

Reducing Underage Alcohol Consumption

Recognizing that considerable new research has emerged regarding health consequences of alcohol consumption by youth as well as changing trends in the marketing of alcohol to youth under the legal age of 21 since the adoption of APHA Policy 9409 (Limiting Youth Access to Alcohol),¹ and

Recognizing that alcohol still continues to play an important role in unintentional injuries, homicides and suicides which are the leading causes of death among youth,^{2,3} and that

Children who consume alcohol before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence at some point in their lives versus children who abstain from alcohol until they are 21, and over 40% of those who began drinking before age 14 become alcohol dependent⁴ and that

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey found that, in 2003, 44.9% of high school students reported using alcohol in the preceding month, 30.2% of high school students reported riding with a driver who had been drinking, and 28.3% of high school students had five or more drinks on one or more occasions in the preceding month,⁵ and that the CDC found "point-of-purchase," or on-site, alcohol marketing in 94% of the nearly 4,000 convenience stores, grocery stores and gas stations it studied, having selected types of retail outlets that are frequented by underage youth,⁶ and recognizing that

Alcohol use is implicated in at least one-third of sexual assault and acquaintance or "date" rape cases among teens and college students,⁷ and

Nearly a quarter of the alcohol advertising on television was more likely to be seen by youth ages 12-20 than by adults of legal drinking

1 age,⁸ and that 1

2 Reports by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth revealed that 2

3 underage youth are heavily exposed to alcohol advertising on radio,⁹ 3

4 in magazines,¹⁰ and on the Internet,¹¹ and that 4

5 The current voluntary guidelines of the Beer Institute and the 5

6 Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S. allow alcohol advertising to 6

7 reach a great number of youth, and since the 2004 report by the Na- 7

8 tional Research Council and Institute of Medicine¹² gives 39 recommen- 8

9 dations for combating underage drinking, 9

10 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Public Health Associa- 10

11 tion urges the support and implementation of the following recommenda- 11

12 tions of the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine's re- 12

13 port entitled *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility* 13

14 by¹² 14

15 1) Urging the federal government to fund and actively support the 15

16 development of a national media effort to reduce underage drink- 16

17 ing (similar to successful anti-tobacco campaigns).^{13,14} 17

18 2) Advocating that Congress appropriate funding for U.S. Department 18

19 of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) to monitor underage expo- 19

20 sure to alcohol advertising. 20

21 3) Urging Congress to fund the USDHHS to enable them to conduct pe- 21

22 riodic reviews of movies, television, and music to ascertain the 22

23 influence they have on youth alcohol consumption. 23

24 4) Requesting the federal government to require states to achieve 24

25 designated rates of retailer compliance related to youth access 25

26 to alcohol similar to the Synar Amendment's requirements for to- 26

27 bacco sales to youth. 27

28 5) Urging USDHHS to fund only evidence-based education interventions. 28

- 1 6) Advocating that the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alco- 1
2 holism and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admin- 2
3 istration to continue to fund evaluations of college-based inter- 3
4 ventions. 4
- 5 7) Recommending that USDHHS expand the availability of effective 5
6 clinical services for diagnosing and treating underage youth who 6
7 have alcohol abuse problems. 7
- 8 8) Support the establishment of a federal interagency coordinating 8
9 committee on prevention of underage drinking, chaired by the Sec- 9
10 retary of USDHHS. 10
- 11 9) Support the establishment of a National Training and Research 11
12 Center on underage drinking within the USDHHS. 12
- 13 10) Requesting that the secretary of USDHHS issue an annual report to 13
14 Congress on underage drinking. 14
- 15 11) Urging the Monitoring the Future Survey and the National Survey 15
16 on Drug Use and Health to revise their surveys to elicit more 16
17 precise information on the quantity of alcohol consumed and to 17
18 ascertain brand preferences of youth. 18
- 19 12) Advocating that Congress raise excise taxes on alcoholic bever- 19
20 ages. 20
- 21 13) Requesting that USDHHS and the U.S. Department of Education fund 21
22 both development and evaluation of programs for *all* underage 22
23 populations. 23
- 24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the American Public Health Association 24
25 state affiliates and sections urge state and local government leaders 25
26 to support and implement any of the appropriate 39 recommendations for 26
27 their jurisdictions, of the National Research Council and Institute of 27
28 Medicine's report titled *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Re-* 28

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