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Report of the Maine Underage Drinking Task Force, October, 2000

Maine Underage Drinking Task Force

Maine Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services

Maine Office of Substance Abuse

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**Report of the
Maine
Underage Drinking
Task Force**

October, 2000

**Convened With Support From:
The Maine Office of Substance Abuse
Department of Mental Health,
Mental Retardation, and
Substance Abuse Services**

**And Funded By:
The Office of Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention**

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Introduction

Underage drinking in the State of Maine is a significant problem. Research demonstrates that early alcohol use impacts adolescent physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, in addition to its well publicized role in car crashes, alcohol poisonings, sexual assaults, and other tragedies. The 1998/99 Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey, conducted by the Office of Substance Abuse (Fall, 1998), found that while 16% of 12th graders said they had never used alcohol, 41% were classified as recent users and 12% were frequent users (see note below). The majority of twelfth graders said it was "not wrong at all" or "a little bit wrong" for someone their age to drink alcohol regularly. Less than one in ten twelfth graders said if a young person drank alcohol in their neighborhood, he/she would be caught by police. More than three-quarters of high school students said it would be "sort of easy" or "very easy" for them to get some alcohol.

The Office of Substance Abuse, in partnership with other state and local organizations, has been working to reduce underage drinking in communities across the State of Maine. In July, 1998, using federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funding, the Office created the Maine Youth Voices Program. This effort has established youth driven efforts in 12 communities to identify local community norms that encourage underage drinking, and to plan and carry out local efforts to begin to change those norms. Local groups of youth, working under the guidance of a school or local non-profit organization, began to carry out activities such as creating and broadcasting public service announcements, preparing and delivering theater productions which teach people about the impact of the use of alcohol, developing placemats with a no-use message for local restaurants, and advocating for more effective alcohol policies.

With additional OJJDP funding, beginning in November, 1999, the Office convened the Maine Underage Drinking Task Force to examine the problem of underage drinking statewide, and to develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce underage use. In an effort to develop broad based support for the strategy, the Office invited representatives from a wide range of state agencies, community based groups concerned about the issue, and business associations which distribute and sell alcohol. The Task Force included youth representatives from several of the community based Maine Youth Voices groups.

The purpose of this document is to report on the first year's work of the Task Force, including the findings and recommendations of the group. A special section of this report goes beyond the broad, comprehensive long term recommendations, and focuses on the things that can and should be done immediately to address underage drinking in Maine.

This is a problem rooted in community norms and values, based on lack of attention to and appreciation of the consequences of underage drinking. The members of the Task Force and its subcommittees invite all Maine citizens to learn more about this problem and begin to take action against it.

Note:

Frequent users are those who have used 10 or more times in the past 30 days, or who participated in binge drinking 3 or more times in the past two weeks.

Findings and Recommendations

Overall Findings

The Task Force:

- reviewed data about the nature of underage drinking in Maine, receiving input from a wide variety of perspectives
- reviewed strategies which have proven effective nationwide in response to the problem,
- identified the types of approaches which fit best with Maine's culture, values, and existing laws, and prioritized among the most promising approaches.

The group drew several broad findings from its work. These findings were that:

- 1) Maine has a serious problem with underage drinking. It is expensive. It has long term consequences. It costs lives. Maine needs to make responding to this problem a priority.
- 2) Early use of alcohol is frequently supported by community norms. Underage drinking is often either implicitly or explicitly acknowledged by others as an acceptable rite of passage. The whole community needs to be involved in changing those norms.
- 3) Education is a key part of the solution for both youth and adults. Educational strategies which are aimed at youth need to be developed with attention to the developmental level of the target group.
- 4) Effective efforts must combine strategies aimed at changing individual behavior with strategies which change the environment within which individual youth make their decision to use or not use alcohol.
- 5) Government and the business community are both an important part of the solution. Coordination between the two entities, and the involvement of the business community in strategies to reduce underage use is critical.
- 6) Youth are the direct target of many strategies. Therefore, youth need to be involved in developing, directing, and evaluating our efforts to combat underage use.
- 7) Strategies must be developed which change the behavior of adults who supply alcohol to underage drinkers, and those who encourage underage drinking. Youth are not the primary producers, distributors, promoters, sellers, purchasers, or users of alcohol. Therefore, adult behavior must change in order to impact on youth alcohol use.
- 8) Crafting effective strategies requires a comprehensive understanding of the problem. Additional study of some aspects of the problem is required.
- 9) Current allocation of resources to enforce existing laws is inadequate.

Task Force Recommendations

The efforts of the task force were organized into four categories:

- Retail access to alcohol
- Social access to alcohol
- Access on college campuses, and
- Consistency of enforcement

Subcommittees were established to study each of these areas and develop findings and submit recommendations to the Core Task Force. The results of the work of each of these subcommittees appears below.

Retail Access to Alcohol

One important way in which those under the age of 21 obtain alcohol is by purchasing it, directly from local licensed outlets, both off-premise (retail stores) and on-premise (bars, restaurants, etc.). The vast majority of licensees understand and seek to avoid the risks and liabilities associated with selling to minors.

However, factors such as the high volume of sales in many locations and under-trained sales staff contribute to the problem.

RETAIL RECOMMENDATION #1:

Develop and implement better ways to identify people who may legally purchase alcohol.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Develop and implement good retail policy, such as checking the identification of everyone who appears to be under the age of 30.
- Post the consequences of:
 - attempting to purchase alcohol while under age
 - purchasing and providing alcohol to a minor, and
 - for the clerk's benefit, the consequences of selling to a minor.
- In smaller stores, use a blotter right at the cash register to provide information about carding and consequences.
- Explore the effectiveness of new technology, including bar codes and scanners
- Consider the use of grant money to offset the initial cost of scanners
- Encourage trade organizations develop programs to purchase scanners and provide them at lower cost to members

RETAIL RECOMMENDATION #2:

Take aggressive steps to reduce retail store sales of alcohol to people under the age of 21.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Conduct pseudo-compliance checks (i.e., alcohol purchase surveys) in local communities using a partnership of the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement, local law enforcement, community youth, area businesses, and other community groups. This activity will help identify the extent and nature of problems with compliance at local licensed establishments.

