

Effort aims to stop teen drinking

■ Project stresses consequences of buying alcohol for minors.

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Adult and youth volunteers through the Genesee Valley Health Partnership have been at Livingston County convenience stores pasting underage drinking stickers to alcohol packs.

The Project Sticker Shock campaign, in its first year, is aimed at reminding adults of the penalties they face when they purchase alcohol for minors, said Rachel Pena, coordinator of the Healthy Communities That Care program, which is heading the sticker project.

"Usually kids hang outside of convenience stores and wait to see adults to go up to and say 'Hey, can you get this for me?'" Pena said of targeting convenience stores and not liquor stores. The project has been done in other states, she said.

The yellow and red sticker tells the person purchasing a six-pack of beer or wine coolers that providing alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 is illegal and that penalties include up to a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

"Having these reminders

... will help raise awareness and make them think twice," Pena said.

A group of about 45 people has been splitting up in teams of one adult and three to four youths and going to designated communities, including Avon, Caledonia, Genesee and Livonia. They are visiting mini marts, Wilson Farms, 2 Kwik Fill stores and other stores that have pre-approved the project.

Jamie Chesna, Livingston area manager for 2 Kwik Fill stores, said the four Kwik Fills that sell alcohol are participating in the event this weekend mostly because she wants the teenagers, not as much as the adults, to be aware of

the consequences.

"That is just wonderful to me, that youth are the ones participating in this," Chesna said, adding that teenagers often don't know the consequences that adults face when purchasing liquor for minors and also of the dangers of underage drinking. "Anything that can teach them, I'm for it."

Part of the project also will consist of putting fact and tip sheets inside students' report cards or passing out flyers at school and community events on how to have safe and alcohol-free parties for youths who soon will be celebrating prom and graduation. □

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