

ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT

Other names/examples: Developing an "alcohol unit" for law enforcement, Alcohol Enforcement/Education Team (AET)

Description of strategy

Enhanced enforcement programs initiate or increase the frequency of enforcement of alcohol related regulations. One common type of enhanced enforcement is an increase in retailer compliance checks for laws against the sale of alcohol to minors in a community. Retailer compliance checks, or "sting operations," are conducted by or coordinated with local law enforcement or alcohol beverage control agencies, and violators receive legal or administrative sanctions. In addition, enhanced enforcement programs can be conducted as part of multi-component, community-based efforts. Enhanced enforcement programs may include strategies to increase perceived risk of detection by publicizing the increased enforcement activities and cautioning proprietors against selling alcohol to minors. For example, a media campaign may publicize the presence of a mobile alcohol command unit to deter drunk driving (Guide to Community Preventive Services, 2006).

Discussion of effectiveness

Alcohol
Evidence supports enhanced enforcement as an effective strategy for limiting underage alcohol purchases but further research is needed to determine the effect on underage drinking (Guide to Community Preventive Services, 2006). A 2012 study found that a multi-component intervention that included enhanced enforcement did not reduce adolescents' odds to initiate weekly drinking but did reduce risk to initiate drunkenness among adolescents who were already weekly drinkers (Schelleman-Offermans, Knibbe, Kuntsche, & Casswell, 2012). Evidence suggests enhanced enforcement is effective as part of a multi-component college campus strategy to reduce underage drinking (Saltz, Welker, Paschall, Feeney, & Fabiano, 2009; Weitzman, Nelson, Hang, & Wechsler, 2004).

Intervening Variables

Retail Pricing	
Retail availability	
Social availability	
Law Enforcement	
Community norms	
Promotion & media	

References for description of strategy

Guide to Community Preventive Services. (2006). Preventing excessive alcohol consumption: Enhanced enforcement of laws prohibiting sales to minors. Retrieved July 31, 2012, from: www.thecommunityguide.org/alcohol/lawsprohibitingsales.html

Evidence base

Guide to Community Preventive Services. (2006). Preventing excessive alcohol consumption: Enhanced enforcement of laws prohibiting sales to minors. Available at: www.thecommunityguide.org/alcohol/lawsprohibitingsales.html

Saltz, R. F., Welker, L. R., Paschall, M. J., Feeney, M. A., & Fabiano, P. M. (2009). Evaluating a comprehensive campus-community prevention intervention to reduce alcohol-related problems in a college population. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, (Suppl. 16), 21–27.

Schelleman-Offermans, K., Knibbe, R. A., Kuntsche, E., & Casswell, S. (2012). Effects of a natural community intervention intensifying alcohol law enforcement combined with a restrictive alcohol policy on adolescent alcohol use. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.03.006

Weitzman, E. R., Nelson, T. F., Hang, L., & Wechsler, H. (2004). Reducing drinking and related harms in college: Evaluation of the 'A Matter of Degree' program. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 27(3), 187-196.

Further reading

Enhanced Enforcement of Laws to Prevent Alcohol Sales to Underage Persons: New Hampshire, 1999-2004. (2004, June 4). MMWR: Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 53(21), 452-454. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5321a2.htm>

National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives. (2001). Community how to guides on underage drinking prevention: Guide 5, Enforcement. Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Available at: http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/alcohol/community%20guides%20html/Book5_Enforcement.html#Shoulder%20tap

Montgomery, J. M., Foley, K. L., & Wolfson, M. (2006). Enforcing the minimum drinking age: State, local and agency characteristics associated with compliance checks and Cops in Shops programs. *Addiction*, 101(2), 223–231. doi:10.1111/j.1360-0443.2006.01328.x