



## PRC COMMUNITY OUTREACH

<http://resources.prev.org/>

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### Alcopop Pricing

Last May Alcohol Justice released a report on alcopop pricing at a well known convenient store. The report shows that 7-Eleven cut prices on supersized alcopops making them cheaper than non-alcohol energy drinks and beer. All 7-Eleven stores in Marin County were surveyed by Alcohol Justice. Alcopops are known to be attractive to youth for a number of reasons such as taste and price. They are often the first alcoholic drink for many youth, and the alcohol industry utilizes the attractiveness of the alcopops to the youth market. Below are some of the key findings from the report:

“Supersized alcopops were priced cheaper per fluid ounce than non-alcoholic energy drinks. For example, supersized Mike’s Harder Lemonade was cheaper per fluid ounce than Rock Star or Monster, and far cheaper than Red Bull.

On average, alcopops were the same price per standard alcohol drink as beer, but supersized alcopops were priced cheaper per standard drink than beer. At 16 or 24 ounces, Sparks, Mike’s, Blast, Joose, Four Loko and Jeremiah Weed provided more ethyl alcohol for the price than beer of the same size – while the alcopops also packed 2.5 to 5 standard drinks per single-serving, chilled container. Some supersized alcopops were cheaper per standard drink than any malt liquor. Four Loko (23.5-oz can, 12% alcohol), at 2 cans for \$5, was \$0.53 per standard drink — cheaper by 3 cents/drink than 40-oz Steel Reserve.”

One step that Marin County has taken to stop youth from drinking alcopops is encouraging all 217 off-sale liquor license holders to voluntarily stop selling the product. Merchants are already supporting the proposal to the Alcopop-Free Zone Marin campaign and encouraging others to join. A recent update at the [Alcohol Justice](http://alcoholjustice.org/) website states the following:

### San Rafael City Council Passes Alcopop-Free Zone™ Resolution



Earlier this month, San Rafael City Councilmembers took a step toward protecting youth from alcopops when they unanimously passed the country’s first city resolution supporting the creation of an Alcopop-Free Zone™. The resolution encourages alcohol retailers to voluntarily stop selling the dangerous, youth-oriented, flavored malt beverages known as alcopops. Following a similar resolution of support from the Marin County Board of Supervisors, various San Rafael, Stinson Beach, and Bolinas retailers pulled most alcopop products from their stores. Alcohol Justice and the Youth for Justice group will continue to fight for the elimination of alcopops from Marin County retailers, and alcohol retailers throughout the country.

To view the Alcohol Justice site and to view all reports: <http://alcoholjustice.org/>



### **From the PIRE website:**

#### **Friends Don't Let Problem Drinkers Drink**

The attitude of friends, and family, makes a difference for people trying to sustain recovery from addiction to alcohol. That is the message of recent research, which demonstrates that people who make positive changes in their social relationships can improve their chances of success following treatment.

Using innovative statistical techniques to overcome some of the methodological flaws of previous research, this study, published in the May edition of the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, shows that social networks can have a powerful and lasting effect on how well people are able to cope following treatment for alcohol abuse. These effects can last for at least three years after treatment.

In the study, participants who had friends or family who forthrightly advocated that they abstain from drinking alcohol tended to be more successful. Conversely, those who had someone who encouraged them to drink (a pro-drinker) usually had a more difficult time quitting alcohol. "Most of us have an image of a 'pro-drinker' as someone who drinks heavily. Often, however, pro-drinkers are people who may be abstainers or light drinkers, but who don't believe their friend who is struggling with an alcohol problem has a drinking problem that requires treatment," said [Dr. Robert Stout](#) of the [Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation \(PIRE\)](#). In the study, Stout and his colleagues argue that intervening with pro-drinkers to make them advocates for abstinence may present an important opportunity in helping people to recover from addictions.

While it can be difficult to make changes in personal relationships, especially when people are stressed by trying to recover from an addiction, modifications may be necessary to sustain their efforts. According to Stout, "It can be intimidating to reach out to new people, or to explain to one's current friends and family that they need their support during recovery. Breaking off old relationships can also be hard, but equally important." Although this study and previous research shows that social influences are very important for recovery, researchers still want to learn more about ways that family, friends, and treatment providers can help those with alcohol problems make the changes needed for their recovery.

The paper, entitled "Association Between Social Influences and Drinking Outcomes Across Three Years," available at [www.jsad.com/jsad/link/73/489](http://www.jsad.com/jsad/link/73/489), supports the development of treatments that promote positive social changes and the need for additional research on the determinants of social network changes.

