



Alcohol Policy

UPDATE

“Tobacco use is down but heavy drinking remains a problem among youth...”

— CAMH news release announcing the results of the 2001 Ontario Student Drug Use Survey, Nov 19, 2001.

OSDUS 2001:

Alcohol High?

The latest *Ontario Student Drug Use Survey* (OSDUS) is out and the news is not all good. While the proportion of student smokers has declined significantly since 1999, rates of heavy drinking remain stubbornly high, particularly in Northern Ontario. Among the survey's key findings:

- Nearly two thirds (65.6%) of Ontario students reported drinking in the past 12 months. This represents approximately 601,600 young people in grades 7 to 13. As with previous surveys, there was little variation in drinking prevalence by gender, but wide variation by region, with students in the North reporting the highest rate of drinking (73.3%), and those in Toronto the lowest (57.5%).
- Of student drinkers, one in three (37.4%) reported having alcohol only on special occasions, nearly half (45.9%) drank 1-3 times per month and one in six (16.3%) drank at least once a week.
- Some 252,000 students - 27.5% - reported consuming five or more drinks on a single occasion at least once in the month before the survey. The rate of "binge" drinking rose from 4.2% among 7th graders to 48% among 12th graders. Rates varied by gender (31.7% of males, 23.4% of females), and region (18.6% in Toronto, 28.6% in Eastern Ontario, 29.8% in Western Ontario and 32.1% in the North). While the majority of student drinkers did *not* report binge drinking or getting drunk, both practices have increased steadily in the past decade.

- 16% of grade 7 students reported having tried alcohol by grade 4, up slightly from two years ago but similar to rates in 1993 and 1981.
- 12.8% of students who drank during the past year reported being unable to stop drinking once they started; while 29% reported not being able to remember what happened on occasions when they had been drinking.
- One in seven students with a driver's licence reported getting behind the wheel within an hour of having two or more drinks, at least once during the past year. Males, students in grades 12 and 13, and those living in Western Ontario were most likely to report drinking and driving. Disturbingly, nearly one in three students (31.9%) reported being a passenger with a drinking driver during the past twelve months. Older students were most likely to report this behaviour.

Authors Ed Adlaf and Angela Paglia conclude with a discussion of the survey's implications for public health programming. Among other things, they recommend a focus on delaying the onset of drinking. They also highlight the need for programs that address heavy drinking and associated problems such as victimization and drinking and driving. To download the executive summary of *Drug Use among Ontario Students, Findings from the OSDUS, 1977-2001*, go to www.camh.net/research/pdfs/ExecutiveSummary_Osdus2001.pdf. For a paper copy of the bilingual report, call the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 800-463-6273 or 416-595-6111.

Research Corner

Below are interesting recent articles on alcohol policy and prevention issues. For copies or to borrow a journal, contact the CAMH-ARF Library, isd@camh.net, 416-535-8501 ext. 6144. For additional research and news items, see the APOLNET Listserv bi-weekly News Digest or the bi-monthly Alcohol Research Update on www.apolnet.org.

*A typology of adolescent drinking-drivers. Stoduto G and Adlaf EM. **Journal of Child and Adolescent Substance Abuse**, 2001; 10(3), 43-58.

Alcohol and breast cancer: review of epidemiologic and experimental evidence and potential mechanisms. Singletary, KW; Gapstur SM. **Journal of American Medical Assoc** 2001; 286(17): 2143-2151. <http://jama.ama-assn.org/issues/v286n17/abs/jsc10055.html>

Alcohol intake: measure for measure. Ferner, RE and Chambers J. **British Medical Journal** 2001; 323:1439-1440. <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/323/7327/1439>

Alcohol servers' estimates of young people's ages. Willner, P and Rowe G. **Drugs: Education, Prevention & Policy** 2001; 8(4):375-383.

Alcohol use, drug use and alcohol-related problems among men who have sex with men: the Urban Men's Health Study. Stall, Ron et al. **Addiction** 2001; 96(11):1589-1601.

*Attitudes toward compulsory substance abuse treatment: A comparison of the public, counselors, probationers and judges' views. Wild, TC, Newton-Taylor, B; Ogborne AC, Mann R, Erickson P and Macdonald S. **Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy**, 2001; 8(1):33-45.

