

## April 2005 Resource Alert

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, and this year's theme is "Together, We Can Stop Underage Drinking." For more information about Alcohol Awareness Month activities, visit <http://www.ncadd.org/programs/awareness/aamk2005.html>.

Below you will find several new studies and resources to help you with your Alcohol Awareness Month activities.

How aware are you about the types, flavors, and potency of alcoholic beverages? This month's UDETC audio-teleconference, titled "What You Should Know about Alcohol Beverage Types," will explore alcoholic beverage consumption patterns and preferences among youth and will feature Didra Brown Taylor, Ph.D. from the UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute. For more information about this month's audio-teleconference discussion and to register for the event, visit [www.udetc.org/registration.asp](http://www.udetc.org/registration.asp).

Speaking of the National Leadership Conference, this year's conference theme, *Law Enforcement and Communities: Sustaining Progress, Blazing New Trails*, highlights successful collaborative efforts to reduce youth access to alcohol and underage drinking. The Center welcomes workshop submissions that feature efforts that have resulted in documented reductions in alcohol availability and underage drinking. Visit our website [www.udetc.org](http://www.udetc.org) to respond to our Call for Presentations and to learn more about the Conference.

The Alcohol Policy Information System (APIS) web site has added a new topic to its *Selected Policy Topics* section: "Criminal Liability for Hosting Underage Drinking Parties." The new section discusses legislation that holds individuals (social hosts) criminally responsible for underage drinking on property they own, lease, or otherwise control. Click on <http://alcoholpolicy.niaaa.nih.gov> to connect to this new section.

A joint study by researchers at the University of Florida and the University of Minnesota indicates that the greatest deterrent to sale of alcohol to minors is regular police enforcement of liquor laws within licensed establishments. Results of the 5-year national study show that consistent, regular enforcement is necessary to deter alcohol sales to minors. The results of the study appear in the March 2005 edition of *Addiction*. To view the abstract, click on <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/doi/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2005.00973.x/abs/>.

The Substance Abuse Policy Research Program (SAPRP) of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) has issued a report titled "Assessing State Readiness to Act on Alcohol Tax

Research Findings." The report includes public health findings on alcohol taxes as well as information on the size of State budget deficits, political strength of public health advocates and the alcohol industry, proportions of drinkers and nondrinkers in each State, existing alcohol-related policies, cultural and religious factors, and the burden of alcohol-related health and crime on State budgets in relation to alcohol tax revenue. The document is available at <http://www.saprp.org/>.

The harm caused by alcohol consumption among college students may exceed previous estimates of the problem. Researchers report that unintentional fatal injuries related to alcohol increased from about 1,500 in 1998 to more than 1,700 in 2001 among U.S. college students aged 18-24. Over the same, period national surveys indicate the number of students who drove under the influence of alcohol increased by 500,000, from 2.3 million to 2.8 million. The new findings appear in the April 2005 issue of the *Annual Review of Public Health*, now online at <http://arjournals.annualreviews.org/loi/publhealth>.

The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) has issued a new report titled *Underage Drinking in the United States: A Status Report, 2004*. The purpose of the report is to prompt action on underage drinking by putting a spotlight on whether the Nation is making progress in protecting our children by reducing underage drinking. It is based on epidemiological data and on research on underage drinking released in 2004. The full report and the news release can be found at <http://camy.org/>.

This month's Success Story is from Maine. In 2002, the Piscataquis County Sheriff's Office established a task force to examine the extent of underage drinking and to develop solutions. The task force developed and implemented a comprehensive and innovative approach to stimulate greater enforcement of underage drinking laws. The approach was guided by research demonstrating that changing perceptions of risk associated with underage drinking could result in changes in drinking behavior. Read this month's Success Story to learn more about the specific activities implemented by the task force and the results of local school survey data.

Visit [www.udetc.org/documents/ResourceAlert0405.pdf](http://www.udetc.org/documents/ResourceAlert0405.pdf) to print hard copies of this month's Resource Alert and Success Story



# National Electronic Seminars Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Program

The OJJDP Audio-TELECONFERENCE Series

**February 17, 2005 3:00 – 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time**

## **Reducing Underage Drinking Among Middle and High School Athletes**

Student athletes are often at higher risk of substance use than non-athletes. In response, States have committed resources to address and reduce alcohol and drug use by student athletes. Presenters will discuss how to implement successful programs, and how these programs affect student behaviors. The role of parents and other athletic program stakeholders will be highlighted.

**March 24, 2005 3:00 – 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time**

## **Addressing Underage Drinking Problems on College Campuses: Using Research to Guide Practice**

Underage and high risk drinking behavior on college campuses and in college communities can have a variety of negative effects on individuals and quality of life. The Prevention Research Center (PRC) in Berkeley, California has conducted a wide range of research relevant to the prevention of problem drinking behavior in college communities. This audio-teleconference will feature information from PRC on strategies for preventing underage and high risk drinking among college students as well as information from individuals in college communities who have worked to implement the prevention strategies discussed.

**April 21, 2005 3:00 – 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time**

## **What You Should Know About Alcohol Beverage Types**

Alcohol is the substance most abused by young Americans. Alcohol use also plays a significant role in all three of the leading causes of death for adolescents: unintentional injury, homicide, and suicide. While there is a plethora of studies on drug-specific use by youth, little information is available regarding specific alcoholic beverage consumption patterns or the extent to which youth are using readily available household items to get drunk. This audio-teleconference will share information on this important topic.

