

American Medical Association

Physicians dedicated to the health of America



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AMA CALLS ON CONGRESS, OTHERS TO WORK TOGETHER TO STOP UNDERAGE DRINKING

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“With the health of our nation’s teens and pre-teens at stake, the AMA urges the implementation of a coordinated campaign to combat underage drinking. We need a comprehensive program – one that involves all parties, not just the government.

“Let’s use the recommendations in the National Research Council (NRC) and Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, “Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility” as a guide to a national campaign to combat this public health threat of underage drinking.

“The AMA and the NRC/IOM report agree -- we need to increase alcohol taxes to be used for health education, enhance enforcement laws and dedicate funds to a national adult-oriented media campaign on underage drinking and its health effects.

“This report provides an excellent primer on the problem of underage drinking and what science-based strategies must be deployed at the local, state and federal level. We need to use all the tools and resources available to help our nation’s youth abstain from drinking.

“Today, the Senate helps shine a spotlight on this important issue by holding a hearing on America’s underage drinking problem. The AMA commends the Health, Labor, Education and Pensions Subcommittee on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services for taking this issue as seriously as the families devastated by the negative health effects of underage drinking.

“The AMA has long been concerned about underage drinking, and its effects on our patients -- the youth of America and their families. The AMA Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse was created to help stop this problem.”

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The AMA currently has two programs aimed at eliminating underage drinking through its Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse. Reducing Underage Drinking Through Coalitions works with community leaders to identify factors that contribute to underage drinking and then create solutions. A Matter of Degree works with campus communities to reduce college student drinking by moving beyond traditional prevention efforts and addressing the social environment that influences individual decision-making.

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