- Focus on licensees showing a pattern of selling to people under the age of 21. For stores with two licensing offenses within two years, offer cashier training in lieu of liquor license suspension. For stores with three or more offenses within two years, require mandatory store license suspension.
- Expand the staff of the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement to support more enforcement and training activities.

RETAIL RECOMMENDATION #3:

Ensure that appropriate consequences for youth in violation of underage drinking laws exist and are enforced consistently.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Meaningful consequences for underage drinkers are essential.
- Promote the development of a system for assessment, educational programming, and treatment for youth with alcohol related problems.
- Explore and develop effective consequences for violations. Consider legislation to mandate driver's license suspension for youth that use false id's. Consider educational and alternative sentencing options for first time offenders (similar to the Smokeless Saturday programs for first time tobacco offenders).

RETAIL RECOMMENDATION #4:

Develop a system of education about underage drinking especially for licensees. Include education about the consequences of selling to minors, common methods of purchase by underage drinkers, and using false identification

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Education for licensees should be available and affordable. We should develop creative and affordable ways of packaging training for sellers.
- Explore the use of grant funds to provide more training to licensees
- In order to make training accessible to more licensee staff, request that the legislature lower the state fee for the basic course from \$28 to \$10.
- Explore involving local law enforcement personnel in instructing sales personnel in their community about Maine law and how to respond to underage purchasers of alcohol. Bureau of Liquor Enforcement staff could provide "Train-the-Trainer" cashier training to police officers, who can in turn offer this training regularly in their communities. Identify funding to increase cashier training activities.
- Publicize the retail education efforts through the media.
- Encourage certification of existing training programs to enhance quality and improve consistency of current efforts.

Note:

Research demonstrates that responsible beverage server training is effective in reducing sales to minors when combined with active and well publicized enforcement. Implementation of these recommendations should take this link into account.

Social Access to Alcohol

One important place where alcohol is available to young people is in social settings, such as parties and community events. Adults frequently purchase alcohol for youth and/or supply alcohol to underage drinkers in a social setting. Community norms often support this, and sometimes those furnishing the alcohol don't realize that their behavior is illegal and/or are not aware of the potential consequences of their actions.

Part of the long term solution is community-wide education and increased awareness of the risks of underage use. Another part of the solution is beginning to address the underlying societal issues which lead to abuse of alcohol by both young people and adults in the community. In addition, the laws prohibiting furnishing alcohol to minors and providing a place for minors to consume alcohol must be enforced more consistently.

SOCIAL ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #1:

Increase public awareness and understanding of the extent and scope of the problem of underage use, including:

- the reasons for and extent of use by youth, and effective responses to the problem.
- Develop and deliver messages that are tailored to the needs and perspectives of the target audiences, including and especially:
 - youth
 - parents
 - professionals in the community
 - the general public

Comment and Suggested Actions:

Especially for youth

- Include substance use/abuse in a comprehensive health curriculum in schools. Work with the Department of Education on the identification and implementation of model health curricula. Education programs should present a consistent message. Education should start by the 5th grade and continue through high school. It should be interesting and age appropriate, and target a wide variety of learning styles.
- Provide education to youth about the consequences of underage drinking as part of the Driver Education programs.

Parents/Professionals/The General Public

- Deliver clear messages to educate all about the consequences of underage drinking.
- Educate parents, schools and the community about the importance of consistent enforcement of policies and giving youth consistent messages about underage drinking.
- Offer stronger support to parents to set clear family rules about alcohol and enforce those rules more consistently.

- Train youth workers on issues related to early use of alcohol

Linking with the Media

- Establish positive partnerships with the media to raise awareness, share information and promote consistent messages
- Link media representatives with local groups to develop powerful messages. Develop targeted media campaign for holidays, graduation, etc.
- Replicate exemplary public service announcements that are being created now in selected communities.
- Explore connections with national programming where relevant and appropriate.

SOCIAL ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #2:

Actively promote awareness of laws related to providing alcohol to those under 21 in social situations, and the consequences of violating the law.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- The Bureau of Liquor Enforcement should aggressively promote public awareness of its role and services, as part of an overall strategy to promote public awareness of Maine's laws about underage use.
- Working directly with the public, and/or through local law enforcement agencies, the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement should aggressively pursue reports of parties where liquor is or has been provided to underage drinkers. In the process they should make a special effort to cite the person who furnished the alcohol and/or provided the place for the party.
- Working directly with the public, and/or through local law enforcement agencies, the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement should develop opportunities to speak directly with parents and other community members about Maine liquor laws related to providing alcohol to minors.

SOCIAL ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #3:

Promote a sense of responsibility across entire communities for the problem of underage use. Engage the whole community in responding to the problem. Recognize that family members provide both positive and negative examples to youth about alcohol use.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Identify community norms and values around the use of alcohol by those under the age of 21, and strengthen and promote those norms which support non-use.
- Develop local study/talking circles which examine community norms and underage access and plan actions to reduce access
- Conduct discussions within schools about use and consequences for students. Include community members in these discussions.

- Promote non-use behavior by establishing mentoring programs, creating community after-school programs, increasing media literacy and awareness of advertising strategies, and other strategies proven to be effective.
- Encourage the development of programs which promote quality parent/child time and promote positive family values.

