



MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF PREVENTION PROFESSIONALS AND ADVOCATES

POSITION STATEMENT ON UNDERAGE DRINKING

Preventing the crime of possessing or consuming alcohol by any person under 21 is an important goal of MAPPAA. To reach this goal, MAPPAA supports the following positions:

All existing laws should be strictly enforced by all jurisdictions and law enforcement agencies. This enforcement should emphasize 1) possession and/or consumption by persons under 21; 2) furnishing or selling alcohol to a person under 21; 3) driving by a person under age 21 with a BAC of .02 or higher; 4) manufacture or use of false ID; 5) requiring keg registration; and 6) requiring adult responsibility. Laws are referenced on the back.

Sure, swift and significant sanctions should be imposed starting with the first offence and become more severe for subsequent offenses. Sanctions should be applied by police, the Department of Juvenile Justice, State's Attorney's offices, courts, and alcoholic beverage license boards.

A certified addiction counselor should screen all first offenders for substance abuse treatment needs. Also, an appropriate professional should assess mental health needs.

Education and training should be available for communities and professionals in all disciplines on the impact of underage drinking and on effective strategies for prevention, enforcement and treatment.

Community education and social marketing campaigns should be used to build community norms that underage drinking is unhealthy, illegal and unacceptable.

New laws and policies shown by research or practice to reduce underage drinking should be adopted, including 1) higher alcohol taxes; 2) automatic revocation of driver's license for possession of alcohol by a person under 21; 3) minimum server/seller age of 21; 4) server/seller training for all retail servers and clerks; 5) criminalization of laws against adults providing alcohol to and/or permitting consumption by any person under 21.

All youth under 21 years of age should have adequate and appropriate opportunities to spend their leisure time in activities that are alcohol-free and developmentally appropriate.

Jurisdictions and agencies addressing underage drinking should develop and maintain data systems that improve needs assessment and process, outcome and impact evaluations.