

Law Enforcement Today with Sheriff Toulon



A Public Service Message
from Sheriff Errol D. Toulon, Jr.

THINK BEFORE YOU LET THEM DRINK

Suffolk's Social Host Law holds parents responsible for allowing anyone under the age of 21 to drink alcohol or engage in the improper use of legal and illegal drugs at a party or gathering in their home.

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Conversation Card on Suffolk's Social Host Law

The Social Host Law holds parents – and adults over 18 - responsible for allowing anyone under the age of 21 to drink alcohol or engage in the improper use of legal or illegal drugs at a party or gathering in their home, apartment, an RV, a hotel or in the yard.

The Social Host Law uses broad language, but it also gives parents and other responsible adults some leeway to take prompt action to stop the drinking in their home or other premises. For example, while it is illegal to knowingly allow the consumption of alcohol by a minor in your presence, you can and should take appropriate and “reasonable corrective action” to stop an underage person from drinking.

Reasonable corrective action includes:

- Making a prompt demand that they stop drinking the alcoholic beverage or leave the premises;
- If they refuse to leave or stop drinking alcohol, you are expected to report the matter to local law enforcement; or to any other person with a greater degree of authority over the minor, such as their parent or guardian.
- The failure to act promptly to stop minors from drinking on your premises can result in fines or even criminal charges.