Does joining the police service drive you to drink? A longitudinal study of the drinking habits of police recruits. Obst, PL, Davey JD and Sheehan, MC. **Drugs: Education, Prevention & Policy** 2001; 8(4):347-357.

*Driving, traffic crashes and addiction: Clients in addiction treatment programs. Chipman, ML, Macdonald S, Mann RE. **American Journal of Epidemiology**, 2001; 153(11):s74.

Identification of alcohol intoxicification by police. Brick, J; Carpenter, JA **Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research**, 25(6):850-855, 2001.

Intervention in social networks: A new method in the prevention of alcohol-related problems. Nygaard, P. **Addiction Research & Theory**, 2001; 9(3):221-237.

Intoxicated motor vehicle passengers: an overlooked at-risk population. Schermer, Carol et al. **Archives of Surgery** 2001; 136:1244-1248. <http://archsurg.ama-assn.org/issues/v136n11/abs/soa1020.html>

Making the link: a public health approach to preventing alcohol-related violence and crime. Mosher J and Jernigan D. **Journal of Substance Use** 2001; 6(4): 273-289.

*Predicting repeat DUI offenses with the alcohol interlock recorder. Marques, PR, Tippett AS, Voas RB, Beirness, DJ. **Accident Analysis and Prevention** 2001; 33(5):609-619.

Slippery when wet: the effects of local alcohol access laws on highway safety. Baughman R, Conlin M, Dickert-Conlin S and Pepper J. **Journal of Health Economics** 2001; 20(6):1089-1096.

*Validation of the Atlantic Alcohol Risk Continuum as a population framework. Poulin, CC, Graham LA, Van Til L. **American Journal of Epidemiology**, 153(11):s247, 2001.

*denotes Canadian content

Quick Quiz #1

Alcohol Policy & Youth

This interactive quiz is part of the new Alcohol Policy 101 series designed to orient APU readers to alcohol-related laws and policies. Please visit www.apolnet.org for the answers, including links to background documents. Good luck!

True or False?

- 1. The legal drinking age in Ontario is 19.
- 2. The legal drinking age in most other Canadian provinces is 18.
- 3. You have to be at least 16 to serve alcohol in an Ottawa bar.
- 4. It's against the law in Ontario for a parent to give a 16-year old a glass of wine in a restaurant.
- 5. You're not breaking any laws if you give alcohol to someone who's underage but shows you a student ID that says they're old enough to drink.
- 6. You can be charged with impaired driving even if you haven't had any alcohol.
- 7. The police can suspend your driver's licence for 12 hours if your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is less than .08 mg%.
- 8. Under graduated licensing, only those under 18 are required to maintain a zero BAC at all times while driving.
- 9. If you just got your driver's licence, you must make sure the person riding in the front seat next to you is not impaired and is an experienced, fully licensed driver.
- 10. You will be immediately suspended from school if you're caught with liquor in your locker.
- 11. If your 18 year-old girlfriend comes to the school dance drunk she can be suspended. If the principal finds out she was drinking your beer in the school parking lot, you will be expelled.
- 12. In Ontario, alcohol ads can't feature a 17 year old drinking, but they can show her dancing and hanging out with friends.

BONUS QUESTIONS

- 13. What is the legal drinking age in Michigan?
- 14. If you are convicted of supplying alcohol to a minor under the Ontario *Liquor Licence Act*, what penalties, if any, apply?
- 15. If you are convicted of impaired driving for the first time, what will it take to get your licence back?

Round Up

“ Got a question? comment? announcement? Get connected!
Join the APOLNET Listserv, www.apolnet.org/subscribe.html.”

