

MCRUD AGREEMENT

The MCRUD Agreement is a statement of the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking outlining the factors we believe contribute to underage drinking and the measures we believe must be undertaken to address this problem.

Persons and organizations who affiliate with MCRUD will share this point of view and are committed to carrying out the suggested strategies to the extent they are able.

Alcohol is a legal drug, which can be used responsibly by many persons 21 and older. The misuse of alcohol, however, correlates with a number of health, safety, and social problems, and regular use over time leads to alcohol dependence in 10% of those who drink.

Alcohol is particularly harmful for young people because they can develop dependence at a higher rate and in a briefer time of regular use than do those who begin drinking as adults. Biological children of alcoholic parents and grandparents are at particularly high risk for developing dependence if they use alcohol. An additional problem with underage use is the youthful pattern of high risk drinking.

Contributing Causes

The factors which lead to youthful use of alcohol are complex and interacting. MCRUD believes these include:

- A cultural view that alcohol use is the norm and that underage use is a rite of passage--inevitable, and therefore to be tolerated.
- The accessibility of alcohol--from the home, adult buyers, or abundant commercial outlets at low prices and with little risk of citation for breaking the law.
- Insufficient enforcement of underage drinking laws, prosecution of buyers and sellers, or conviction and punishment of those who break the law.
- Inconsistent enforcement of school, workplace, and other community policies.
- Industry promotion which reaches youth through advertising, sponsorships, and appealing products.
- Media portrayals which establish alcohol use as the norm, or which show misuse as responsible, acceptable, or inconsequential.
- Societal denial of the nature and magnitude of alcohol use problems, a perception that problems exist only in certain communities, or disbelief that problems exist locally.
- Parent role modeling, disengagement from children's lives, inadequate supervision of children's activities, or non-involvement with children's peers and other parents.
- The perception that alcohol relieves stress, medicates pain, avoids problems, and gets one away from oneself.
- Youthful perception that "there is nothing else to do" as well as insufficient alternative activity, opportunities for community service, etc.
- The challenge of reaching youth at a developmental stage when they establish independence, feel invulnerable, question authority, view choices as a matter of personal freedom, and when peers are a primary influence.
- Prevention efforts which are not continuous, don't employ multiple strategies, don't address environmental as well as individual issues, are insufficiently targeted, or don't use culturally appropriate approaches and materials.

With complex factors influencing underage use of alcohol, there can be no simple or one-time-only solution to the problem. Reducing and preventing underage drinking will require continuous and repeated strategies, coming from multiple sectors of society, targeting both individuals and their environment.

**Strategies Directed at
Individuals**



Strategies targeting individuals will encourage and enable them to make healthy, no-use choices. The

- Provide factual information about alcohol and its effects on mind, body, and behavior, and about the consequences of underage use.
- Educate youth about their individual risk.
- Develop prevention skills such as decision-making, peer resistance, effective communication, building healthy relationships, study and other life skills, media literacy, and self-motivation.
- Provide alternative activities and diverse opportunities for creativity, expression, civic engagement, community service, and forming friendships.
- Make parenting education, with content which specifically addresses underage drinking, available for all parents and caregivers.
- Acknowledge and address the reasons a youth may be using alcohol.
- Require assessment and education when youth violate laws or policies.
- Intervene at the earliest sign of any problem with a youth's alcohol use.
- Use materials and delivery methods which are targeted and culturally diverse.
- Be delivered through classrooms, youth organizations, athletic teams, religious institutions, informed parenting, workplaces, and every possible sector of society.

**Strategies Directed at
the Environment:
Limiting Accessibility
and Changing the
Culture**



Strategies targeting the environment will create or change conditions, laws, policies, and practices so that youth are both influenced and supported to make healthy choices.
**Strategies Directed at the Environment:
Limiting Accessibility and Changing the Culture**

Environmental Strategies: Promotions

- Prohibit alcohol industry sponsorship of sports, races, concerts, cultural or other events frequented by youth where the company or any alcohol product is named, portrayed, or advertised.
- Prohibit advertising which would appeal to youth in community settings and on college campuses.
- Restrict advertising which would appeal to youth in media.
- Limit the type, size, density and placement of alcohol advertisements.
- Prohibit sales or giveaways of products appealing to youth (t-shirts, water bottles, stuffed animals, etc.) which have alcohol brand names, logos, or other identifying information.
- Require a match of non-industry counter-advertising for radio, tv, billboards, and publications.
- Restrict product placement in media such as movies, music videos, etc.
- Restrict advertising that includes product costs, in media or on billboards, or on signage on store fronts/windows, or on walkways in front of outlets, or on promotional displays in aisles or at ends of aisles.

Environmental Strategies: Product

- Restrict the size of single drink containers or servings.
- Restrict the alcohol content of beer, wine, and distilled spirits.
- On its label, include the number of standard drinks a product contains.
- Impose labeling and container requirements to distinguish alcohol from other drink products.
- Prohibit or restrict sales of products packaged, named, labeled, or promoted in a manner that would appeal to youth.
- Revise warning labels on alcohol products so they are more easily read, conspicuously placed, and provide a rotation of messages.

Environmental Strategies: Placement

- Prohibit promotional displays of alcohol products
- Obtain ordinances or store practices which confine shelving of alcohol products to places not easily observed by children or reached by youth.
- Decrease and/or limit the density of alcohol outlets.
- Prohibit or restrict the manner of alcohol beverage sales at public events, such as fairs, games, concerts.
- Prohibit alcohol sales near schools, religious institutions, etc.