SOCIAL ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #4:

Continue to build our knowledge of the nature of the underage drinking problem in Maine

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Broaden the State's capacity to research the specific nature of the underage drinking problem in Maine, disseminate this information, and identify ways to use new knowledge to reduce the problem.
- This capacity should be developed by a number of organizations, including the Office of Substance Abuse and Maine's Institutions of Higher Education.
- Specific Issues Which Need Examination include:
 - Developing a better understanding of the root causes of the problem. Study those who do not use alcohol in order to learn more about how the prevent or delay its use.
 - Researching why youth use or do not use alcohol.
 - Obtaining baseline statistics for underage purchases. Survey those who use alcohol and come to the attention of law enforcement, such as those cited under Maine's drinking and driving laws, to determine the most common sources of alcohol for Maine's young people.
 - Developing a mechanism, potentially through the Department of Corrections, to gather on-going information about methods of access and patterns of use of alcohol by juvenile offenders.

Access on College Campuses

Some of the most challenging communities where we must address this problem are college campuses. Here there is extensive use of alcohol by people under the age of 21, supported by the notion that using alcohol is part of the rite of passage from youth to adult. Certain aspects of the physical, social, legal, and economic environment support high risk alcohol use by students of all ages.

A comprehensive effort is required to change college community norms and behaviors, in part by engaging members of surrounding communities in on-campus prevention efforts. In addition, college communities must be linked with each other and with outside organizations and resources, including law enforcement, across the State of Maine.

COLLEGE ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #1:

Develop a statewide infrastructure to facilitate efforts among Institutions of Higher Education (IHE's).

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Fund a statewide coordinator position to facilitate efforts among IHE's to perform, among other things, the following functions:
- Inventory and assess current statewide practices, data collection efforts, staffing, funding, and programs.
- Collect statewide data, track trends, monitor college policies and enforcement efforts, disseminate information on research and best practices.
- Support the development of college level prevention plans and link local state and national guidelines.
- An annual report card for each institution should be issued and publicized based on the key elements of a comprehensive program addressing alcohol issues. The IHE's should be involved in the development, design and data collection of the report card.

COLLEGE ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #2:

Engage the top level administration of individual IHE's, including the trustees, the presidents and their staff, in addressing alcohol use issues on their campus

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Institutions of Higher Education (IHE's) presidents, trustees, and top level administrators should be held accountable for their institutional commitment to address alcohol issues. IHE administrations need to view themselves as a critical part of the solution and work collaboratively with enforcement agencies and state and local prevention and intervention resources.
- Build on the 1999 meeting of the IHE presidents to further address the issue of underage drinking.
- Implement individual campus report cards as referenced above.

COLLEGE ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #3:

Under the leadership of the administration, Institutions of Higher Education (IHE's) should adopt a comprehensive plan, allocate sufficient resources, and develop the necessary infrastructure to pursue "Best Practices" for both prevention and response to critical incidents

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- In developing this plan, individual institutions should:
 - A. Develop a campus and surrounding community plan to establish positive alternatives and change the environmental factors that encourage drinking. Special attention should be devoted to sub-populations with higher drinking norms.

- B. Recognize the misperceptions concerning alcohol use (especially overestimation of typical student drinking patterns) and employ a social marketing approach to raise awareness of actual norms.
 - C. Create and link multiple opportunities to develop positive norms, healthy lifestyles and effective coping skills with special supports for students facing additional risk factors.
- Institutions should increase staff and funding resources for prevention.
 - Institutions should devote more attention to the secondary effects of drinking on non-drinkers, using strategies similar to those applied to the problem of second hand smoke.
 - Institutions should explore the benefits of collaborations such as that between the College Parents of America and insurance companies. On some campuses students sign a contract of no alcohol use to reduce insurance rates.

COLLEGE ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #4:

Institutions of Higher Education (IHE's) should have alcohol policies with clearly outlined consequences that are actively publicized and enforced consistently by all levels of staff and administration.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Institution Presidents and other top level administrators must take the lead in this area.
- Stated policies need to be the real policies concerning use by those under 21.
- Policies need to be actively communicated repeatedly, in a variety of formats, to students, parents, staff and community members.
- Stated policies need to be enforced and applied consistently across the campus.
- Enforcement practices need to be studied to identify inconsistencies in application, and to track improvements over time.

COLLEGE ACCESS RECOMMENDATION #5:

Institutions of Higher Education (IHE's) should take action to limit the availability of alcohol and include on-campus guidelines for alcohol-related marketing and sponsorships in their alcohol policies.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Institutions should work with alcohol sales outlets to control and restrict illegal access.
- National model strategies for limiting access need to be identified and analyzed to determine their applicability to campus communities in Maine.
- Institutions should actively work to limit the availability of alcohol to underage students and in those locations where those under 21 are present.

- Institutions should review the role of alcohol at events where it is prominent, in order to determine the risk it poses and the messages it sends to students under the age of 21.
- Institutions should promote a sense of community and identity among those who see themselves as non-users.

Consistency of Enforcement of Existing Laws

This is an important area of focus because many groups must coordinate their efforts to enforce Maine's laws concerning underage drinking: State Bureau of Liquor Enforcement officers; state, county, and local law enforcement agencies; the county District Attorneys; and the court system. Key local community officials must set policies which support the enforcement of state laws. Law enforcement agencies operate within the context of existing community norms. In order for law enforcement agencies to successfully enforce Maine's laws concerning underage drinking, a concerted effort needs to be made, community by community, to create a climate which supports their efforts.

ENFORCEMENT RECOMMENDATION #1:

Ensure that school and college policies discourage underage drinking and support and encourage enforcement of Maine law.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- Encourage increased rapport between school personnel and police to cooperate on the enforcement of existing school policies and laws. This can be supported with expanded community policing, school resource officers, campus law enforcement liaisons, and cooperative agreements among key parties.

