socially accepted than ever before. Open, honest conversations can help them make informed, healthy choices. You don't need to be an expert — just a trusted adult willing to listen and guide.

The buttons to the right feature resources to support your conversations, including local and statewide tools, facts about cannabis and youth brain development, and tips for prevention and support.

Let's talk. Their future starts with your voice.

For printed copies of any of these resources, please contact the Heart of New Ulm.

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