

December 8, 2010

Dear Store Owner:

We are writing to you because we know that you care about our community. The Yonkers Coalition is dedicated to preventing and reducing youth alcohol and other drug use in Yonkers. We are writing to encourage you to be part of the solution in keeping our youth alcohol-free.

The community depends on you to help protect the well being of our youth. As a business owner and a member of the community, you are aware of the importance of maintaining safe and responsible business practices. Some excellent business practices related to preventing underage drinking include the following:

1. Ask to see identification from everyone who purchases alcohol (this eliminates the need for the clerk to “guess” a customer’s age).
2. Have all staff trained in responsible beverage service so they can avoid sales to minors. For information on getting your staff trained for FREE, please call the Ann Marie Linden at 914-332-1300.
3. Limit alcohol signs that are visible from the street.
4. Refuse to display any alcohol signs that are attractive to young people – like ads that use cartoon characters.
5. Stock all beverages that contain alcohol in a distinct area, away from sodas and other non-alcoholic beverages.
6. **We are requesting that you immediately remove Four Loko and all energy drinks that contain alcohol from your shelves. One can of Four Loko contains the equivalent of four beers and an eight ounce cup of coffee and has been blamed for numerous hospitalizations of young people in recent months. The Food and Drug Administration has warned that is unsafe and has banned it from sale in the United States. Governor Paterson and the State Liquor Authority announced that it will no longer be shipped to New York State. As a community, please help protect our young people by responding to this ban and ceasing all sales of this product and similar products. Thank you for your cooperation and partnership in this effort.**

Working together, we can promote a healthy and safe environment for all our youth. If you have any questions, or wish to join the coalition’s efforts, please call me at 914-968-7627.

Sincerely,

Nychelle Jackson Walcott  
Coalition Coordinator, Yonkers Drug Free Community Coalition  
914-968-7627

December 8, 2010

The Journal News  
Att: Letter to the Editor  
1 Gannett Drive  
White Plains, New York 10604

Dear Editor:

The Yonkers Coalition is dedicated to preventing and reducing youth alcohol and other drug use in Yonkers. We are writing in regard to the recent action taken by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to address the danger of alcoholic energy drinks. In particular, the FDA has authoritatively declared that Four Loko, the popular alcoholic energy drink which has the alcohol equivalent of 5 beers and the caffeine of an 8 ounce cup of coffee - and additional stimulants – as well as other brands of alcohol energy drinks are unsafe due to their potent combination of alcohol and caffeine. Four Loko has been blamed for numerous hospitalizations, particularly among young people.

Recently the New York State Liquor Authority and the New York State Beer Wholesalers Association reached an agreement that will halt distribution of this product in New York. Distributors have until December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to clear their inventory of the products, with retailers given additional time to sell off existing stock. Thus, it is unclear exactly how long these products will still be available in retail stores.

We are sending a letter to establishments licensed to sell alcohol in Yonkers, asking them to **IMMEDIATELY** remove **Four Loko** and all alcoholic energy drinks from their shelves. In addition, we are asking them to be vigilant in upholding the law and insuring that no alcoholic product is sold to minors. We encourage parents to talk to their teens about the dangers of combining alcohol and caffeine. Working together as collaborative partners, we can preserve the safety of our youth.

Sincerely,

Nychelle Jackson Walcott  
Coalition Coordinator, Yonkers Drug Free Community Coalition  
Coordinator, Community Services  
Westhab, Inc.  
914-968-7627