

Description of strategy

The "Shoulder Tap" is a method minors use to obtain alcohol from social sources. In this method the minor will stand outside of an alcohol establishment and ask an adult to buy them alcohol by tapping the adult's shoulder or otherwise signaling the adult. "Shoulder Tap" enforcement programs enlist a minor decoy, under the direct supervision of law enforcement officers, to solicit adults outside of liquor stores to buy the minor decoy alcohol. Any person seen furnishing alcohol to the minor decoy is arrested (either cited or booked) for furnishing alcohol to a minor (National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives, 2001).

Discussion of effectiveness

Alcohol
 Limited evidence suggests that "Shoulder Tap" enforcement programs are effective as part of a multi-component strategy for alcohol outcomes (Spera, Barlas, Szoc, Prabhakaran, & Cambridge, 2012). More evidence is needed to evaluate "Shoulder Tap" programs as stand-alone prevention strategy.

| Intervening Variables | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Retail Pricing | |
| Retail availability | |
| Social availability | |
| Law Enforcement | |
| Community norms | |
| Promotion & media | |

References for description of strategy

National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives. (2001). Community how to guides on underage drinking prevention: Guide 5, Enforcement. Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Retrieved July 23, 2012, from: http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/alcohol/community%20guides%20html/Book5_Enforcement.html#Shoulder%20tap

Evidence base

Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. (1999). Regulatory strategies for reducing youth access to alcohol: Best practices. Calverton, MD: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Center for Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws. Available at: <http://www.udetc.org/documents/accesslaws.pdf>

Spera, C., Barlas, F., Szoc, R. Z., Prabhakaran, J., & Cambridge, M. H. (2012). Examining the influence of the Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) program on alcohol-related outcomes in five communities surrounding Air Force bases. *Addictive Behaviors*, 37(4), 513–516. doi:10.1016/j.addbeh.2011.11.016

Further reading

California ABC - Shoulder Tap Program (Web page). (n.d.). Available at: http://www.abc.ca.gov/programs/Shoulder_tap.html

Hoover, S. A. (n.d.). Policy strategies to reduce underage and binge drinking. Community Prevention Institute. Available at: http://www.cpi.org/docs/publications/TARP/TARP_PolicyStrategies.pdf

National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives. (2001). Community how to guides on underage drinking prevention: Guide 5, Enforcement. Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Available at: http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/alcohol/community%20guides%20html/Book5_Enforcement.html#Shoulder%20tap

Toomey, T. L., Fabian, L. E. A., Erickson, D. J., & Lenk, K. M. (2007). Propensity for obtaining alcohol through shoulder tapping. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 31(7), 1218–1223. doi:10.1111/j.1530-0277.2007.00420.x.

Toomey, T. L., & Wagenaar, A. C. (2002). Environmental policies to reduce college drinking: Options and research findings. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, Suppl. 14, 193.