



## PRC COMMUNITY OUTREACH

<http://resources.prev.org/>

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Welcome to the March Edition of the PRC Community Outreach Newsletter! As our readership grows, we hope to continue sharing more of our resources and work done, such as environmental prevention strategies, in your community. We encourage you to share our newsletter with others and let them know they, too, can sign up to receive our newsletter.

This edition includes prevention work from the North County Prevention Partnership, a new report on neighborhood bars from our Resources site (In The News tab), and more such as Los Angeles community members using text messages to fight alcohol ads in the city.

### North County Prevention Partnership



### Community Spotlight

The adult and youth partners of the North County Prevention Partnership (NCP) are engaged in ongoing environmental strategies to reduce and prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. The NCP serves primarily South San Francisco, Daly City, and Pacifica.

NCP is about youth and adults working together to improve the health and well-being of the community we live in. In 2009, the Youth Leadership Institute's **Youth Access Survey**, conducted with over 1,200 youth in the Jefferson Union High School District, revealed several remarkable facts, some of which include:

- Access to alcohol (51.6%), tobacco (81.7%), and other drugs (33.4%) is most often provided by friends.
- Half of the students surveyed reported that acquaintances or friends that provide drugs are dealers themselves.
- 51.5% of youth surveyed said that adult hosts (parents or guardians) of social events/celebrations/parties DO NOT KNOW that youth are drinking alcohol at their event.
- Youth report that 73.8% of sources for drugs are relatives (35.3% from parents, and 38.3% from family members).
- Of youth who purchase tobacco, 62.9% say they are not consistently asked for ID.
- 88.9% of youth who purchase alcohol reported that they are not carded consistently.

These statistics indicate high rates of use and permissive social norms about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. With funding from the Behavioral Health & Recovery Services department of San Mateo County, the NCP Youth Coalition works toward social justice and improving the health of the community by combating these and other factors that contribute to substance abuse.

We hope to include more on their current project soon, a focus on mapping alcohol outlets around a local high school, examining liquor store environments, and promoting responsible beverage service training in order to present RAMA (Responsible Alcohol Merchant Awards).

For more information on NCP, visit:

<http://www.ncpps sanmateo.org/>

<http://www.facebook.com/ncpps sanmateo>

# Density of neighbourhood bars is linked to intimate partner violence-related visits to the emergency department

- Intimate partner violence (that is, violence between spouses or cohabiting partners) has been linked to heavy drinking, and alcohol outlet density to violence.
- A new study looks at links between alcohol outlet densities and emergency department visits related to intimate partner violence.
- Findings showed that the density of bars is positively related to emergency department visits related to intimate partner violence, while there is no relationship between restaurant density and these emergency visits.

Intimate partner violence has been linked to heavy drinking, substance use by one or both partners, and living in a neighborhood characterized by poverty and social disadvantage. Alcohol outlet density has been linked to assaultive violence in a community. A recent study examined the relationship between alcohol outlet densities and visits to the emergency department resulting from intimate partner violence. Data from California between July 2005 and December 2008 indicated that density of bars is associated with emergency department visits resulting from this type of violence.

“Most of the research on this type of violence has focused on individual-level risk factors,” explained Carol B. Cunradi, senior research scientist at Prevention Research Center and corresponding author for the study. “We wanted to extend this line of research by testing whether alcohol outlet densities are associated with greater intimate partner violence as indicated by emergency department visits, while also taking into account other neighborhood-level characteristics previously shown to be linked with risk for intimate partner violence.”

“Although it is true that both bars/pubs and restaurants sell alcohol and food, we hypothesized that the context surrounding use of these two types of outlets would be quite different,” said Cunradi. “For example, we expect that restaurants that also sell alcohol are frequented by couples and/or families primarily to have a meal that may or may not be accompanied by alcohol. On the other hand, we expect that bars/pubs are primarily frequented by men with or without their female partners, with the primary goal of drinking alcohol that may or may not be served with some food. There is also a large literature linking bar attendance, but not restaurants that serve alcohol, with aggression.”

Cunradi and her colleagues computed half-yearly counts of emergency department visits related to intimate partner violence for individual zip codes taken from patient-level public datasets. Alcohol outlet density measures – calculated separately for bars, off-premise outlets such as liquor stores and grocery stores that sell alcohol, and restaurants – were derived from California Alcohol Beverage Control records.

