



**County of McHenry  
County Administration**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**McHenry County Officially Launches its Underage Drinking Task Force**

WOODSTOCK, IL – The McHenry County Underage Drinking Task Force was officially launched on Monday, September 20 by County Board Chairman Ken Koehler. In attendance at the meeting were leaders from education, law enforcement, and health care professionals from throughout the County. The meeting began with opening remarks by Chairman Ken Koehler in regards to the importance of developing a task force.

“At a recent meeting of the Illinois Liquor Commission in Rockford, I sat in a presentation on how communities can control illegal alcohol use. I found it very encouraging that other communities in Illinois are aggressively attacking this issue. In McHenry County, we have already instituted a portion of this approach through stepped-up sting operations and enhanced law enforcement, in which we have seen positive results. However, it became evident to me that we could do a better job through collaborative methods in messages to our parents and teenagers. It is now time to add this second important component, the engagement of parents and teens on this issue,” stated Chairman Koehler on the formation of the Task Force.



**Chairman Koehler addressing the Task Force**

Following the Chairman’s opening statement, individuals in attendance spoke in support of the development of such a task force to partner with parents to engage teens in strategies that mitigate the problem of underage drinking. Those that supported the efforts of the Task Force include the McHenry County Sheriff Keith Nygren, the Mayor of Crystal Lake Aaron Shepley, the President of the McHenry County Mental Health Board Don Larson, among others.



**McHenry County Sheriff Keith Nygren supporting the formation of the Task Force**

Finally, Chairman Koehler introduced the Task Force Co-Chairs Dr. Joe Williams, Assistant Regional Superintendent of Schools and Jamie Rein, Assistant State's Attorney. Dr. Williams provided a Powerpoint presentation highlighting the need for such a task force exists because "not only has it been proven that this issue can be addressed through a collective effort, but engaging in the issue of underage drinking in our community will make us stronger and our young men and women safer".

The McHenry County Underage Drinking Task Force will be conducting its first official meeting on Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup> in the McHenry County Administration Building – Conference Room A, 667 Ware Road, Woodstock. McHenry County has also developed an informational website in support of the Underage Drinking Task Force. <http://www.co.mchenry.il.us/departments/UnderDrinkTask/Pages/index.aspx>

For more information, please contact Adam Lehmann at (815)334-0309 or [aflehmann@co.mchenry.il.us](mailto:aflehmann@co.mchenry.il.us).

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