

Enforcing Age-21 Drinking Age (e.g. compliance checks)

Evidence of effectiveness

According to the NCBI (National Center for Biotechnology Information), compliance checks conducted by law enforcement agents can significantly reduce the likelihood of illegal alcohol sales to underage individuals, but these checks need to be conducted using optimal methods to maintain effectiveness. (NCBI, 2014).***

Compliance checks that occurred annually and on a more frequent basis led to a decrease in the availability of alcohol to those under age 21 from off-sale businesses, and a decrease in underage DWI arrests (Alcohol Epidemiology Program, 2000).*

Considerations*

- Law enforcement/community buy in and compliance
- Piloting programs to see what works in your specific community
- Creation of partnerships is critical for success

Potential enforcement strategies*

- **Educational only:** issue warnings². This requires educating local businesses about penalties for selling to underage drinkers and how it negatively affects the community.
- **Educational/administrative:** no criminal charges³. This requires educating local businesses about penalties for selling to underage drinkers and how it negatively affects the community as well as administrative penalties such as fines, warnings, liquor license suspension, etc.
- **Administrative/criminal:** this includes administrative penalties such as fines, warnings, liquor license suspension, etc. as well as bringing in the legal state statutes and having businesses/sellers in violation face with criminal charges such as revoking of license, jail time, etc.

Expected beneficial outcomes*

- Reduced crime and alcohol-related problems such as traffic crashes, sexual assault, etc.
- Lower frequency of teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and school dropout rates
- Once organized, compliance check operations are easy, quick, and inexpensive.
- Compliance operations send a message to the community and alcohol providers (parents, business, over 21 friends, etc.) that providing alcohol to young people is not acceptable.

Other, similar towns with colleges & universities have compliance checks

Bloomington-Normal, IL**

- There are three enforcement bodies that conduct compliance checks on a regular basis: Normal Police Department, Bloomington Police Department, and McLean County Sheriff's Department.
- Alcohol licensees are made aware of the potential penalties for selling to underage youth and informed that compliance checks will occur at various times throughout the year without notice.
- Coalitions, community organizations, and campuses work together to organize proposals, ordinances, and legislation to help keep the community and businesses safe and accountable.

Citations for Proposal

Alcohol Epidemiology Program (2000). Compliance check manual. Accessed on July 18th, 2016 from [www.prev.org/Safer-Toolkit/Toolkit attachments/Compliance checks/10 Compliance Check Manual.pdf](http://www.prev.org/Safer-Toolkit/Toolkit%20attachments/Compliance%20checks/10%20Compliance%20Check%20Manual.pdf)

**Bloomington-Normal Campus Community Committee (2011). Underage youth assisting with alcohol law compliance. Retrieved July 18, 2016, from bnccc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/BNCCC_jan11.pdf

***National Center for Biotechnology Information. "Current use of underage alcohol compliance checks by enforcement agencies in the United States. U.S. National Library of Medicine, n.d. Web. 18 July 2016.

NIAAA Matrix. <http://www.collegedrinkingsprevention.gov/CollegeAIM/EnvironmentalStrategies/default.aspx>

Potential Resources

http://bnccc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/BNCCC_jan11.pdf
<http://www.prev.org/Safer-Toolkit/Toolkit%20attachments/Compliance%20checks/10%20Compliance%20Check%20Manual.pdf>

For more information, visit pip.missouri.edu

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