Province unveils 18 new LCBO "franchises"

Eighteen small towns in Eastern Ontario will be test cases for a bold plan to add 150 new "franchises" to the LCBO retail network. The announcement came on December 20, three months after Minister of Consumer and Business Services (MCBS) Norm Sterling unveiled a major liquor outlet expansion to improve access to alcohol in small rural and tourist communities. The LCBO is soliciting interest from prospective operators, although municipalities will have veto power over whether additional outlets are allowed within their jurisdiction. Meanwhile, The Beer Store chain is pushing for the Minister's go-ahead to open branded affiliates in South Mountain, Bath, Constance Bay, Verona, and Wolfe Island. It is also offering attractive sales commissions, thousands of dollars in start-up and store improvement grants and other incentives to encourage new affiliates to carry Beer Store signage and products. The move to expand retail alcohol availability, more clearly "brand" retailers and increase competition in small communities has been met with some concern by addictions groups and public health authorities. Recently, the Toronto Board of Health passed a motion calling on the government to proceed with caution citing Canadian and international research linking increased alcohol outlets and promotion with increased drinking and driving, alcohol-related violence, injuries and other problems. Other groups appear to be taking a "wait and see" approach, noting the LCBO is promising to continue to provide responsible sales training to new operators and to vigorously monitor and enforce compliance with the law, particularly prohibitions on the sale of alcohol to minors and the intoxicated. For more info on the LCBO expansion, contact

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Brian Kelcey in the Minister's office, 416-326-3001, or Marisa Kraus, marisa.kraus@lcbo.com. For details on the controversial Beer Store expansion plans contact Jeff Newton, 905-709-1811 ext 223. For a copy of the T-O Board of Health Report contact Frank Baldassini, 416-395-7352.

Ignition Interlocks go into effect in Ontario

On December 23, ignition interlocks finally became mandatory in Ontario. Only first, second and third time offenders who have served the term of their suspension and completed a remedial measures program, will be eligible to have the devices installed at their own expense as a condition of having their driver's licence reinstated. Four-time offenders receive a lifetime suspension and are ineligible for the program. Ignition interlocks are devices that detect alcohol in a driver's breath and keep a car from starting if the driver is over a certain limit. They also log the number of times someone has tried to start the car after drinking. Mandatory ignition interlocks came into effect a year after the original private member's bill received all-party support in the provincial legislature and on the heels of a federal criminal code amendment giving judges in jurisdictions with ignition interlock laws the option to authorize the use of these devices. Meanwhile, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health is reporting that only one of some 12,000 convicted drinking drivers who participated in the *Back on Track* remedial measures program since April 1999 has returned due to a subsequent conviction. Successful completion of the program is mandatory for those convicted of drinking and driving under the provincial highway traffic act. Participants must undergo an initial assessment, complete an education or treatment program and pass a six-month follow-up interview

prior to getting their licence back. They must also pay for the program. CAMH research indicates that such programs can cut the mortality rate among participants by 30%. For more on remedial measures or ignition interlocks, see the Impaired Driving Action Pack on www.apolnet.org.

BAC to .05?

MADD is on a mission to reduce the number of drinking drivers on the road; and its solution is to reduce the legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to .05. Right now the law is .08, although in Ontario police can automatically suspend the licences of drivers with BACs between .05 and .08. According to research conducted by CAMH senior scientist, Bob Mann, lowering the legal BAC limit will reduce total traffic deaths by 6% to 8%. The issue is being considered by the House of Commons Committee on Justice and Human Rights. For updates on the committee's deliberations, visit the Hot Issues section of APOLNET or call Committee clerk Danielle Vachon, 613-996-1553. For the case on lowering the BAC, or a comprehensive review of Canadian impaired driving legislation prepared by Western Ontario law professor, Robert Solomon, contact MADD Canada, 800-665-6233, or visit its online library at www.madd.ca/library. Some documents are also available in French. For an opposing view on the BAC debate visit the Canada Safety Council, www.safety-council.org. To download a copy of the *2001 Road Safety Monitor*, go to the Publications section of Traffic Injury Research Foundation's website www.trafficinjuryfoundation.ca or call Transport Canada, 800-333-0371. The new road safety statistics, like the BAC proposal, have sparked some controversy. For sample media coverage see the APOLNET listserv news digest online.

News & Views

Got an event to promote? Submit it to the APOLNET Events & Milestones Calendar, www.apolnet.org.

About Us

Alcohol Policy Update (APU) is a free quarterly fax-newsletter of the Alcohol Policy Network. APN is a project of the Ontario Public Health Association. Our mission is to facilitate the development of policies that prevent problems associated with alcohol use and enhance the health, safety and well-being of individuals and communities across Ontario.

