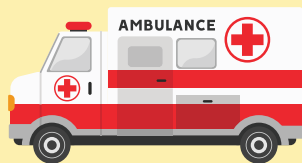




# Protect Youth from Harms Associated with **ALCOHOL USE**

## ALCOHOL IS A LEADING CAUSE OF PREVENTABLE DEATH IN THE US

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that **more than 1,744 people die each year in Massachusetts because of alcohol use.**<sup>1</sup> Harms result from both long-term use, such as chronic heavy drinking, and short-term misuse, such as binge drinking.
- Alcohol sales have gone up during the pandemic. National alcohol sales increased 54% for the week ending March 21, 2020, compared with 1 year before; online sales increased 262% from 2019.<sup>2</sup>
- Alcohol is #1 drug used by youth.
- Underage alcohol use costs MA \$1.3 billion a year.<sup>3</sup>
- Underage youth are getting alcohol from home delivery services and curb-side pickup. According to the National Liquor Law Enforcement Agency, there was an 80% violation rate of alcohol sold to underage youth through these new access points.<sup>4</sup>



### ALCOHOL USE IMPACTS THE HEALTH OF THOSE WHO DRINK

including alcoholic liver disease, cancers, hypertension, poisonings (interactions with painkillers), unintentional injuries, and suicide.



### ALCOHOL USE IMPACTS OTHERS

including motor vehicle crashes, domestic partner violence, and subsequent social, emotional, and financial harms to families of people who misuse alcohol.



### ALCOHOL USE IMPACTS COMMUNITIES

including lost workplace productivity, health care expenditures, and costs to the criminal justice system.

## PREVENTION SCIENCE SUPPORTS ALCOHOL POLICY SAFEGAURDS

- Research consistently demonstrates that increasing the number of physical locations where alcoholic beverages are available for purchase (per area or per population) leads to increases in excessive alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harms.<sup>5</sup> Youth are impacted by increased access to alcohol.
- Limiting the number and type of acceptable IDs reduces underage alcohol sales.<sup>6</sup>
- Keep the integrity of the 3-tier system. It preserves tax revenues for the state. Also, allowing exemptions for small producers gives the same rights to out of state industry.

## THE PUBLIC AND THE SCIENCE SAY “MAINTAIN POLICIES THAT WORK”

- The public wants state governments to keep alcohol safeguards in place. In a recent poll, 83% of respondents supported state regulation of alcohol and 82% agree that alcohol *is different from other products*, and therefore should be regulated differently.<sup>7</sup>
- More alcohol policy safeguards (stricter laws) in a state result in less adult and youth binge drinking, driving under the influence, alcoholic cirrhosis mortality, alcohol-related suicide and homicide, and alcohol involvement in fatal vehicle crashes.<sup>8</sup>

## TALK TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENTION SPECIALISTS

- **Involve Public Health and Prevention in Analysis of Policies.** Alcohol use is a public health issue, and evidence-based policies are needed to protect our youth, families, and communities. Those knowledgeable in public health and prevention need to be part of every discussion.

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2. Pollard MS, Tucker JS, Green HD. Changes in Adult Alcohol Use and Consequences During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the US. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2020;3(9):e2022942. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2020.22942
3. <https://www.needhamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4051/ALCOHOL---Underage-Drinking-Costs-MA-2011?bidId=#:~:text=Underage%20drinking%20cost%20the%20citizens,use%20of%20alcohol%20by%20youth.&text=%241.33>
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6. Guide to Community Preventive Services. Alcohol -Excessive Consumption: Regulation of Alcohol Outlet Density. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/alcohol-excessive-consumption-dram-shop-liability> Page last updated: September 30, 2020. Page accessed: April 16, 2021
7. The Center for Alcohol Policy. <https://www.centerforalcoholpolicy.org/2019/05/06/national-poll-shows-support-for-state-regulation-of-alcohol-bridges-partisan-gap/> Page accessed: April 16, 2021
8. Naimi TS, Blanchette J, Nelson TF, et al. A new scale of the U.S. alcohol policy environment and its relationship to binge drinking. *Am J Prev Med*. 2014;46(1):10-16. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2013.07.015