

# THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL-RELATED ISSUES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

## Youth

- **Alcohol kills more kids than all illegal drugs combined.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2000.
- **Everyday 7,000 young people under the age of 16 have their first drink of alcohol.**  
Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 2004.
- **Twice as many kids use alcohol than any other illegal drug.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2000.
- **Three million kids 14 – 17 are regular drinkers.**  
Source: 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDS) a project of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).
- **Kids who are *under 21* spend over \$5 billion on alcohol.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2001.

## Homes and Families

- **One out of 4 kids live in a home where alcohol is abused.**  
Source: *Substance Abuse The Nations Number One Health Problem: Key Indicator for Policy*, February 2001.
- **Alcohol is a key factor in 1 out of 3 divorces.**  
Source: Ibid.
- **One half of all adults have a family member who is an alcoholic.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2001.

## Health and Medical

- **Alcohol is the leading contributor to injury death and the main cause of death for people under age 21.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute of Health, 2004.
- **One person every minute is injured in an alcohol-related car crash.**  
Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2002.
- **One dollar of every four that Medicare spends on inpatient hospital care is associated with substance abuse.**  
Source: *Substance Abuse The Nations Number One Health Problem: Key Indicator for Policy*, February 2001.
- **More than 100,000 deaths each year are attributed to alcohol.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute of Health, February 2001.

## Festivals

- **The alcohol industry sponsors, promotes and sells product at thousands of community festivals every year.**  
Source: *The Bottom Line on Alcohol in Society*, Volume 21, Number 4, Winter 2000.
- **Beer tents and beer sponsorship are often a main attraction.**  
Source: Ibid.
- **There are few policies that control cup size, drink limits, youth access, open containers and the hours of alcohol service.**  
Source: A.C. Wagenaar, et al., "Sources of Alcohol for Underage Drinkers." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 57(3):325-333, 1996.

## Low-Income Urban Areas

- **There are more high-octane malt liquors available than anywhere else.**  
Source: Preventing Alcohol-Related Injury and Violence (ARIV), a project of the Trauma Foundation, January, 1999, pp. 125-126.
- **There are 40 – 50% more billboards that advertise alcohol and tobacco than in the suburbs.**  
Source: Edward McMahon and Patricia Taylor, *Citizens' Action Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising*, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Washington DC and Scenic America, Washington DC, 1990, pp. 6-7.
- **There are more alcohol outlets than any other business.**  
Source: Lieber and Mosher, *Alcohol Policy: A Public Health Perspective Slide Show Script*, Alcohol Policy Initiative Project, Trauma Foundation, San Francisco, 1997, pp. 4-5.

## Sports Stadiums

- **More than 70% of all beer sponsorship spending goes into sporting events.**  
Source: Buchanan and Lev, "Beer and Fast Cars: How Brewers Target Blue-Collar Youth through Motor Sport Sponsorships," Marin Institute for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Problems, San Rafael, CA. AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 1999, p. 25.
- **Messages to drink appear everywhere – billboards, scoreboards, programs, and jumbotrons.**  
Source: Johnson, "Sports and Suds," *Sports Illustrated*, August 8, 1988, pp. 69-82.
- **There are very few guidelines for alcohol sales. This results in fistfights, fans who yell obscenities, throw objects, vomit, injure themselves and others, and drive home drunk.**  
Source: *The Globe*, International Alcohol and Drug Problems, November 3, 1996.
- **In 2002, alcohol producers spent \$595 million on ads for sports programming.**  
Source: Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth.

## Public Perception

- **Americans are bombarded with \$4 billion worth of alcohol marketing each year.**  
Source: Grube, J. Television alcohol portrayals, alcohol advertising, and alcohol expectations among children and adolescents. In Martin, S., ed. *The Effects of the Mass Media on the Use and Abuse of Alcohol* (pp. 105-122). Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Research Monograph No. 28. Grube, J. and Wallack, L. (1994). Television beer advertising and drinking knowledge, beliefs, and intentions among schoolchildren. *American Journal of Public Health* 84:254-259; Slater, M. et al. (1996). Male adolescents' reactions to TV beer advertisements: The effects of sports content and programming context. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 57:425-433.
- **Alcohol advertising focuses on “positive” aspects of drinking – when to drink, how to drink, where to drink, who to drink with and why drinking is good.**  
Source: Ibid.
- **In 2002, alcohol product ads on TV outnumbered alcohol industry “responsibility ads” 226 to one.**  
Source: Marin Institute, 2005.
- **Youth are more likely to see alcohol advertising on TV than ads for products such as juice, gum, chips, sneakers or jeans.**  
Source: Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, “Television: Alcohol’s Vast Adland (2002).

