



For immediate release

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## **Two-Day Alcohol Education Campaign Kicks Off Wednesday**

*Helena, Montana* - Local health officials are kicking off a two-day alcohol education campaign in Helena on Wednesday. Award-winning hip hop artist, Native fancy dancer, and motivational speaker - Supaman, originally from Crow Agency in Southeast Montana – will visit four local schools and headline two community events on Wednesday and Thursday, May 21 and 22.

“Montana has the inglorious reputation of leading the nation in drunk driving fatalities for both adults and teenagers,” says Amber Johnson, Lewis and Clark County Communications Specialist. “60% of all crash fatalities in Montana over the last decade were caused by impaired drivers.”

These tragic statistics point to the fact that Montana also leads the nation in heavy drinking and binge drinking. Over the last decade, Montana has consistently ranked among the top five states for highest adult binge drinking.

Heavy drinking is defined as consuming 15 or more drinks for men and 8 or more drinks for women per week, and 4 or more drinks any day for women or 5 or more drinks any day for men.

Binge drinking is defined as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08% - or 0.08 grams of alcohol per deciliter – or higher. For a typical adult, this pattern corresponds to consuming five or more drinks (male), or four or more drinks (female), in about two hours.

“The use, and misuse, of alcohol has become so normalized in our culture and society that it is easy to overlook the fact that no other substance compares to alcohol in years lost and lives affected. The third leading cause of preventable death in the United States, alcohol-related deaths kill more people than all other drugs combined. That is the cold, hard truth people don’t want to acknowledge or talk about,” states Johnson, “but it’s time to start talking about it.”

To start the conversation, Lewis and Clark Public Health is hosting an event called Sober Delight, a mocktail happy hour and community conversation from 5:30 – 8:30 PM Wednesday, May 21 at the Helena Indian Alliance, located at 501 Euclid Avenue.

Villette Burk, Substance Use Prevention Coordinator at LCPH, hopes to see a large turnout for the community-led conversation.

“There are so many reasons to join us for this special event. Apart from the great conversation, there will be free childcare, free food and drink, and door prizes. Please join us,” says Burk.

Then from 5:30 – 8 PM Thursday, May 22, Supaman will be headlining an outdoor concert on the Walking Mall at 48 N Last Chance Gulch. Organizers are encouraging residents to plan for travel and parking, as the community response to the event is robust.

“If you haven’t yet had the pleasure of seeing Supaman perform, you are in for a really good time. He is an incredible performer with an amazing and inspirational message of hope and recovery,” says Johnson.

Lewis and Clark Public Health hopes that this is just the beginning of many conversations, events, and campaigns that will encourage moderate and responsible alcohol consumption by the general public, champion sobriety for people wrestling with alcohol misuse and chemical dependency and decrease the number of needless fatalities caused by drunk driving.

“Years lost to alcohol are too many,” says Burk. “Each year, deaths from excessive drinking shorten the lives of those who died by an average of 24 years. And many of the states that suffer the most years lost to alcohol-related deaths among residents (based on population) are located in the West. Montana is in the top five.”

For more information about the LCPH Alcohol Education Campaign, please visit their website at [Alcohol Education Campaign - Lewis & Clark County](#). Call Communications Specialist Amber Johnson at 406-558-9459 or email her at [ajohnson@lccountymt.gov](mailto:ajohnson@lccountymt.gov) for questions.