

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | October 7, 2020

Human Services launches anonymous tip system to help prevent underage substance use

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Department of Human Services' Behavioral Health Division, through collaboration with the North Dakota Sheriffs and Deputies Association, the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation and the North Dakota Highway Patrol, recently launched NDTip, an anonymous statewide tip system that connects North Dakotans with their local sheriff's department or highway patrol to report underage substance use.

Although great strides have been made in reducing underage drinking, alcohol remains the most abused drug by North Dakota youth with 13 percent of North Dakota high school students reporting their first drink before age 13 (2019 North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey). Not only is underage drinking against the law, but there are also many consequences associated with underage drinking such as violence, sexual assault and car crashes.

"Prevention is creating an environment that promotes health and well-being," said Behavioral Health Division Assistant Director Laura Anderson. "NDTip is one part of the state's comprehensive effort to address and prevent substance misuse in North Dakota."

NDTip uses an app that is available for download in the Apple Store or Google Play Store. Once installed, users are able to report a tip, choose the law enforcement agency that corresponds to the location of the crime and provide any relevant information, including the option to upload images. Once the tip is sent, law enforcement can communicate with the individual who submitted the tip to gather more information if needed.

Anderson said all tips are anonymous. The app removes all identifying information, and there's no way to identify the sender.

Individuals can also use NDTip to report community-related crime, traffic incidents or other law enforcement issues.

"The NDTip system allows North Dakota residents of all ages to anonymously report suspicious activity or crimes simply through the app on their phone without fear of their information being released as a reporting party," said Chad Kaiser, Stutsman County Sheriff. "This engagement and collaboration are vital in keeping our neighborhoods and communities safe."

Individuals can also submit an anonymous tip through the division's website at <https://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/nd-tip>.

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NDTip is not a substitute for calling 911. If individuals see a crime in progress or have an emergency, they should immediately call 911.

To support child well-being and behavioral health, there are age-appropriate resources available for parents, family members and others at www.parentslead.org/. Individuals who may be struggling with substance use, can find help and treatment options at www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/addiction/service-locator.

The Behavioral Health Division is responsible for reviewing and identifying service needs and activities in the state's behavioral health system to ensure health and safety, access to services and quality services. It also establishes quality assurance standards for the licensure of substance use disorder program services and facilities and provides policy leadership in partnership with public and private entities. For more information, visit www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov.

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