## Small Business and Industry

- **Alcohol problems cost U.S. employers \$27 billion a year in lost productivity – much of that from absenteeism.**  
Source: Marin Institute, April 2005.
- **19% of managers, supervisors and hourly workers are alcohol dependent.**  
Source: T.W. Mangione, J. Howland and M. Lee, “New Perspectives for Worksite Alcohol Strategies: Results form a Corporate Drinking Study.” Funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, December 1998.
- **Almost 60% of alcohol-related performance problems come from non-alcohol dependent drinkers.**  
Source: Ibid.

## Government

- **To date, the \$19 billion federal “War on Drugs” campaign includes very few messages on alcohol even though alcohol is the number one drug of choice for youth.**  
Source: *Substance Abuse The Nations Number One Health Problem: Key Indicator for Policy*, February 2001.
- **The alcohol beverage industry pours more than \$3 million into campaign contributions and lobbying efforts.**  
Source: PAC Contributions to Federal Candidates; The Center for Responsible Politics, 2000-2001.
- **Federal excise tax on beer has been raised only once (1991) since 1972.**  
Source: “Inside the Beer Industry’s Political Machine,” *The Wall Street Journal*, Monday, August 18, 1997, pp. B1 and B12.

## Colleges and Universities

Every year, on college campuses nationwide –

- **There are 696,000 alcohol-related assaults reported annually.**  
Source: Hingson, R. et al. Magnitude of Alcohol-Related Mortality and Morbidity Among U.S. College Students Ages 18-24: Changes from 1998 to 2001. *Annual Review of Public Health*, vol. 26, 259-79; 2005.
- **There are 599,000 students who are injured due to alcohol.**  
Source: Ibid.
- **1,700 students die from alcohol-related injuries.**  
Source: Ibid.
- **More than 97,000 students have reported alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.**  
Source: Ibid.
- **Two-thirds of all property damage, 64 percent of violent behavior, 42 percent of physical injury, 37 percent of emotional difficulty, and 38 percent of poor academic performance can be attributed to alcohol abuse.**  
Source: Alcohol Research Information Service (ARIS), 1999.
- **Many universities do not inform parents when students are involved in an alcohol-related incident.**

## Drinking and Driving

- **One person every minute is involved in an alcohol-related car crash.**  
Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2002.
- **Nationwide, 40% of all traffic fatalities are alcohol related.**  
Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2004.
- **In 2004, there were 14,409 traffic fatalities in which the driver had a blood alcohol level above .08.**  
Source: Ibid.

## Costs to Society

- **Untreated alcohol problems waste an estimated \$184.6 billion dollars per year in health care, business and criminal justice costs, and cause more than 100,000 deaths.**  
Source: Goplerud, E., George Washington University Medical Center.
- **Alcohol is responsible for more than 100,000 deaths annually.**  
Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute on Health, February 2002.
- **Annual cost of alcohol abuse is \$185 billion. Smoking is \$148.5 billion and illegal drugs are \$128.3 billion**  
Source: Alcohol and drug abuse costs: Harwood H. Fountain D., Livermore G. "The MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Drug Abuse and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 1998. Smoking costs: Unpublished data for 1995 from Rice DP, Institute for Health and Aging, University of California at San Francisco, CA.
- **The cost of underage drinking is currently \$58 billion. This represents ¼ of the Medicare budget for the nation.**  
Source: David T. Levy, PhD., Ted R. Miller, PhD., Rebecca Spicer and Kenya Cox, "Underage Drinking: Immediate Consequences and their Costs," Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation working paper, July 1999. Cost figures are based on problem incidents in 1996, (except where otherwise noted) converted to 1998 dollars to reflect more current costs.

# **ACTION STEPS FOR REDUCING ALCOHOL-RELATED PROBLEMS**

## **Colleges and Universities**

- Eliminating “high-risk” drink promotions in campus newspapers, “beat the clock” and “bladder buster” specials, extended happy hours, and discounted drink prices.
- Take steps to support the low-risk, legal use of alcohol-related student offenses.
- Establishing alcohol-free dorms.
- Require parental notification on all alcohol-related student offenses.
- Require mandatory alcohol assessment for students involved in alcohol-related violations.
- Provide events and venues that provide students with the opportunity to socialize in an alcohol-free environment.
- Limit the amount and type of pro-drinking messages that students see in association with campus events.
- Ensure the ability to track beer kegs sold through alcohol licensees.
- Eliminate alcohol beverage industry sponsorship on college campuses.
- Increase the retail price of alcohol through alcohol excise tax.
- Mandate responsible alcohol sale and service training for managers, sellers, and servers.
- Change the way alcohol is promoted, purchased, and served at fraternity and sorority parties.

## **Schools**

- Enforce alcohol sales laws in your community.<sup>1</sup>
- Train merchants regarding responsibilities associated with alcohol sales.<sup>2</sup>
- Implement appropriate sanctions to merchants that sell to minors.

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<sup>1</sup> Wolfson, M., Toomey, T.L., Wagenaar, A.C. McGovern, P.G. & Perry, C.L., (1996). Characteristics, policies and practices of alcohol outlets and sales to underage persons. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 57(6), 670-674.