ENFORCEMENT RECOMMENDATION #2:

Establish a consistent continuum of enforcement, prosecution, and adjudication of violations of Maine's underage drinking laws within and across communities.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- The entire enforcement system and individuals within it should work together toward a consistent approach to violations of Maine law, which encompasses the work of local law enforcement and the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement, District Attorneys and their staff, and the courts. All involved need to promote and support a clear division of labor and clear expectations and protocols in the investigation and prosecution of violations where this does not already exist.
- There needs to be a common understanding among officers, district attorneys, and judges as to which cases warrant prosecution, the information that needs to be collected during the investigation and the appropriate protocols for collecting it, and an expected range of punishment upon conviction.
- Given additional resources, the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement should expand to other communities its current partnership with local law enforcement in communities such as Portland, South Portland, Old Orchard Beach, and Biddeford. Here, following extra training, police officers take a more active role in investigation of violations, and coordinate closely the prosecution of cases. Local law enforcement across the state needs to pursue rather than drop or ignore underage drinking violations.

- As part of this effort, the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement needs to expand its role in a) training local law enforcement concerning proper procedure in the handling of complaints, b) coordinating with the agency on violations that will be taken to court, and c) communicating the key aspects of Maine's laws to parents and other members of the local community.

ENFORCEMENT RECOMMENDATION #3:

In order to support consistent enforcement of underage drinking laws and policies, link with related systems which raise awareness and concern regarding underage drinking, and provide services to underage drinkers. Connect with administrators and educators to promote and support consistency of enforcement of school and college policies.

Comment and Suggested Actions:

- A wide range of agencies linked to enforcement should be targeted for educational and awareness efforts, including the Department of Public Safety, the Department of Education, the Maine School Management Association, local police departments, local offices of the district attorney, the court system, the Department of Corrections, school systems, and colleges.
- Engage educators and administrators in conversations about how to enforce alcohol policies consistently; offer ongoing training and forums to promote these conversations.

Immediate Next Steps

As noted at the beginning of this report, Maine has already embarked on a series of steps to address the problem of underage drinking. Some key initiatives include:

- Creation of the Maine Youth Voices program, designed to empower youth to plan and carry out efforts to reduce underage drinking in their communities,
- Efforts of the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement to train the staff of licensees in responsible server practices, establish special partnerships with local communities to enforce Maine's liquor laws,
- Obtaining a commitment from college presidents across Maine to increase their efforts to reduce underage and high-risk alcohol use on their campuses,
- Redesigning the Driver Education and Evaluation Program (DEEP) for teens who have been cited under Maine's Operating Under the influence (OUI) laws to reflect the latest research on what makes education and assessment services effective with teens,
- Continued expansion and refinement of the Office of Substance Abuse prevention and Safe- and Drug-Free Schools programs across the state to emphasize environmental strategies as a key part of the services offered, and
- Development of a statewide Juvenile Justice Substance Abuse Screening and Juvenile Drug Treatment system, to youth identified with substance use problems and provide them with the services they need.

At the same time, more must be done. Specific actions are being planned which coincide with the recommendations that have been developed by the Underage Drinking Task Force:

1) Gathering of Critical Information About Access

One of the most significant gaps in our knowledge of this problem is detailed information about how youth, community by community and region by region, obtain alcohol. A small study is currently underway which is designed to gather this information.

Youth who have lost their license for drinking and driving and are attending the Teen Driver Education and Evaluation Program are being surveyed anonymously about alcohol availability issues. The data is being gathered for this survey between February and October, 2000. An estimated 300 participants in the Driver Education and Evaluation Program, Moving Ahead, will be surveyed. Data analysis will be completed by December, 2000, and the results will be shared with groups who are beginning to tackle this problem across the state.

2) Additional Community Based Efforts to Change Local Norms and Reduce Underage Access to Alcohol

With funds from OJJDP's "Enforcement of Underage Drinking Laws" program, the Office of Substance Abuse and the Underage Drinking Task Force have authorized the development of a subgrant program to establish comprehensive efforts in local communities to address the problem.

The specific goal of this subgrant program is to reduce access to alcohol by underage drinkers in specific local communities. The proposed activities in each community will be directed at both of the following broad outcomes:

- a) Making it less acceptable in the community for those under the age of 21 to use alcohol (i.e., changing community norms about alcohol use), and
- b) Reducing the supply of alcohol which reaches underage drinkers in the community, by reducing retail sales to those under 21, preventing legal purchasers from buying alcohol for underage drinkers, and reducing access by those under 21 in social settings.

Efforts linking community groups, local youth, and local law enforcement will be funded in four communities. Funding of programs began in June, 2000. Intensive training is being provided to the community groups, with the assistance of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE).

In addition, there is the potential for additional funding from the OJJDP Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws discretionary grant program to continue funding for these communities for a second year, and provide funding for similar work in an additional five communities for up to 18 months.

3) College Training Initiative

Teams from up to ten colleges in Maine have been invited to participate in a series of trainings and technical assistance sessions to be conducted by the Higher Education center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention. This initiative will assist the participating colleges in a year-long process that includes a) assessing their campus norms, b) building a coalition, c) developing a strategic plan involving environmental strategies, d) using social marketing to reduce the exaggerated perception of campus drinking norms, and e) follow-up work to implement and revise the strategic plan. Participating colleges will involve both students and campus/local law enforcement representatives on their team, collect local data for baseline and tracking purposes, and recruit active top-level administrative support for their strategic plan.

4) "State of the State" Town Hall Meeting to promote the awareness of underage drinking problems and potential solutions.

On October 20, 2000 the Gardiner Maine Youth Voices group will host a State of the State Town Hall Meeting. This event will focus on the issue of the underage drinking and provide an opportunity to strengthen partnerships among policy makers, organizations which enforce the laws, and members of the community around the issue. The agenda will include study circles on the nature of the problem, recommendations for addressing underage drinking in Maine and across the nation, and discussion of current efforts to reduce underage drinking.

5) Continue the long range planning begun by the Underage Drinking Task Force.

We need to continue to do long range, strategic thinking about Maine's underage drinking problem, where progress is being made, where we need to do different things, and how best to proceed, year to year.

Toward this end, in the Fall of 2000, the Underage Drinking Task Force will reconvene to continue the work begun in 1999.