“The key findings of the study are that the density of bars was positively associated with emergency room visits related to intimate partner violence; the density of off-premise outlets, such as liquor stores and other stores that sell alcohol, was negatively associated with this type of emergency department visit,” said Cunradi. “For the latter finding, the association was weaker and smaller than the bar association. There was no association between density of restaurants and emergency department visits related to intimate partner violence. These findings suggest that environmental factors, such as alcohol outlet density, affect violence between intimate partners, as indicated by emergency room visits. Further research is needed to understand the mechanisms that underlie these associations.”

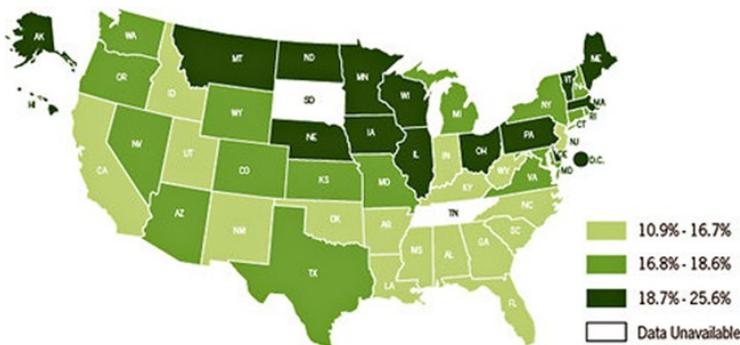
Intimate partner violence is sometimes measured by police reports. Emergency department visits represent a much more serious level this type of violence than police reports. “Police-reported intimate partner violence cases may involve threatening behavior, property damage, loud arguments, and physical aggression that may or may not result in injury,” said Cunradi. “In contrast, when the violence leads to an emergency department visit, it has resulted in injuries requiring medical attention.”

“The take-home message is that environmental factors, such as alcohol outlet density, affect a variety of behaviors, including violence between intimate partners that result in emergency department visits,” said Cunradi. “However, the absence of individual-level data do not allow us to determine the precise mechanisms that link an increase of one bar per square mile with a three percent increased likelihood of IPV-related ED visits in a given zip code. There is nonetheless research evidence linking bar attendance with aggressive behavior, both in and out of the bar. Additional research is needed to investigate how bar density results in increased risk for intimate partner violence leading to emergency department visits.”

**(for more information, see pg 4)**

## Binge Drinking: Age and Income

Recent estimates by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention report that almost 16 percent of people in the United States binge drink, and that while young adults have the highest proportion of binge drinkers (28%) and consume the most (averaging 9.3 drinks), those who binge drink more often (5.5 times a month) are people over the age of 65. They also report that people with lower incomes (less than \$25,000) binge drink more in quantity (number of drinks) and more frequently. People with higher incomes (more than \$75,000) had the highest number of drinkers (20%) compared to those with less income. For underage drinkers, the number of binge drinkers went as high as 23 percent among 12<sup>th</sup>-graders in one state. Besides the numerous health and risk-taking behavior concerns, binge drinking is associated with more than half the number of deaths related to excessive drinking and 85 percent of driving accidents and alcohol-impaired driving arrests. Reports also note that more than half the alcohol consumed by adults is during a binge, and for youth binge drinking accounts for 90 percent of alcohol consumed. (reword last sentence). The map below



## More Binge Drinking...

A recent study looked at the influence of alcohol in movies and young people's drinking behavior. Over two years the study surveyed over 6,500 youth (and asking them four different times) between the ages of 10 and 14, asking them about their drinking behavior and other factors, and whether or not they had seen any of 50 randomly selected movies during each of the sessions. While other factors were associated with drinking but not binge drinking (parents who drank at home, access to alcohol at home), watching films with alcohol was found associated to binge drinking as well as the onset of drinking. Other factors associated with the onset of drinking and binge drinking were owning (alcohol) branded merchandise, rebelliousness, and friends who drank.

## Big City Plans

After targeting smoking in public places and junk food, Mayor Bloomberg in New York City proposed limiting alcohol sales and advertising as part of the ongoing initiatives to promote healthier lifestyles. Plans to limit the number of alcohol outlets was expected to get support from local community boards, some already trying to limit the number of liquor stores in their neighborhoods to reduce noise and rowdiness. However, a recent update in January stated that Bloomberg dropped support of the proposal to reduce the number of outlets. Reports claim that alcohol is related to approximately half of the homicides in the city and more than 25 percent of fatal vehicle accidents, as well as nearly half of all accidental subway deaths. Between 2003 and 2009, the number of alcohol-related emergency visits doubled.