APN offers a range of products and services including information and referral, regional workshops and seminars, publications and a comprehensive website called APOLNET.

APN does not take public positions on issues although individual members and the Ontario Public Health Association may do so. Information appearing in this newsletter in no way constitutes an endorsement by OPHA or its members.

APU is distributed via fax to over 700 subscribers active in substance abuse prevention, injury prevention and public health. It can also be downloaded from the Resources section of our website, www.apolnet.org.

For more details on this newsletter or our other products and services, please contact Paula Neves, Project Manager, apn@opha.on.ca, or Ana Almeida, Web Development and Training Consultant, apolnet@opha.on.ca.

New Resources

In the fall, APN released the *2002 Directory of Substance Abuse and Injury Prevention Contacts in Public Health*. This year's edition includes approximately 150 contacts in 37 public health units, and detailed descriptions of programs and resources related to bicycle and motor vehicle injury, falls, alcohol and other drug use. It also lists contact info for over 200 non-profit and government organizations involved in injury and substance abuse prevention as well as useful background resources guiding work in the substance abuse area. To download your free copy, go to the Resources Section of www.apolnet.org. To find colleagues with expertise in a specific area try searching the Key Contacts Database in the similarly titled section of the website.

Looking for interactive websites to liven up your youth alcohol and other drug use presentations? Check out the new and improved Virtual Party, www.virtual-party.org, a collaborative venture of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the Peterborough County-City Health Unit. Other student-oriented websites we like: www.HadEnough.org and www.factsontap.org, two US sites targeting college binge drinking. Also recommended: www.projectknow.com, a site on alcohol and drugs for parents and teens. And from down under, the very cool, www.100incontrol.com, and the glitzy and colourful, www.alcohol.org.nz, targeting social hosts, heavy drinkers, party-goers, outdoor types, parents and others. Downloadable software on books and booze is available from the University of Alberta Health Centre, www.ualberta.ca/dept/health/public_html/healthinfo/books.htm and for those doing DUI presentations, check out Drink Wheel, an online BAC calculator at www.intox.com/wheel/drink_wheel.asp. Finally, if looking for substance abuse information and resources for use in a classroom setting, visit OPHEA's www.moreaction.org (online registration required) or the Alcohol-related Resources Database on www.apolnet.org (after Feb 15).

APN News: CoCo a' GoGo

The APN Coordinating Committee, affectionately known as "CoCo," is a little-known group with big ideas and even bigger plans. CoCo is comprised of researchers, health promoters, and community members with an interest in alcohol policy. Its role is to advise APN on emerging policy issues. Last summer, the group organized a retreat to review accomplishments since its inception in August 1995, and map out strategic priorities for the coming year. It identified committee renewal, strengthened stakeholder relations and orientation and training for the substance abuse field as three issues needing immediate attention. Building on these recommendations, APN co-hosted an **orientation** and **web tour** for substance abuse professionals new to the field. It also helped found the **Newbie Network**, a new collaborative venture to support practitioners who've been on the job less than a year. In 2002, APN will expand these offerings to include a **policy tele-roundtable series**, a **self-guided e-learning initiative**, and much more. Over the coming months, CoCo members will also be meeting with key stakeholders to address worrisome trends in alcohol and other drug use. Finally, the committee is launching a **recruitment drive** for representatives from Aboriginal, rural, Northern, enforcement and public health communities. If you're well-networked, energetic, knowledgeable about alcohol policy issues and able to commit 3-4 hours a month, please contact Ana Almeida, 416-367-3313 x23 or Nancy Langdon, nancy.langdon@rmoc.on.ca. In the meantime, our sincere thanks and best wishes to those who've temporarily stepped off, or recently resigned from the Coordinating Committee to take on exciting new assignments: Norman Giesbrecht (CAMH-Research), Dianne McKay (Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres), Trevor Werely (FOCUS Resource Centre), Ginette Delaurier (Porcupine Health Unit), and Ena DePeuter (Algoma District Health Unit). Way to go, CoCo!

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I would rate this issue of *Alcohol Policy Update* as ...

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1	2	3	4	5

Comments/suggestions: