

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Safe & Sober Joins CPO as Key Prevention Program

21-year-old initiative strengthens prevention efforts for youth in Missouri and beyond

SPRINGFIELD, Mo., (9/30/2025) – Community Partnership of the Ozarks (CPO) is proud to announce that the **Safe & Sober Program**—a proven prevention initiative that has empowered students and schools for more than two decades—is now officially a part of CPO’s Prevention & Youth Support Division.

Founded in 2004 by Springfield attorney **Kurt Larson**, Safe & Sober provides free, prevention-focused videos and curriculum to middle schools, high schools, and other youth-serving organizations across the country. The program equips students to make safe, healthy choices around underage drinking, impaired driving, vaping, prescription misuse, and related challenges, while also addressing root causes such as stress, depression, and anxiety.

Now in its 21st year, Safe & Sober is reaching more students than ever before:

- **459 active schools in Missouri**
- **741 schools in other states**
- **1,200 total schools and youth-serving organizations nationwide**

This represents a **61% increase in Missouri participation** and a **45% increase nationwide** from 2024.

Safe & Sober will continue its powerful mission as part of CPO, guided by **Program Director Brandon Jason** under the leadership of CPO’s Prevention & Youth Support Division.

“As I approach the fourth quarter of my life, I knew it was time to step back from Safe & Sober,” said **founder Kurt Larson**. “I find great comfort in knowing this program—something that has become a true ministry to me—will continue in the capable hands of Community Partnership of the Ozarks. At CPO, prevention isn’t a side project; it’s their day job. Safe & Sober will not only live on, but thrive.”

CPO President/CEO **Janet Dankert** said the transition is a natural fit.

“Safe & Sober shares our mission of building healthier communities through prevention. Together, we will strengthen and expand the reach of this important work, ensuring more young people have the tools to make safe and healthy choices.”

As Safe & Sober “turns 21,” this milestone marks both a celebration of its legacy and a bold step into the future—where prevention, education, and hope continue to shape the lives of students across Missouri and beyond. You can learn more about Safe & Sober and how to get involved at www.safeandsober.org

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ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OF THE OZARKS: *The mission of Community Partnership of the Ozarks is to facilitate and promote the building of resilient children, healthy families, and strong neighborhoods and communities through collaboration, programming and resource development. For more information on the Partnership’s collaborative efforts and programs, visit www.cpozarks.org.*