The first author of the paper is Dr. Robert Stout, Senior Scientist at Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. Co-authors include Drs. John Kelly of Massachusetts General Hospital, Molly Magill of Brown University, and Maria Pagano of Case Western Reserve University. The research was supported by a grant from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

<http://www.pire.org/more.asp?cms=941>

Related link: Drunk Driving Prevention (1983 - Present)

[http://www.aef.com/exhibits/social\\_responsibility/ad\\_council/2399/pf\\_printable](http://www.aef.com/exhibits/social_responsibility/ad_council/2399/pf_printable)

## PRC Spotlight!

A new presentation by Kathryn Stewart, Environmental Prevention and Underage Drinking is now available at our resources site. It was presented at the MADD National Convention in September, 2012

- overview of effects and evidence of age 21 laws
- overview of environmental approaches to youth access to alcohol
- Examples of environmental approaches to underage drinking, including highlights from the Safer Universities program, The Border Project: Preventing alcohol-related problems at the US/Mexico Border, and the Oregon comprehensive community approaches program



*Reward and Reminder is an intervention designed to address commercial sources of alcohol for youth.*

To download the presentation: <http://resources.prev.org/recentpresentations.htm>

**An alert from Alcohol Justice** asks for support in telling California Governor Brown to **Veto SB 778** which would allow the promotion of alcohol in contests and sweepstakes. They point out that California's alcohol industry already pays too little to "mitigate the harm its products cause" and that the last excise tax increase in 1991 was only increased by one penny. California is one of the few states that does not allow alcohol contests and sweepstakes yet leads the nation in alcohol sales and alcohol related harm. They urge calling on Governor Brown to veto the bill and calling attention to the existing ban on using alcohol for contests to prevent increases in problem drinking behavior and public health and safety.

<http://alcoholreports.blogspot.com/2012/08/alcohol-justice-blasts-california.html>

## From the Healthy Alcohol Marketplace...

is a report on public support for alcohol regulation. One finding was that people support decisions at a more local level and by people who know the community. 74% believe that alcohol distribution should be handled by local businesses and 81% believe that states should determine laws and regulations of alcohol sales. And 69% believed that any deregulation in alcohol sales would result in increased underage drinking, increased drunk driving accidents, and overconsumption of alcohol. They also found that 78% support the 21 and over drinking age.

From: <http://healthyalcoholmarket.com/>

## San Fernando, CA

A town hall meeting in May focused on "Parent's Awareness of Underage/Binge Drinking" to education the community on the risks of underage drinking and how the community can help. Community members invited included parents, youth, law enforcement officials, and teachers .

Local community surveys on underage drinking included the following results:

- Alcohol was most available at parties (71%)
- 1 in 20 8<sup>th</sup> graders reported intoxication at least once during the past month
- 1 in 7 10<sup>th</sup> graders and 2 in 7 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported intoxication at least one time a month

<http://alcoholjustice.org/press-room/press-releases/755-parents-awareness-of-underagebinge-drinking.html>

## Generation Drinkers

A recent study looked at age groups and heavy drinking. Data from cross-sectional surveys between 1979 and 2010 looked at the number of alcohol drinks and whether someone reported drinking 5 or more days during the week. Men born in the United States between 1976 and 1985 and women born in the United States between 1981 and 1985 drink the heaviest.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2012.04055.x/abstract>

## To Drink Little or Not to Drink

A recent study from the Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, Middlesex University (UK) focused on the lives and influences of young people who report little to no drinking. According to the National Health Service (NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care, 2012), 20% of people aged 16-24 do not drink and an additional 11% hardly drink at all. As the study points out researchers endeavor to understand why people do something rather than to understand why they do not (such as drinking alcohol or not).

The researchers interviewed 52 young people who either drank little alcohol (30) or no alcohol at all (22). Reasons for not drinking or drinking little alcohol included family influences on appropriate drinking behavior, seeing peers drink to excess, and alcohol problems among friends, family, and people in the community. Also reported were personal experiences with drinking or a turning point in life that changed their previous drinking behaviors such as a negative experience with drinking alcohol. Influences on the decisions to drink little or no alcohol were often reinforced with existing attitudes and beliefs.

Additional findings included that people who drank little or not at all preferred environments where alcohol was rare. While some are comfortable with their non-drinking status, others avoid being identified as non-drinkers. The report also voiced the need for legitimizing the choice *not to drink*.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/young-people-drinking-choices-full.pdf>

## Distance to Bars and Risky Drinking

A study in Finland conducted longitudinal data from 2000 to 2009 looking at the distance from a person's home to the nearest bar and risky alcohol behaviors. Over 54,000 people were included in the longitudinal data and over 78,000 were included in the cross-sectional data. They found that those residing within one kilometer of the nearest bar were more likely to engage in heavier drinking, and moving closer or farther to the nearest bar was associated with changes in risky alcohol behavior.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2012.04053.x/abstract>

At our Resources site is a section on [Alcohol Outlet Control Resources](#). The articles include research on outlet density and neighborhood violence, youth and young adults, injuries among youth and young adults, and change in bar closing time. One article, [Preventing Alcohol Trauma: A Community Trial](#), discusses how changes in environment such as increases in enforcement of drinking and driving laws, stricter alcohol service policies, and reduced number of alcohol outlets can reduce alcohol related problems in a community. The article also lists the strategies implemented by the Community Trials Project.

