



Success Stories

Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Program

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

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With support from the OJJD Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws Initiative, community organizations, enforcement agencies, youth, and other concerned citizens are working collaboratively to change local ordinances and enforcement practices.

Environmental Model Key to BRC's Success in Newark, Delaware

The Building Responsibility Coalition (BRC) has been successfully reduced underage drinking and other high-risk drinking behavior by "changing the norms, attitudes, policies, and practices affecting high-risk drinking on and off the college campus," states Tracy Bachman, BRC program director. With the high number of young people living on and around college campuses, the prevention of underage drinking has become a high priority for the BRC, which is part of a National effort called "A Matter of Degree" funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The BRC uses an environmental model as the basis of its advocacy efforts in policy, enforcement, and awareness. Many of the BRC's accomplishments stem from two main policy objectives: to control the easy accessibility of alcohol and discounted pricing of drinks in downtown Newark, and to reduce the secondhand negative effects of disorderly parties and high-risk drinking on campus and in surrounding neighborhoods.

Together with the University of Delaware, the Mayor's Alcohol Commission, the Newark City Council, and the Newark Police Department, the BRC has actively pursued environmental change to impact underage and other high-risk drinking in the Newark area.

To assist the City of Newark in directing alcohol policies and programs, the Mayor's Alcohol

Commission was formed in November 2001. The commission's efforts has resulted in the City of Newark adopting State Alcohol Beverage Commission laws that can be enforced by local police and used to prosecute violators in local courts. In addition, an alcohol enforcement unit was created. The Newark City Council also voted to increase the business license fees of alcohol sellers to help fund the alcohol officer unit, supporting the BRC principle that costs of additional enforcement should be paid by those who buy, sell, and use alcohol.

In 2002, the Newark City Council passed a local ordinance that restricts happy hours and discounted drink specials. The Newark City Council has also been successful in adding "dormitories" to the list of properties protected in the zoning code from alcohol licensed establishments operating in adjacent buildings, and placing restrictions on licensees within 300 feet.

>Our Point: Communities and States are successfully changing laws, ordinances, regulations and enforcement practices to reduce underage drinking.

The Newark Police Department (NPD), an integral partner in this venture, has increased patrols in neighborhoods surrounding the university to reduce alcohol-related complaints from permanent residents, as well as compliance checks of local establishments, thanks to OJJD grants.

BRC efforts in supporting policies that encourage the responsible and legal use of alcohol are resulting in a healthier environment for students, residents, and businesses and a reduction in harm to people and property caused by high-risk drinking.

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