6) Toward a Legislative Agenda

In many areas Maine now has exemplary laws and policies in place related to underage drinking. See, for example, the comparison of Maine laws and policies and those identified by OJJDP as "best practices." At the same time, there is always room for improvement.

The Task Force has identified several specific legislative actions which would help support a more effective response to the problem of underage drinking in Maine. The following actions are recommended:

- a) Increased staff resources for the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement, in order to adequately enforce existing laws, and begin to implement selected recommendations of the Task Force

In order to carry out its mandates effectively, the Bureau needs to have additional licensing staff, enforcement officers, and training staff. Licensing staff are needed to monitor retailer compliance with current Maine laws and prevent violations by ensuring that licensees understand the issues related to underage drinking. Officers are needed to investigate liquor violations, and coordinate with local law enforcement and the courts on prosecution of criminal violations. Training staff are needed to continuously update the understanding and capability of local law enforcement agencies concerning the enforcement and prosecution of current liquor laws.

Adding three (3) staff would return the Bureau to staffing levels which existed in the late 1980's before the period of state budget shortfalls, and extensive staff reductions. The creation of additional staff positions would allow for increased enforcement of existing laws, and Bureau support for implementation of Task Force recommendations. Adding an additional six (6) licensing staff would reduce the ratio of licensees to licensing staff from 300 : 1 to a ratio of 200 : 1

- b) Active review and discussion about the adequacy, appropriateness and impact of existing penalties for liquor law violations

The combination of limited manpower at the Bureau of Liquor Enforcement and somewhat limited sanctions for liquor law violations creates the impression among young people and those who purchase alcohol for young people that they are unlikely to be caught or punished for violations. In order to be successful, sanctions are needed which can be administered swiftly and consistently. For youth these sanctions need to be short-term and meaningful, and, for a first offender, not become part of the youth's permanent criminal record. Special attention needs to be paid to creating or strengthening sanctions for adults who furnish alcohol to minors.

Additional discussion needs to be held in order to craft the most effective blend of sanctions.

- c) Create a mechanism for regular, legislative review of the extent of underage drinking in Maine, and progress toward solving the problem.

Underage drinking is a long-term problem and will not be solved with short term efforts. The size and nature of the problem, and progress on this problem should be reviewed regularly by key policy makers. Interdepartmental cooperation and coordination should be assessed. The public should have the opportunity to review and comment on the issue.

Consequently, the Legislature should consider establishing an ongoing mechanism for this regular review, in the form of a permanent commission, or a regular report to the Legislature. Public review and public discussion about this costly problem is an important ingredient in its solution, long term.

Appendices

Appendix A

Maine Underage Drinking Task Force and Subcommittee Members

A special thank you is extended to the many people who served as members of the Core Task Force, and as members of the four subcommittees which helped develop this report. Their names appear below.

Core Task Force Members

- Lynn Duby, Commissioner, Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse**
- Raquel Boehmer, Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages & Lottery
- Christine Buchanan, Maine State Police
- Lynn Cayford, Bureau of Liquor Enforcement
- Michelle Cram, Office of the District Attorney, Kennebec County
- Daniel Harfoush, Department of Corrections
- Felix Hernandez, Narraguagus Youth Voices
- Janet Keith, Narraguagus Youth Voices
- William Lowenstein, Office of Substance Abuse
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- Rebecca Matusovich, Office of Substance Abuse
- Hannah Osborne, Administrative Office of the Courts, Family Division
- Deborah Rafnell, Department of Corrections
- Joseph Rogers, Maine Police Chiefs Association
- Judy Paradis, Maine State Senate
- Cheryl Timberlake, Maine Beer & Wine Wholesalers Association

** Chair of the Task Force

Retail Access Subcommittee Members

- Mark Boesen, Maine Association of Substance Abuse Programs
- Christine Burke, Maine Grocers Association
- Josh Gregoire, Gardiner Youth Voices
- Dick Grotton, Maine Restaurants Association
- Frank Lyons, Bureau of Liquor Enforcement**
- Scott MacMaster, Gardiner Police Department
- Dick McKeen, Hannaford Brothers
- Cheryl Timberlake, Maine Beer and Wine Wholesalers
- Tina Snell, NL Partners
- Robert Tardy, Somerset Association
- Rob Tod, Maine Brewers Guild
- Mary Trescot, Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

** Chair of the Subcommittee

Social Access Subcommittee Members

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- Christine Buchanan, Maine State Police**
- Hope Dixon, Gardiner Youth Voices
- Maureen Duggan, Maine Public Television
- Gerry Fougere, Aroostook Band of Micmacs
- Felix Hernandez, Narraguagus Youth Voices
- Janet Keith, Narraguagus Youth Voices
- Cindy Krum, Maine Association of Prevention Programs
- William Lowenstein, Office of Substance Abuse**
- Rodney Mondor, University of Southern Maine
- Jay Pennell, Department of Corrections
- Judy Paradis, Maine State Senate
- Holly Pomelow, Bureau of Liquor Enforcement
- Suzanne Rudalevige, Maine Council of Churches
- Lynn Saucier, Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- Susan Savell, Communities for Children
- Diane Smith, Bancroft School
- Anna Vandenbosch, Gardiner Youth Voices
- Scott Webber, Hampden Police Department

** Co-chairs of the Subcommittee

College Access Subcommittee Members

- Dan Belyea, Eastern Maine Technical College
- Raquel Boehmer, Bureau of Alcohol Beverages & Lottery**
- Charles Collins, Central Maine Technical College
- Paul Dexter, University of Southern Maine
- Bob Graves, Bowdoin College
- Jerry Hinton, Brunswick Police Department
- Dan Jones, Maine Maritime Academy
- Brandon Judkins, St. Joseph College
- Mark Krogman, Southern Maine Technical College
- Larry LeClair, Parkview Hospital
- Bob LaGuardia, Bureau of Liquor Enforcement
- Christine Lyman, Bureau of Health
- Rebecca Matusovich, Office of Substance Abuse**
- Richard Schamle, Maine Maritime Academy
- Alan Storman, University of Maine
- Oliver Wesson, Office of the Attorney General
- Lisa White, St. Joseph College
- Gary Zane, Unity College