**May 26, 2005 3:00 – 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time**

## **Party Prevention and Controlled Party Dispersal: Enforcement and Community Volunteers Working Together**

This audio-teleconference will focus on underage drinking in party settings. It will provide step by step information about how to prevent parties as well as how to break-up such parties in a manner that is safe and that can lead to changes in community norms about underage drinking parties. The audio-teleconference will also share specific information about how community volunteers can be incorporated into this work so that operations proceed efficiently and without liability.

**June 23rd 2005 3:00 – 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time**

## **Campaign Matters: Using Media to Maximize Success**

This audio-call will focus on initiating or enhancing underage drinking prevention efforts by developing campaigns that lead to sustainable changes in the way a community views and responds to underage drinking. Presenters will provide an overview of how core components of a campaign fit together with examples of and solutions to common pitfalls. Participants will develop a solid understanding of the importance of developing campaign timelines and media advocacy plans.



**For audio-teleconference registration information, please visit [www.udetc.org](http://www.udetc.org)**

All programs provide opportunities for presentation, discussion and sharing information. Telephone dial-in instructions and accompanying materials will be mailed to registrants two weeks before the audio conference.

**To register for any of these free electronic seminars by phone, call toll-free 1-877-335-1287 extension 230**



# Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws Program

## AUDIO CONFERENCE

### TOPIC

#### What You Should Know About Alcohol Beverage Types

Alcohol is the substance most abused by young Americans. Alcohol use also plays a significant role in all three of the leading causes of death for adolescents: unintentional injury, homicide, and suicide. While there is a plethora of studies on drug-specific use by youth, little information is available regarding specific alcoholic beverage consumption patterns or the extent to which youth are using readily available household items to get drunk. This audio-teleconference will share information on this important topic.



### DATE

Thursday, April 21, 2005

### TIME

3:00 – 4:15 p.m. Eastern Time

### PRESENTER

**Dr. Didra Brown Taylor**  
UCLA-Integrated Substance Abuse Programs  
Neuropsychiatric Institute  
Los Angeles, California  
[Xdidrax@aol.com](mailto:Xdidrax@aol.com)

### WEB ENHANCED

*Internet users will be able to log on to our conference web page to view presentation slides and interact with other participants.*

### REGISTER

**Please register by using one of our automated options:**

- **To register on our website**, please visit [www.udetc.org](http://www.udetc.org) and complete the online registration form, or
- **To register by phone**, please call our toll-free number, 1-877-335-1287, extension 230, and follow the prompts.

**Telephone dial-in instructions and accompanying materials for the audio conference will be mailed one (1) week before the call.**



# Success Stories

Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Program

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

April 2005

[www.udetc.org](http://www.udetc.org)

## Innovative Approach in Piscataquis County Produces Results

In 2002, Maine's Office of Substance Abuse (OSA) allocated EUDL discretionary program funds to five county sheriff's offices. In each of the five counties, a task force was established to examine the problem more in-depth at the local level and to develop solutions. The Piscataquis County task force included all four municipal police chiefs in the county, the Warden Service and Rangers from nearby wilderness areas and state parks, juvenile and adult probation officers, the District Attorney's office, and school officials.

Based on task force findings, the County Sheriff's Office and the task force developed and implemented a comprehensive and innovative approach to stimulate greater enforcement of underage drinking laws. The approach was guided by research demonstrating that changing perceptions of risks associated with underage drinking could result in changes in drinking behavior. The strategy consisted of four main components:

- **Implementation of a written department policy on underage drinking offenses.** This policy is internal to the Sheriff's Office and requires that officers responding to underage drinking complaints treat the complaints as crimes and aggressively investigate the source of alcohol.
- **Targeted Enforcement Details.** Multi-jurisdictional details conducted underage drinking patrol operations that covered wilderness areas and private residences, as well as traffic-based enforcement tactics to intercept alcohol transport involving underage drinking parties.
- **Development of a "Callout" Team.** This system engages up to 10 off-duty officers who investigate reports of underage drinking parties in progress.
- **Increased Communication with Parents.** The parent of any youth present at an underage drinking party is called in order to inform parents about the high-risk contexts in which their children socialize. The Sheriff's Office also presents to school-based parent groups to increase understanding of why enforcement activity and parental engagement are necessary.

Local school survey data for Piscataquis County for 2002 and 2004 was analyzed to determine if changes regarding ease of availability, risk of apprehension, and alcohol (and illicit drug) use occurred following implementation of this comprehensive strategy. Few other prevention programs were implemented in the county during the same 2-year period; therefore, the results of the analysis are impressive. A few noteworthy findings include the following:

- A 13 percent drop in the proportion of high-school students reporting that it is easy to get alcohol.
- A 32 percent increase in the perception that police will apprehend underage drinkers in the county.
- A lower rate of current (past 30 day) alcohol use in 2004 among high-school students compared to the state average (36 percent in the county vs. 42 percent statewide).
- A 35 percent decrease in current marijuana use among high-school students.

The successes in Piscataquis County can be attributable to several factors, including the commitment of department leadership, ongoing problem analysis and strategic planning, multi-jurisdictional collaboration, communication with parents, and high-quality law enforcement training. In addition, the impact of internal agency policy to respond aggressively to all underage drinking complaints should not be overlooked. This policy, enacted by leadership, stimulated all of the resulting action. Finally, it also should be noted that the ability to document the successes in Piscataquis County, depended on attention to local-level evaluation from the inception of the initiative. Statewide and county survey data analyzed over time have enabled the Piscataquis County task force to show that their efforts are beginning to pay off. The county's approach to planning, policy, strategy implementation, and evaluation merits consideration for replication in communities elsewhere in the Nation.

**For further information contact: Becca Matusovich, Prevention Specialist, Maine Office of Substance Abuse, 207-287-6415 or [Rebecca.matusovich@maine.gov](mailto:Rebecca.matusovich@maine.gov)**



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