

## **Enforcement:**

### *Key to Prevention*

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## **MYTH:**

**"It's only alcohol."**

## **REALITY CHECK:**

Alcohol kills more youth than all other illegal drugs combined.

## **MYTH:**

**"It's okay as long as they don't drive."**

## **REALITY CHECK:**

Only one-third of underage drinking deaths involve auto crashes.

## **The rest:**

- Alcohol poisoning
- Homicides
- Suicides
- Unintentional injuries, e.g.:
  - burns
  - drowning
  - falls

### Health and Safety Risks:

- Damaged brain development
- Increased chances of addiction
- Depression
- Academic problems
- Sexual assault
- STD/STI's
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Violence
- Crime

*The Forbidden Fruit Myth:*



“Cracking down on underage drinking will only make kids want to drink more.”

### REALITY CHECK:

Even though we think of kids as rebellious, the great majority respond best to clear rules—both from their parents and society at large.

**From our Maine data...**

### COMMUNITY NORMS

Youth who believe adults in their community think it's OK for kids to drink are **2 times** more likely to drink than youth who believe adults think underage drinking is wrong.

(60% vs. 27%)

Source: 2006 Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey, grades 6-12

### PARENTS

Youth are **almost 5 times** more likely to drink if they believe they would NOT get caught by their parents.

Source: 2006 Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey, grades 6-12

## ALCOHOL ACCESS

Youth who think it's easy to get are **4 times** more likely to drink than youth who think it's hard to get.

(45% vs. 12%)

Source: 2006 Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey, grades 6-12

## ENFORCEMENT

Youth who think underage drinkers will NOT be caught by police are **4 times** more likely to drink.

(36% vs. 8%)

Source: 2006 Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey, grades 6-12

## Underage Drinking Deterrence Research

- Certainty ✓
- Celerity ✗
- Severity ✗

Dent, C.W., Grube, J.W., Biglan, A. (2005). Community level alcohol availability and enforcement of possession laws as predictors of youth drinking. *Preventive Medicine*. 40: 355-362.

Grovesnor, D., Toomey, T.L., Wagenaar, A.C. (1999). Deterrence and the Adolescent Drinking Driver. *Journal of Safety Research*. 30(3) 187-191.

Wagenaar, A.C. and Wolfson, M. (1994). Enforcement of the legal minimum drinking age in the United States. *Journal of Public Health Policy*. 15(1)37-53.

## For youth in the community, enforcement is *prevention*.

- Increases youth certainty of being caught by police (**certainty = deterrence**)
- Reduces underage access to alcohol.
- Clearly communicates community standards for acceptable behavior.
- Engages parents as critical partners and empowers them to address the problem (break through denial)

From slide by Becca Mattuovich, Maine Office Of Substance Abuse, Nov. 2004 Presentation: Model Underage Drinking Enforcement Policy Summit

## For the youth who are caught, enforcement is *intervention*.

- Sends a message of community expectations and concern for youth.
- Alerts parents to what is really going on, so that they can intervene.
- Provides an opportunity for youth who are abusing alcohol to receive assessment and intervention
- Offers a chance for youth who need it to receive treatment.

## Enforcement is a powerful prevention tool when it:

- Clearly communicates community standards for acceptable behavior.
- Engages parents as critical partners and empowers them to address the problem (break through denial)
- Reduces underage access to alcohol.
- Increases youth certainty of being caught by police (**certainty = deterrence**)

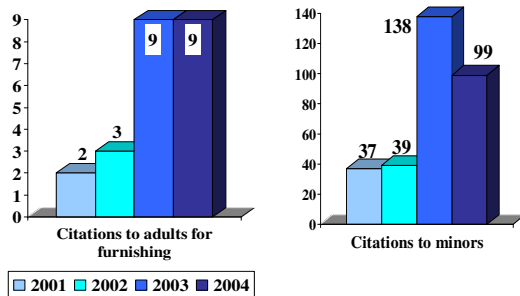
## Key components:

1. Policy
2. Training
3. Collaboration
4. Communication

## Case Study #1: Piscataquis County, Maine

- 2-year OSA grant, 2002-2004 to the Sheriff's Office
- Less than \$25,000 per year
- Key components included a written policy, targeted enforcement details, a callout team, and increased communication with parents.

## Results from increased enforcement



## RESULTS: 2002-2004 MYDAUS risk & protective factors

### ↑ in teen perception of...

- likelihood of being caught by police
- likelihood of being caught by parents
- how hard it is to get alcohol
- how wrong adults in the community think it is for teens to drink

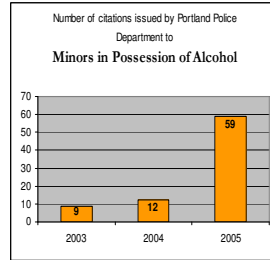
## RESULTS: 2002-2004 MYDAUS Substance Abuse Rates

- ↓ 30-day alcohol use
- ↓ 2-week binge drinking
- ↓ 30-day marijuana use

## Case Study #2: Portland, Maine

- CMCA started 2003
- Partnership with PD started 2004
- No additional resources (until 2006)
- Strong focus on community collaboration and communications

## Portland Results



## RESULTS: 2004-2006 MYDAUS risk & protective factors

↑ in teen perception of...

- likelihood of being caught by police
- likelihood of being caught by parents
- how hard it is to get alcohol (high school)

## RESULTS: 2004-2006 MYDAUS Substance Abuse Rates

↓ 30-day alcohol use

↓ 2-week binge drinking

↓ all other substances

Conclusion:

**Enforcement  
works!**

## Enforcement is listed as key recommendation by:

- National Academy of Sciences/Institute of Medicine 2003 report to Congress
- U.S. Surgeon General, 2007 National Call to Action
- Maine Office of Substance Abuse Strategic Plan

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