



**EMBARGOED UNTIL 3PM OCTOBER 28, 2010**

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**For Immediate Release**

**For More Information Contact: LiveFree! at 813-503-5658 HCADA at 813-731-2696**

**Florida Receives Major National Grant Award for Substance Abuse Prevention:  
Pinellas County and Hillsborough County One of Six Partner Communities**

(St. Petersburg, FL and Tampa, FL) At a joint press conference with the White House Office of Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Florida Office of Drug Control Director Bruce Grant announced that Florida is the only state in the nation to receive a 2010 Prevention Partnership for Success Grant. \$11.5 million, awarded over five years, will fund substance abuse prevention planning and evidence based practices at the grassroots level within six of Florida's most populous counties, including Pinellas and Hillsborough.

The Florida Prevention Partnership for Success grant will be administered by the Florida Department of Children and Families and will include work with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice to support substance abuse prevention aimed at reducing incidences of youth violent crime and juvenile delinquency.

The six partner communities of the grant, Duval, Orange, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Broward and Dade, represent 47% of the state's 12-17 year olds. The six counties will spend the next six to eight months examining the conditions associated with substance abuse and youth crime. They will then develop comprehensive community action plans using evidence based practices working with community coalitions, including prevention providers. The Florida Department of Children and Families will then fund the implementation and evaluation of the progress made by each community, the county and the state.

LiveFree! Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Pinellas County and the Hillsborough County Anti Drug Alliance will be awarded funding through the Prevention Partnership for Success Grant to help reduce underage drinking and juvenile violent crime. Both coalitions have a proven track record for implementing research-based underage drinking and youth substance abuse strategies and policies in the Tampa Bay region.

"It is exciting that Florida was chosen as a recipient of this grant," says Daphne Miller, Chair of the LiveFree! Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Pinellas County (LiveFree!). "Having Pinellas and Hillsborough chosen as two of the six community partners gives us a unique opportunity to really make a regional impact as we collectively move forward with substance abuse prevention and education throughout our state."

Juvenile substance abuse is a major contributing factor towards youth violent crime and juvenile delinquency. Underage drinking is a persistent public health problem that generates significant costs to society from alcohol-related consequences such as criminal activity/delinquency, antisocial behavior, academic difficulties, risky sexual behavior, health problems, unintentional injuries, and traffic crashes.

“It is vital that we strive to implement policies and programs that successfully target underage drinking,” says Ellen Snelling, Board Member of the Hillsborough County Anti Drug Alliance who also Chair of the Tampa Alcohol Coalition. “Effective policies have the potential to generate significant savings to state government, taxpayers, businesses, schools, and other segments of society by reducing many of the negative consequences that are associated with underage drinking.”

*The Economic Costs of Underage Age Drinking in Florida*, a 2009 study conducted by the Health Economics Research Group at the University of Miami, provides the most current estimates of the economic impact of underage drinking in the state of Florida. According to the study, counties located in the Central and Suncoast regions of the state generated the largest share of total state-wide costs, with the Suncoast region having the highest cost per youth under the age of 21 (\$679) and per youth between the ages of 14 and 20 (\$2,021).

The estimated cost of underage drinking related motor vehicle crashes in Hillsborough County was \$52,289,000 - the highest in the state. The estimated cost of violent crime associated with underage drinking in Hillsborough County was \$97,195,000. The estimated cost of underage drinking related motor vehicle crashes in Pinellas County was \$31,684,000, and the - estimated cost of violent crime associated with underage drinking was \$80,155,000.

If you would like to set up an interview about this issue with a member of either LiveFree! or Hillsborough County Anti Drug Alliance, please contact **813-503-5658 or 813-731-2696**.

The LiveFree! Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition consists of members of the community coming together to address alcohol and other drug use in Pinellas County among young adults and middle and high school students by creating more systematic, environmental strategies and promoting the use of evidence-based prevention programs. LiveFree! encourages community advocacy, involving youth, law enforcement, parents and businesses in coalition activities and promoting public awareness of substance abuse in Pinellas County. For more information on LiveFree! please visit <http://www.pinellascoalition.com>

The Hillsborough County Anti Drug Coalition works to strengthen community substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts through advocacy, collaboration, and coordination with all segments of the community. The coalition uses innovative prevention, education, and awareness activities to identify, build, and enhance community-based efforts in order to eradicate the illegal use of alcohol and other drugs. For more information please visit <http://www.hcada.com/aboutus.htm>