## The Wild Wild West...In Cyberspace

The Wild West without a sheriff is how David Jernigan, director of the John Hopkins's Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, describes the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and smart phone apps to sell alcohol and the effect it is having on kids. Besides having no way to measure how many youth are effected by alcohol ads in social media, he notes how the ads are designed and attract the attention of children despite being directed at legal-age drinkers.

## Gas for Booze

In the UK, people are offered discounts on filling up their vehicle for buying alcohol at gas stations. Efforts are being made to put up safety notices where alcohol is sold at gas stations and garages as well as encouraging that staff be trained for responsible sales practices. Concerns note that offering discounts for gas with the purchase of alcohol boosts unplanned sales and drinking, especially during holiday season when more people are out on the road to visit friends and family.



## Los Angeles Fights Back...Using Cell Phones

In the Summer of 2011, a Councilmember (Richard Alarcon) proposed to ban all alcohol ads on city and controlled property. After other councilmembers refused to put forth the motion, activists have launched a campaign to document the rising number of alcohol ads on city property. Residents are encouraged to take photos of any alcohol ads they see in the city and to text them to the Advocacy and Outreach Manager at Alcohol justice.

Besides the photo, they are also asking the public to give a brief description of the location and if the ad is near a school, church, park, library, community center or yellow cross walk. The president of the Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight notes that "Passing an ordinance to ban alcohol ads on public property is especially important right now because of the current push by some officials to allow commercial ads in city parks, recreation facilities, and other public spaces that are heavily used by children and youth."



## Minimum Prices vs Taxes

An upcoming article in the journal *Addiction* found that setting minimum alcohol prices could reduce drinking more effectively than taxing alcohol. Historical data from British Columbia, Canada, where the government sets the prices for all alcohol products, showed that when prices went up, people drank less. For wine, a 10% price increase correlated with almost 9 percent drop in consumption. Although price increases for beer resulted in less decline in consumption, overall alcohol consumption dropped an average of 3.4 percent for every 10 percent increase in price. Similarly, in England the Prime Minister has given his support for efforts to set minimum prices in supermarkets and other shops selling alcohol. Experts refer to cheap alcohol products as "pocket-money prices" that are dangerous to drinkers, especially younger drinkers. Further they believe that minimum prices will be fair by targeting the cheap, heavily discounted drinks found in markets while not affecting the price in a restaurant or pub.

Critics from the Conservative are calling the proposal "ludicrous" and do not believe it will stop or prevent binge drinking, and stating that the government should have no say in what kind of alcohol consumption is good or bad. One Conservative official even stated "When families are struggling to survive at the moment with their bills the last thing they need is the Government interfering with the cost of alcohol." It has also been noted that 80 members of the Conservatives also voted in favor of lessening the restrictions on smoking in public places, citing the importance of personal freedoms.

## Drinking Promoted by Travel Agencies

In Denmark, a ban on alcohol advertisements marketed toward underage drinkers was recently enforced and fined a youth travel agency the equivalent of just over \$10,000 US dollars for using alcohol to sell trips. Examples in such ads in their marketing products included showing photos of adolescents drinking and boasting visits to a specific number of bars within a number of hours during one night. In one add, an establishment expressed "The (name) offers 3 hours free bar to light up the party, which soon reaches a boiling point". The ruling is the first since the ban went into effect some years ago, and supporters hope the courts will continue to have no tolerance to advertisements encouraging adolescents to drink alcohol.

## Density of Neighborhood Bars

(continued from page 2)

Results will be published in the May 2012 issue of *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research* and are currently available at *Early View*. Co-authors of the ACER paper, "Alcohol Outlet Density and Intimate Partner Violence-Related Emergency Department Visits," were: Christina Mair of the Prevention Research Center at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, as well as the School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley; and William Ponicki and Lillian Remer of the Prevention Research Center at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. The study was funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

For the full report on our resources site: [http://resources.prev.org/inthenews\\_bardensity.html](http://resources.prev.org/inthenews_bardensity.html)