

Enforce age-21 drinking age (e.g., compliance checks)

Under this strategy, campuses and local and state government support and implement strong enforcement of the existing age-21 minimum legal drinking age. (Compliance checks are an approach regulated at the local or state level whereby undercover youth, supervised by law enforcement or licensing authorities, attempt to purchase alcohol. When a violation occurs, a penalty is applied to the server and/or the license holder, depending on local or state law.)

-**Effectiveness:** ★★ = Higher

-**Cost:** \$\$ = Mid-range

-**Barriers:** ## = Moderate

-**Research Amount:** **** = 5 or more longitudinal studies

-**Public Health Reach:** Broad

-**Staffing Expertise Needed:** Policy advocate

-**Target Population:** Underage students

-**Research Population:** General

Potential Resources:

Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center, [Conducting Compliance Check Operations](#) (online training)

For more information about intervention designs and implementation, check the articles in the References tab.

References:

- Barry R, Edwards E, Pelletier A, Brewer R, Naimi T, Redmond A, et al. [Enhanced enforcement of laws to prevent alcohol sales to underage persons — New Hampshire, 1999–2004](#). *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 53(21):452–4, 2004.
- Flewelling RL, Grube JW, Paschall MJ, Biglan A, Kraft A, Black C, et al. [Reducing youth access to alcohol: Findings from a community-based randomized trial](#). *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 51(1–2):264–77, 2013.
- Grube JW. Preventing sales of alcohol to minors: Results from a community trial. *Addiction*, 92(Suppl. 2):S251–60, 1997.
- Holmila M, Karlsson T, & Warpenius K. Controlling teenagers' drinking: effects of a community-based prevention project. *Journal of Substance Use*, 15(3):201–14, 2010.
- Preusser DF, Williams AF, & Weinstein HB. Policing underage alcohol sales. *Journal of Safety Research*, 25(3):127–33, 1994.
- Scribner R & Cohen D. The effect of enforcement on merchant compliance with the minimum legal drinking age law. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 31(4):857–66, 2001.
- Treno AJ, Gruenewald PJ, Lee JP, & Remer LG. [The Sacramento Neighborhood Alcohol Prevention Project: Outcomes from a community prevention trial](#). *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 68(2):197–207, 2007.
- Wagenaar AC, Toomey TL, & Erickson DJ. Preventing youth access to alcohol: Outcomes from a multi-community time-series trial. *Addiction*, 100(3):335–45, 2005.
- Review:
Elder R, Lawrence B, Janes G, Brewer R, Toomey T, Hingson R, et al. Enhanced enforcement of laws prohibiting sale of alcohol to minors: Systematic review of effectiveness for reducing sales and underage drinking. *Transportation Research E-Circular*, (E-C123):181–8, 2007.

References from 2019 update

- Erickson, D.J.; Smolenski, D.J.; Toomey, T.L.; et al. Do alcohol compliance checks decrease underage sales at neighboring establishments? *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 74(6):852–858, 2013.
- Moore, R.S.; Roberts, J.; McGaffigan, R.; et al. Implementing a reward and reminder underage drinking prevention program in convenience stores near southern California American Indian reservations. *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse* 38(5):456–460, 2012.