## Interlocks Abroad

Last issue we presented an article on the interlock law and emerging data. Judges in New Zealand will now have the option to sentence interlocks installed in vehicles belonging to repeat drinking and driving offenders as well as those caught driving with twice the legal blood alcohol limit. As one spokesperson mentioned, many offenders still drive if their license is taken away. It therefore seems likely that the interlock option will be more effective keeping drunk drivers off the road. It was also noted that while New Zealand has a reported low number of people who drink and drive, most of those who are pulled over are repeat offenders. In fact, 20% of those charged with drinking and driving in 2010-2011 had committed their third or more offence. Some hope that the interlocks become mandatory for repeat offenders and be installed immediately after the offence.

<http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/alcohol-interlocks-step-forward-drink-driving-battle/5/131854>

## Focus on American Indian Youth

A recent study focused on American Indian adolescent binge drinking and drug use, and how use related to self-injury. A total of 58 adolescents participated in focus groups. The participants discussed how substance use typically took place with friends or family, and at a house or around the community. There was no set time of day for use, and school was an often place for substance use to occur. Reasons for drinking alcohol or taking drugs included to avoid problems or to reduce negative feelings and to be cool or to feel part of the group. Community-based strategies and other prevention approaches were discussed such as educating the consequences of drinking alcohol or using drugs, alternative recreation, and encouraging healthy relationships.

<http://informahealthcare.com/doi/>



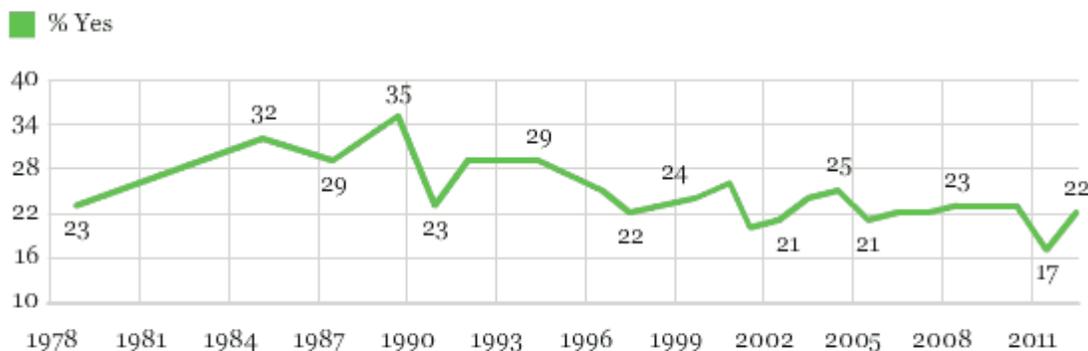
## Trend Watching

The recent annual Consumption Habits poll from Gallup found that drinking trends remained steady, with 66% of people reporting they consume four alcohol drinks per week.

They also found that 22% of people report drinking too much on occasion, which is a dramatic increase from last year. Below is a chart from the report for each year of the poll since 1978 showing the percent of people who believe they sometimes drink too much.

*Do you sometimes drink more alcoholic beverages than you think you should?*

Based on those who drink alcohol



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Among gender, men were more likely to report they sometimes drink too much (30%) compared to women (14%). Across age, men aged 18 to 49 drink the most and 36% reported sometimes drinking too much compared to older men (18%).

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/156770/majority-drink-alcohol-averaging-four-drinks-week.aspx>

## Age of Alcohol Initiation and Intoxication

It is clear that alcohol causes more damage in underage drinkers, which highlights the need for the 21 minimum drinking age law. Previous research has found evidence that those who start drinking at an earlier age are more likely to experience problems with alcohol use and health problems, as well as problems with brain development, risky sexual behavior, and school performance. A study that will be published later this year looked at the age for initiation of drinking and the age for initiation of heavier drinking among college undergraduates. They found among the bi-annual self-reports following over 1,000 freshmen in college through their senior year that initiation of alcohol at an earlier age (such as 15 compared to 16) was associated with problem drinking and negative consequences during their senior year. They also found that earlier initiation of heavier drinking was a predictor of problem drinking and other problems related to alcohol. Overall recommendations were to prevent early age of alcohol initiation and drinking to intoxication, and for those that still drink counseling and education should be available.

\*this study will appear in the November 2012 issue of *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research* Morean, M., Corbin, W., Fromme, K. [Age of First Use and Delay to First Intoxication in Relation to Trajectories of Heavy Drinking and Alcohol-Related Problems During Emerging Adulthood](#). (2012). *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*

<http://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-08-early-alcohol-intoxication-herald-college.html>

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