

Based on the rankings of six community indicators from the 2004 Uniform Crime Reports, the State of Indiana Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup identified Floyd County as ranking in the top ten of the communities identified as “high need” for alcohol-related prevention funding.

The indicators included: 1) number of alcohol-related fatal auto accidents; 2) the rate of alcohol-related fatal auto accidents; 3) number of alcohol-related crashes; 4) rate of alcohol-related crashes; 5) number of arrests for public intoxication; and 6) rate of public intoxication arrests.

For each of the six indicators, counties were given four points if they were in the top 10th percentile, three points if they were in the top 15th percentile, two points if they were in the top 25th percentile and one point if they were in the top 50th percentile. The total points were then summed to total an overall alcohol priority score.

Floyd County received a score of 16, which placed it eighth overall in level of need. In addition, the Floyd County Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Abuse Task Force, the Local Coordinating Council of the Governor’s Commission for a Drug Free Indiana, has identified alcohol consumption by minors, as well as binge drinking as a problem statement, to be addressed in a recent Comprehensive Community Plan. Recent data from the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use by Indiana Children and Adolescents Survey, conducted by the Indiana Prevention Resource Center out of IU Bloomington indicates high rates of alcohol use among Floyd County youth compared to State rates.

The positive note in all this is that thanks to a Strategic Prevention Framework—State Incentive Grant received by Our Place, Floyd County will have an opportunity to address this very serious issue. This grant, provided by the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addictions is affording Floyd County the opportunity to collect and analyze data that will define the reasons why Floyd County has a high rate of underage and binge drinking. Workgroups are going to review all programs, policies, practices and laws in place that contribute to both the positive and the negative findings.

The results of the workgroups will then be developed into a strategic plan which will help Floyd County focus on the solutions and find additional resources if needed.

A recent kick-off meeting for this local effort took place on February 19, at the Cancer Care Center, co –hosted by the Floyd County ATOD Task Force Coordinator Connie Keith and Keith Henderson, Floyd County Prosecuting Attorney.

Approximately 35 community leaders attended. Those attending signed agreements in order to share data and information, and begin the first phase of this initiative. This process will also include a mechanism to ensure cultural competence in the data collected and problems/solution identified, youth participation, training and outreach, and an evaluation component. Efforts will also be made to engage parents and retailers.

We do need parent and adult input, so please if you will, go to their website at www.ourplaceinc.org, click on the SPF-SIG flower as shown and complete a survey.

The survey only takes two minutes, is free and confidential!

If you don’t have Internet access and want to complete one, call 945-3400. Join St. Mary of the Knobs to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day in style! Their 4th Annual Reverse Raffle is set for Friday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. Only 100 tickets sold in increments of \$100, \$50, and \$25. Total cash prizes of \$5,500 – even losers have a second chance to win!