

## **Keep It Real video contest kicks off**

The Keep It Real campaign to reduce underage drinking has launched its sixth annual video contest in which teens can win cash prizes and receive media exposure.

The regional video/Internet competition gives students the opportunity to produce 30-second videos telling why kids under 21 shouldn't drink. All entries are posted online, where community members help select the winners. A new feature this year is a curriculum support package for teachers. To access these resources and see the contest details, visit [www.keep-it-real.us/home.php](http://www.keep-it-real.us/home.php).

"Most high school students don't drink. But the hard truth is that many do -- and those that drink often drink in excess," said campaign spokesman Joe Elswick, a University of Kentucky student and a graduate of Lafayette High School.

"Some people think of drinking as a rite of passage for teens and simply look the other way. This initiative is about so much more than drinking and driving -- it's about quality of life and healthy communities. It is about engaging youth and adults through the video medium to understand that underage drinking poses a danger to a teen's developing brain. It can affect all aspects of development including social, emotional, intellectual and physical. It's not enough to say 'Don't drink and drive.' The message of this campaign is 'If you are underage, don't drink.'"

The deadline for video entries is **Dec. 11**. (The Northside branch of the Lexington Public Library has a digital studio available for students to use. Call 231-5590 for details.) The Internet voting, which runs Jan. 11-22, will determine the "Peoples' Choice" winner. Others will be selected by a team of professionals.

Winners, who will receive up to \$200 in cash prizes, will be announced Feb. 2 at the Kentucky Theatre. The top videos will appear on regional television, will run in the pre-show ads at local cinemas and will get recognition at a Legends baseball game.

The Mayor's Alliance on Substance Abuse, the Bluegrass Prevention Center and the Fayette County KY-ASAP (Agency for Substance Abuse Policy) have spearheaded this campaign.