<sup>2</sup> Altman, D.G., Rasenick-Douss, L., Foster, V., & Tye, J.B. (1991). Sustained effects of an educational program to reduce sales of cigarettes to minors. *American Journal of Public Health*, 81(7), 891-893.

- Implement appropriate sanctions to adults that provide alcohol to minors.
- Consistently enforce laws regarding minors in possession of alcohol.<sup>1</sup>
- Increase the price of alcohol through excise taxes.<sup>2</sup>
- Placing limits on outlet location and density: Higher density: Higher density contributes to increased alcohol-related problems. Lower density reduces alcohol-related problems.<sup>3</sup>
- Place limits on outlet location and density: Higher density contributes to increased alcohol-related problems. Lower density reduces alcohol-related problems.<sup>4</sup>
- Consistently enforce school policies regarding alcohol use on school property or at school sponsored events (These policies are especially important in high schools, but are even more important in colleges and universities.)<sup>5</sup>
- Establish and enforce “zero Tolerance” laws for drivers under 21. All states now have these laws.<sup>6</sup>

### **Small Business and Industry**

- Implement corporate drug policies that are consistent for illicit drugs and alcohol.
- Reduce and limit the amount of alcohol served at corporate functions.
- Train managers and supervisors on how to confront employee performance problems.
- Support random alcohol testing during the workday.
- Create visibility and corporate support for drug-free workplace policies.
- Provide Employee Assistance Programs in the workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> Preusser, D.F., Ferguson, S.A., Williams, A.F., & Farmer, C.M. (1995). *Underage access to alcohol: Sources of alcohol and use of false identification*. Arlington, VA: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

<sup>2</sup> Saffer, H., & Grossman, M. (1987). Beer taxes, the legal drinking age, and youth motor vehicle fatalities. *Journal of Legal Studies*, 16, 351-374.  
Manning, W.G., Blumberg, L., & Moulton, L.H. (1995). The demand for alcohol: The differential response to price. *Journal of Health Economics*, 14, 123-148.

<sup>3</sup> Scribner, R.A., MacKinnon, D.P., & Dwyer, J.H. (1994). Alcohol outlet density and motor vehicle crashes in Los Angeles county cities. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 55 (4), 447-453. Alaniz, M.L., Parker, R.N., Gallegos, A., & Cartmill, R.S. (n.d.). *Final progress report: Alcohol outlet density and Mexican American youth violence*. Unpublished manuscript.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, D.I. (1998). Effect on traffic accidents of Sunday alcohol sales in Brisbane, Australia. *International Journal of the Addictions*, 23(10), 1091-1099. Olsson, O., & Wikstrom, P.H. (1982). Effects of the experimental Saturday closing of liquor retail stores in Sweden. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 11(3), 325-353.

<sup>5</sup> Moskowitz, J.M., & Jones, R. (1988). Alcohol and drug problems in the schools: Results of a national survey of school administrators. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 49(4), 299-305.

<sup>6</sup> Bolmberg, R.D. (1993). Lower BAC limits for youth: Evaluation of the Maryland .02 law. In *Alcohol and other drugs: Their role in transportation* Transportation Research Circular No. 413, pp.25-27). Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board. Hingson, R., Heeren.

- Increase ease of access to Employee Assistance Programs in the workplace.
- Include insurance for employees that covers alcohol screening and treatment services.

### **Drinking and Driving**

- Enforce tougher penalties for alcohol test refusals.
- Support laws that prohibit open containers of alcohol in vehicles.
- Implement .08 percent blood alcohol content (BAC) laws in every state.
- Increase the utilization of sobriety checkpoints. Based on a review of 16 studies conducted around the world utilizing checkpoints, crash reduction from 18 – 24 percent has been found.<sup>1</sup>
- Support enforcement of primary seat belt laws.
- Create tough, comprehensive penalties for higher-risk drivers, (repeat DWI, high BAC, and driving while suspended), including vehicle sanctions and alcohol assessment and treatment.
- Support minimum drinking age laws free of loopholes.
- Support administrative license revocation (confiscating driver's licenses of drunk drivers).

### **Sports Stadiums, Community Events, And Festivals**

- Locate hospitality/beer tents away from family-oriented activities.
- Limit serving cup size to 10 or 12 ounces.
- Train all servers who are over 21.
- Set a limit of one drink per person, per purchase.
- Limit the hours of alcohol sales.
- Support firm policy on how to handle intoxicated individuals.
- Make sure that servers do not drink.
- Require a photo ID from anyone who appears under 30.
- Publicize your alcohol policies frequently – before and during you sports/community event.

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<sup>1</sup> *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, November 2001.

## **Parents and Other Adults**

- Love as a parent, not as a friend.
- Set rules – voice them, follow them.
- Never buy alcohol for kids because you think that it's safer.
- If you think your child is drinking, they probably are – address it now.
- Refuse to provide or ignore the use of alcohol by people under 21 in your home or on your property.