



*“Our Town, Your Town, Koreatown. Improving Quality of Life for Over 35 Years.”*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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## **KYCC implements Card Under 35 Pledge Campaign to reduce underage drinking**

LOS ANGELES, CA—June 13, 2013—KYCC (Koreatown Youth & Community Center) partnered with representatives from local law enforcement, businesses and residents to announce updates on their “Card Under 35” Pledge Campaign to prevent access to alcohol by minors in retail settings.

To encourage responsible alcohol sales, KYCC PATCH (Promoting Advocacy Toward Community Health) program launched its **Card Under 35 Pledge Campaign** this past March to partner with local stores to card customers who look under 35 years old, so as to avoid any potential alcohol sales to minors and ultimately to protect their business from penalties as a result of violations.

“As a store owner, I care about my customers and want a safe, healthy community for all of us, especially for our young people. I support KYCC’s Card Under 35 Pledge Campaign because I believe businesses must be responsible not only to protect our business, but to also prevent underage drinking in our community,” said Juan Duarte, owner of 7&8 Food Store Market and Card Under 35 pledgee.

“Businesses are a part of the solution, and I encourage my fellow business owners to join this campaign and commit to supporting our youth.”

Local businesses support this campaign, and 19 liquor stores and mini-marts have already pledged. As part of the campaign, these stores have posted warning signs about the buying, selling and possession of alcohol by minors, and are receiving education about local laws and how to improve their store environment to reduce the risks of underage drinking. KYCC PATCH also offers free monthly **Responsible Beverage Service** trainings to local alcohol retail stores in English, Spanish and Korean along with resources to support businesses’ pledge to card customers purchasing alcohol.

The campaign has also received community-wide support from local law enforcement and residents. Captain Peter Zarcone from the Los Angeles Police Department Olympic Division shared the impact of underage drinking in the local community and the value of prevention. As a concerned parent of a teenager, local resident Marty Aleman expressed the importance of businesses not selling alcohol to minors in order to help create a healthy environment for youth to thrive. KYCC PATCH also announced the launch of a **Community Team** of local volunteers to support the campaign’s efforts.

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Alcohol is the top substance abuse problem in Koreatown, Pico-Union and Westlake, according to KYCC’s most recent research.<sup>1</sup> Use is closely linked to access, as 72% (or 336 of 467 total respondents) of community members from all three neighborhoods shared that it is easy for minors to get alcohol.<sup>2</sup> The number two reason for alcohol use by minors according to the community survey is “too many liquor or grocery stores” that sell alcohol to minors.<sup>3</sup> From a focus group conducted by KYCC, youth shared that “Friends share information about certain liquor stores that sell alcohol to minors and access alcohol.”<sup>4</sup>

KYCC was established in 1975 for recently immigrated, at-risk youth. Since then, it has grown enormously, with children and family services, economic development, environmental, childcare, and affordable housing units. The mission of KYCC is to serve the evolving needs of the Korean American population in the greater Los Angeles Area as well as the multi-ethnic Koreatown community. Today, KYCC serves over 11,000 people each year, mostly first-generation immigrants from Latin America and Asia.

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<sup>1</sup> 95% or 276 of 288 total respondents. County of Los Angeles – Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control, Survey Analysis Report, 2012. These survey data should be interpreted with caution because they represent the responses of only 467 respondents who were not randomly sampled.

<sup>2</sup> 86% or 250 out of 288 total respondents. Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> 37% or 107 of 288 total respondents. Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> County of Los Angeles – Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention & Control, KYCC Focus Group #1.

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