Environmental Strategies : Pricing

- Raise taxes on beer and wine sales to the level of distilled spirits.
- Adjust the tax rates to reflect the increase in the Consumer Price Index since 1970 (last date of adjustment).
- Adjust tax rates annually to reflect inflation.
- Increase tax levels in those states needed to create parity with bordering states
- Prohibit or restrict happy hours and other discount drink promotions.
- Raise alcohol retail license fees to fund enforcement, education, and surveillance activities.

Environmental Strategies: Point of Sale

- Require server training for all persons involved in selling or serving alcohol products.
- Enact and/or enforce laws requiring servers to limit drinks per hour and refuse sales to persons intoxicated or drinking irresponsibly.
- Establish practice of checking id, confiscating false ID cards, and posting signs and using other possible aids for servers to check ID's accurately.
- Require prominent display of health warnings related to alcohol use at all points of sale.
- Enact ordinances and laws requiring keg tracking.
- Increase citations of persons selling or attempting to sell and purchasing or attempting to purchase alcohol products for underage use.
- Place limits on the number of hours per day or week that alcohol can be sold.
- Prohibit or limit happy hours and other drink promotions.

**Other
Strategies
Needed
Uniformly
Statewide To
Change The
Context Of
Underage
Drinking**

- Develop media attention to and coverage of research, incidences, consequences and all other matters related to underage drinking.
- Create a climate in which the question is always asked, "Was alcohol involved?"
- Create community coalitions, open to all stakeholders including youth, which have specific underage drinking prevention goals related to locally identified problems and issues.
- Build public demand and resources for swift and certain citation, prosecution, and adjudication of all violators of underage drinking laws,
 - creating a climate in which people assume they will be caught for violating the laws, and
 - assuring that communities are safe and public places are
- Through education, media campaigns, and other various means, create public perceptions which
 - are accurate about underage use and its various consequences
 - support non-use of alcohol by those under 21
 - understand the differences between low risk and high risk consumption of alcohol
 - acknowledge the influence of adult role modeling and behaviors
 - put actual use levels and prevailing norms into perspective
 - understand the need for all sectors of society to care about and act on the issues of underage drinking.
- Work for and create conditions which assist youth to have hope for their future, develop a sense of purpose and meaning, engage with society, and believe their communities care about them.

Statements of fact in this agreement are documented in the 10th *Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health: Highlights from Current Research, From the Secretary of Health and Human Services*, June 2002, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institute of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Publication No. 00-1583.

Causes of underage drinking and strategies suggested for addressing the problem have been identified by the MCRUD Steering Committee based on their experience working to prevent underage drinking and on findings and recommendations issued by a number of sources, including: National Crime Prevention Council, www.ncpc.org,* FACE, Truth and Clarity on Alcohol, www.faceproject.org. * Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, www.pire.org, * Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org, * Marin Institute, www.marininstitute.org, * Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, www.samhsa.gov/csap, * Center for Science in the Public Interest, www.cspinet.org, * Join Together, www.jointogether.org

MCRUD is the Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking, which is guided by a statewide steering committee and youth leaders and coordinated by Prevention Network. For further information about MCRUD call 800/968-4968 or e-mail to mcруд@voyager.net

Prevention Network is administered by Prevention Michigan, Inc., with funding provided by Michigan Department of Community Health/Division of Substance Abuse Performance and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Federal Block Grant Funds, with additional funds from Michigan State Police, Office of Highway Safety Planning, and Michigan Department of Community Health/ Office of Drug Control Policy.

MCRUD AGREEMENT SIGN ON FORM—Page 1 of 2

ORGANIZATION: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY & STATE: _____ ZIP _____

PHONE: (____) _____ FAX: (____) _____

E-MAIL: _____

We support the MCRUD Agreement and are committed to carrying out its suggested strategies to the extent we can.

signature

date

role in organization

You may include our organization on a list of MCRUD supporters Do not list our organization

Our organization is primarily: (Please circle) adults k-12 students college students a mixture

Our organization is mostly: (Please circle) volunteers professionals a mixture

We consider our organization: (Circle all that apply) community based school based

college based faith based parent group youth group coalition

business/workplace ATOD prevention provider health or human service

Other (specify): _____

Our organization operates with: (Check all that apply) full time paid staff part time paid staff

no staff volunteer staff an office no office

Our organization is already involved in underage drinking prevention. Our activities are: _____

Our organization is already involved with MCRUD. We: (Circle all that apply)

Serve on the Steering Committee Are a MCRUD Coalition Work with a local MCRUD Coalition

Have youth from our community on the Teen Leadership Team Have received a MCRUD Grant

Our organization plans to take the following steps to act on the MCRUD Agreement: _____

MCRUD AGREEMENT SIGN ON FORM—Page 2 of 2

OUR ORGANIZATION REQUESTS THE FOLLOWING

- Add us to the mailing list for notice of MCRUD Steering Committee meetings and events.
- Send information about Prevention Network Grants
- Add us to the alert list for state/national news, resources, funding, training, and other opportunities related to underage drinking prevention.
- Send this information by: (Please circle) mail fax e-mail
- Contact information (if not the same as on other side): _____

Technical assistance from Prevention Network staff for:

- Understanding the MCRUD Agreement and/ or using it to raise community awareness.
- Ideas for underage drinking prevention activity.
- Involving youth, parents, schools, campuses, or other community sectors in our prevention work.
- What specific sector(s): _____
- _____
- Working with law enforcement and courts
- Working with media
- Other (please explain): _____
- _____

You can FAX the signed MCRUD Agreement and/or request for assistance to 517/393-6931. Or tear this page from the Agreement; fold in thirds with PN address showing on the outside; tape the edge; drop in any USPO Box; no stamp needed. Thank you!



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