** Co-chairs of the Subcommittee

Consistency of Enforcement Subcommittee Members

- Norm Boucher, Cumberland County Youth Voices
- Lynn Cayford, Bureau of Liquor Enforcement**
- Tim Cotton, Bangor Police Department
- Dan Harfoush, Department of Corrections
- Micheal Heavener, Maine Sheriffs Association
- Margaret Howe, Houlton Band of Maliseets
- Vinnie Matia, Old Orchard Police Department
- Cheryl McKenney, Department of Corrections
- Joel Merry, Bath Police Department
- Hannah Osborne, Administrative Office of the Courts - Family Division
- Deborah Rafnell, Department of Corrections
- Ann Robinson, Local Counsel for Anheuser Busch
- Joe Rogers, Maine Police Chiefs Association
- Erica Roy, Cumberland County Youth Voices
- Steve Sarno, Cumberland County Youth Voices

** Chair of the Subcommittee

Staff to the Task Force

- Denise Adams, AdCare Educational Institute
- Patti Currie-Wright, AdCare Educational Institute
- Barbara Kawliche, AdCare Educational Institute
- Neill Miner, AdCare Educational Institute

Appendix B

The Nature of the Problem

Sources of Data

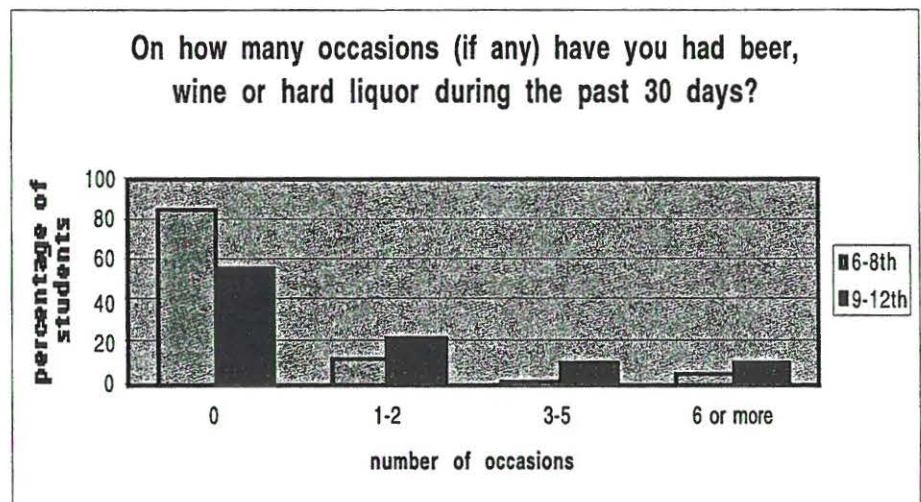
There are a number of sources of data about the size and nature of Maine's problem with underage drinking. Sources used in the following description included:

- 1) **Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey:** This is a biannual survey of students in grades 6 through 12 conducted by the Office of Substance Abuse. It gathers self-reports of youth patterns of alcohol and drug use, and attitudes about use and related behaviors. In 1998 22,000 students were surveyed.
- 2) **Youth Voices Surveys:** informal surveys of the opinions and perspectives of youth who are participating in the Maine Youth Voices program in selected communities across the state. These youth have been involved in local efforts to identify local community norms related to underage drinking, and have planned and carried out activities to strengthen the norms which discourage underage use. These youth were surveyed at selected points between September, 1998 and August, 1999.
- 3) **The CORE Survey:** Students at colleges across the country, including several Maine schools, report patterns of use and related attitudes and behaviors. Data is available in nationwide aggregate only, and not by school, unless it is released by the institution itself.

Overview: the Good News and the Bad News

1) Demographics of Use:

Throughout Maine, and most other states across the country, a large percentage of young people are choosing not to drink alcohol. Eighty-three percent of 6-8th graders and fifty-seven percent of 9-12th graders reported no use of alcohol in the past 30 days.



Among those who do use, alcohol is the most frequently used drug, followed by tobacco and marijuana.

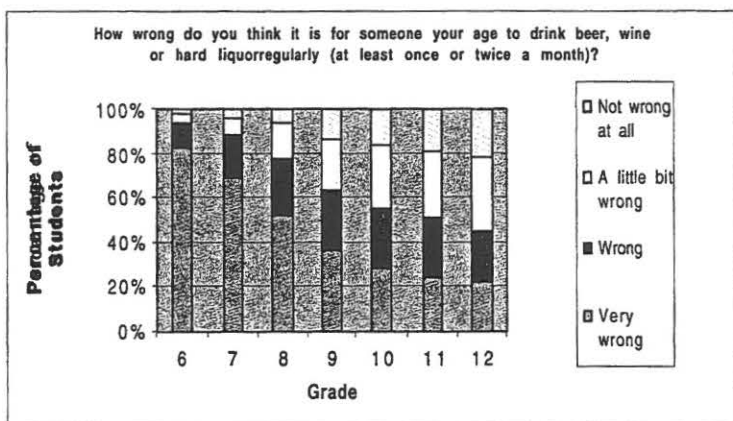
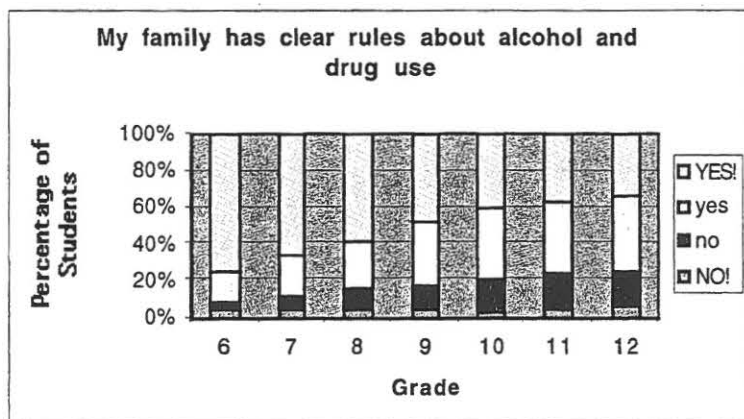
As youth grow older, they are much more likely to use alcohol. For example, a national sample of college students, which included a group under the age of 21 and a group over the age of 21 found that 69.7% of those surveyed had used alcohol in the past 30 days. Forty-two percent had had five or more drinks at one time (binge drinking) within the past 30 days. Specific information about how Maine college students compare to the national group is not available.

Even among college students, however, there continues to be a significant number of college students who choose not to use, as with all other age cohorts.

2) Contributing Factors

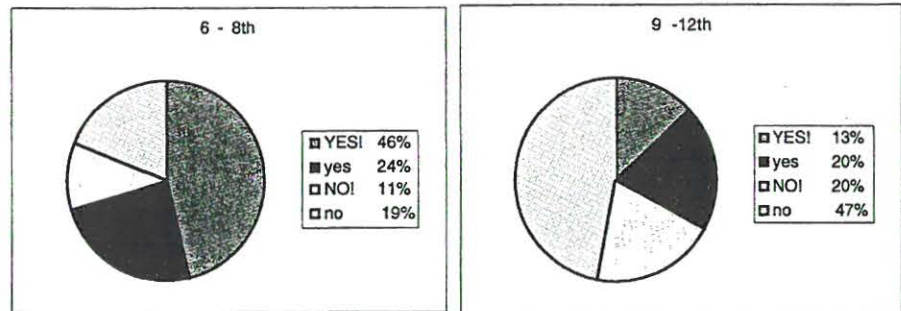
A) Attitudes, Norms and Values Which Are Associated With And Appear To Impact On Underage Use.

Alcohol use is part of a constellation of attitudes and behaviors. If the community supports or tacitly accepts underage use, youth are more likely to use alcohol. If the community actively and aggressively discourages use, and youth perceive that there is risk in use, then they are less likely to use. Perceptions change as young people grow older, especially regarding whether it is wrong for people their age to use alcohol regularly, as the following charts illustrate.

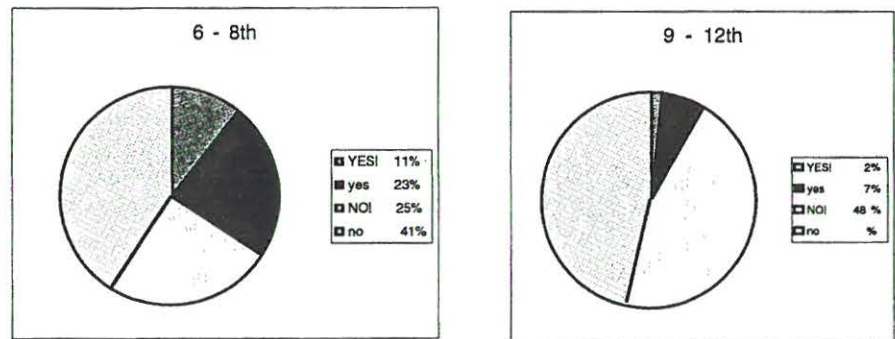


Finally, as they grow older, youth are less likely to believe that they will be caught by either their parents or the police, if they chose to drink beer, wine or hard liquor.

If you drank beer, wine or hard liquor without your parents' permission would you get caught by your parents?



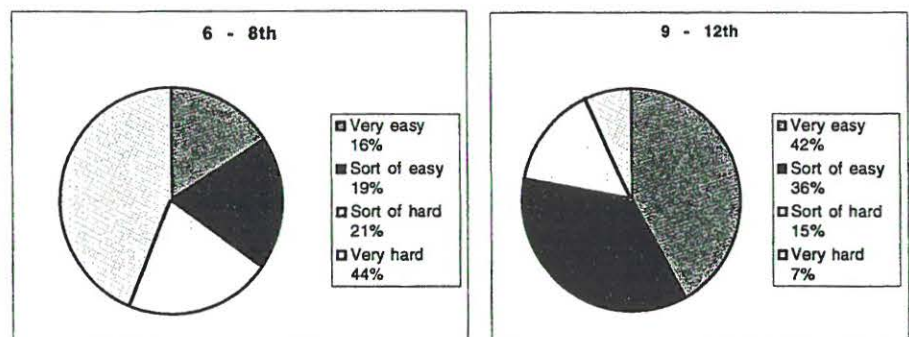
If a kid drank some beer, wine or hard liquor in your neighborhood, would he or she get caught by the police?



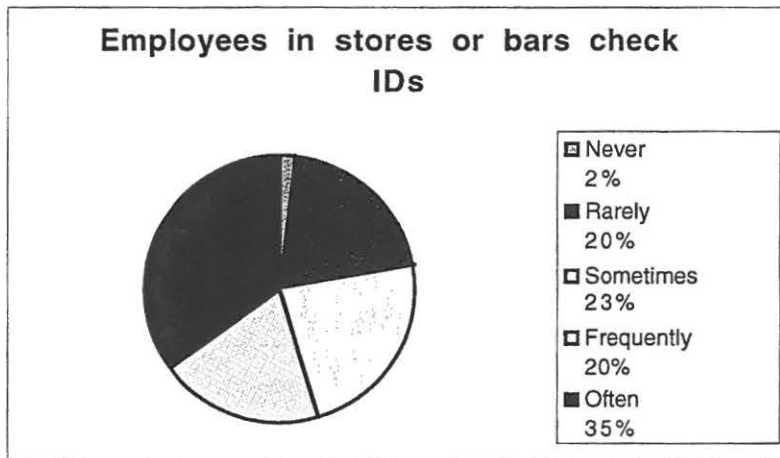
3) Access and Sources of Alcohol

Alcohol is easily accessible to a large number of young people. The vast majority (76%) of 9-12th grade students indicate that alcohol is either "sort of easy," or "very easy" to get. Over one third (35%) of 6-8th graders that gave the same responses

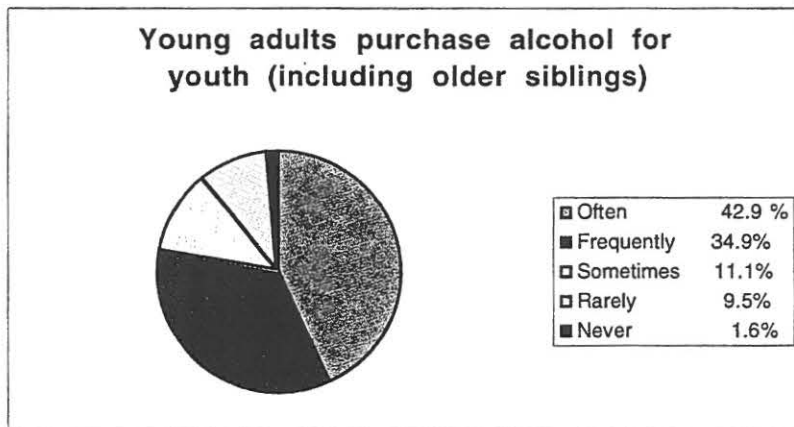
If you wanted to get some beer, wine, or hard liquor how easy would it be for you to get some?



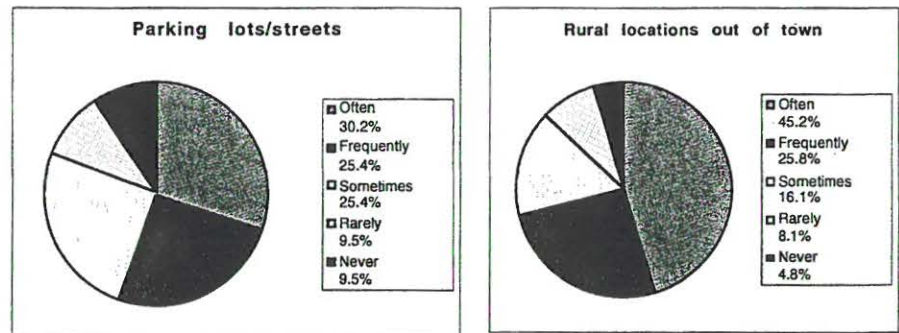
This perception is reflected in the belief of Maine Youth Voices participants that employees in stores or bars check identification never, rarely or only sometimes (45%, total). What is intriguing in this context is that this is the perception of a group of youth, and may or may not reflect actual practices concerning checking for identification.



Until the Teen DEEP alcohol availability survey is completed, there will be limited information about where and how Maine's young people obtain the liquor they use. However, surveys of Maine Youth Voices program participants suggest that young adults, including older siblings are one of the most important sources of alcohol.



Locations most frequently cited by Maine Youth Voices program participants as locations where alcohol causes problems are rural locations out of town, and in parking lots or on the street.



Comment

This information suggests that successful strategies for reducing underage use must be multidimensional. They must be tailored to circumstances in individual communities, and:

- include efforts at a wide range of age groups, with special efforts in Maine's institutions of higher education
- address not only use itself but also community, parent and youth attitudes and perceptions about use, and the risks of use
- target the most prevalent sources of alcohol in each community, and
- include special enforcement on the locations where alcohol is used in each community.

Appendix C

Maine Laws and Policies Compared to "Best Practices" Recommended by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has published a list of laws and policies it recommends that states and local community have in place to help control access to alcohol by those under the age of 21. This publication, *Regulatory Strategies for Preventing Youth Access to Alcohol: Best Practices*, provides substantial information about the nature and purpose of each of these laws and policies.

The following checklist notes the areas where current Maine law and policy closely parallels these recommendations, and where it does not. Not every recommended law and policy is right for Maine. However, the checklist helps focus statewide and local discussion about where gaps may exist in current efforts.

IS EFFECTIVE MAINE LAW AND POLICY IN PLACE?

COMMERCIAL AVAILABILITY	YES	PARTIAL	NO
1) Ban commercial sales to minors	X		
2) Restrict the location of alcohol outlets		X	
3) Restrict alcohol sales at community events		X	
4) Restrict the age of alcohol servers and sellers to 21 and older		X	
5) Restrict minors' access to bars and nightclubs	X		
6) Install and use driver's license scanners			X
7) Regulate home delivery and mail order internet sales		X	
8) Mandate responsible beverage service programs			X
9) Carry out compliance check programs			X
10) Impose appropriate penalties for commercial violations	X		

SOCIAL/PUBLIC AVAILABILITY	YES	PARTIAL	NO
11) Restrict noncommercial furnishing to minors	X		
12) Implement beer keg registrations	X		
13) Implement "shoulder tap" programs			X
14) Implement teen party ordinances			X
15) Restrict and monitor teen parties at motels/hotels			X
16) Establish alcohol restrictions in public locations		X	
17) Impose appropriate penalties for noncommercial violations	X		

MINORS IN POSSESSION	YES	PARTIAL	NO
18) Ban possession by minors in public and private locations	X		
19) Use "Cops-in-Shops programs sparingly (for limited targeting of outlets popular with youth)	X		
20) Implement and enforce zero tolerance OUI laws	X		
21) Ban false identification	X		
22) Apply appropriate penalties to minors in possession			

Note:

"Partial" may signify that Maine law/policy only partially covers what is recommended or it may signify that enforcement of the law/policy is particularly problematic in practice. Please note also that there may be locally based programs or ordinances which are not reflected in this checklist.

