



In 2010, The Blaine County Community Drug Coalition's Underage Alcohol Committee decided that youth consuming alcohol, frequently binge drinking, at house parties was a local condition in Blaine County that had to be addressed.

The 2010 Asset survey taken by Blaine County students revealed that 66% of 12th graders, 54% of 10th graders, and 23% of 8th graders had consumed alcohol in the past 30 days. Additionally, 89% of seniors, 73% of sophomores and 40% of 8th graders had been to parties in the 12 months prior where people their age had been drinking.

After considerable research of communities in California, it was determined that pursuing a Social Hosting Ordinance (an ordinance that would attach liability to a host who provides the venue for underage drinking) would be an effective strategy to decrease the number of house parties and decrease access to alcohol for our youth.

The Committee, which consisted of the Sheriff, County Prosecuting Attorney, a County Commissioner, a school principal, parents and Coalition staff drafted an ordinance based on similar legislation in Ventura County, California. The committee also conducted focus groups and town hall meetings to gauge community support for this policy strategy. While the ordinance had strong support from elected officials and law enforcement, the public loudly voiced concerns about Blaine County adopting "an additional" ordinance to address underage drinking in our community.

The committee determined it would be more effective to concentrate on the Compliance Check strategy to combat local retailers selling alcohol to minors, and re-visit Social Hosting at a later time. Compliance checks began in 2010 (with considerable opposition from the retail outlets), and continue to this day (with little to no opposition from retailers). Compliance rates have vastly improved from under 50% in 2010 to nearly 100% compliance in 2014. Largely due to the success of this strategy, house parties are now the main source of alcohol for minors in Blaine County.

The 2012 Asset survey taken by Blaine County students showed that 30-day alcohol use was trending downwards, but that house parties were still the main source of alcohol and venue for drinking for minors. In 2013 and 2014, the committee once again researched Social Hosting ordinances in Idaho and California, re-drafted an ordinance, offered town hall meetings for youth and adults, held focus groups, conducted workshops for elected officials and law enforcement, and plotted a strategy for adoption by Blaine County and local municipalities. This time, the community was overwhelmingly in favor of pursuing a Social Hosting Ordinance.

The Superintendent of Schools and the Head Master of the largest private school submitted letters of support to the County Commissioners. Mayors, several council

members and law enforcement from the cities voiced their support. The County Commissioners placed the draft ordinance as a discussion item on their agenda in December of 2014, and youth, parents, educators and other stakeholders gave public comments in support of the ordinance at the Commissioners workshops and hearings. We also invited opponents of this ordinance to the workshops to participate in the public dialogue.

In February of 2015, after 4 public hearings, much public comment, and a little legal wordsmithing, the Blaine County Commissioners adopted a Social Hosting Ordinance that attached liability to a host who knowingly provides a venue for underage drinking. In Blaine County, a first offense of this ordinance results in a \$100 citation. A second offense results in a \$300 citation, and additional offenses would result in a misdemeanor punishable by up to \$1000 fine and up to 6 months in jail.

Currently, the cities of Bellevue and Hailey are conducting public hearings regarding similar draft Social Hosting ordinances, and the cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley are expected to put draft ordinances on their agendas in the next two months.