

Recommended Reading



A policy document for community coalitions and local government officials on the role pricing, taxation, and density plays in alcohol use.

Addressing Alcohol-Related Harms: A Population Level Response

Missouri Partners in Prevention is proud to be Missouri's higher education substance abuse prevention and mental health consortium. In order to see measurable change in the health, safety, and well-being on campus, campus prevention practitioners must employ evidence-based strategies and models. This series provides a brief synopsis of the publications, articles, and resource documents available to campuses to assist in their substance abuse prevention and mental health intervention efforts. These documents provide a great deal of technical assistance and support. Browse our recommended reading synopsis to learn more about these publications.

Addressing Alcohol-Related Harms: A Population Level Response is a policy statement published in 2015 from the American Public Health Association on environmental level strategies to reduce excessive alcohol consumption. This document provides a comprehensive review of the evidence of the burdens of alcohol use as well as the most effective population level interventions for preventing excessive alcohol use.

A few key points made in the problem identification section on the burdens of alcohol use include:

- Binge-drinking is the nation's most deadly, costly, and common form of excessive drinking
- Alcohol has adverse health outcomes-leading risk factor for premature death, harms including cancer, liver disease, etc., impact on mental health concerns and suicide

- Alcohol causes increased economic burdens - excessive drinking costs the U.S. \$249 billion per year
- Missouri ranks as one of the states with the highest number of drinks consumed per binge-drinker
- Harms among college students such as being hit/pushed, damaged property, experienced unwanted sexual advances or rape, and being insulted or humiliated are more common than among other age groups

In the review of most effective interventions, it is noted that a comprehensive response includes interventions at each level of the socioecological model. The environmental, or population level, responses are divided into 3 categories: (1) pricing and taxes, (2) retail access, and (3) drinking context and the strategies examined in each are below.

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Pricing and Taxes

- Increase alcohol tax
- Limit price promotions and happy hours

Retail Access

- Decrease outlet density
- Limit days and hours of alcohol sale
- Enact 'control state' measures (government takes ownership in wholesale or retail process)
- Enact dram shop liability laws (alcohol license holders can be held legally responsible for selling/serving to underage or intoxicated patrons)

Drinking Context

- Maintain and enforce minimum legal drinking age of 21
- Conduct alcohol compliance checks at licensed alcohol outlets
- Limit alcohol advertising, especially to youth
- Mandate responsible beverage service training
- Lower the BAC per se legal limit to .05%

The document offers action steps for each of these strategies at both the federal and state/local level on pages 7 and 8 and other relevant APHA policy statements are listed on pages 1-2.

Read 'Addressing Alcohol-Related Harms: A Population Level Response' [here!](https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2020/01/14/addressing-alcohol-related-harms-a-population-level-response)

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Citations

1. Addressing Alcohol-Related Harms: A Population Level Response (2015). American Public Health Association.

Written by Margo Leitschuh, Communications Coordinator. Published April 2020.

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