

CHAPTER 4.2

Cross-State Survey Report

This document is excerpted from:
The December 2015 Report to Congress on the Prevention and Reduction of Underage Drinking

Summary

The Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking (STOP) Act mandates annual collection of data from the states and the District of Columbia on their performance in enacting, enforcing, and creating laws, regulations, and programs to prevent or reduce underage drinking. Since 2011, this survey has collected data on the following topics:

- Enforcement programs to promote compliance with underage drinking laws and regulations
- Programs targeted to youth, parents, and caregivers to deter underage drinking
- State interagency collaboration to implement prevention programs, state best-practice standards, and collaborations with tribal governments
- The amount that each state invests on the prevention of underage drinking

Chapter 4.2 discusses the survey responses in detail. A key conclusion to be drawn from the STOP Act State Survey is that the states have demonstrated a commitment to the reduction of underage drinking and its consequences. This commitment is evident in the fact that all states completed the 90-question survey, reported numerous program activities, and in many cases provided substantial detail about those activities (see individual state summaries). (Note: henceforth, the states and the District of Columbia are referred to, together, as “states.”)

The results presented in Chapter 4.2 must be viewed with caution. In many cases, substantial missing data decrease the extent to which a meaningful conclusion can be drawn. Caution must also be exercised in interpreting the changes from 2011 to 2014, given variations in data availability.

Enforcement Programs

The large majority of states collect data on state compliance checks, minor in possession (MIP) charges, and penalties imposed on retail establishments. However, less than one third of the states collect data on local enforcement efforts. Thus the ability to draw conclusions about enforcement activities and effectiveness is limited, because a substantial portion of underage drinking law enforcement happens at the local level. Improvements in state enforcement data systems would increase the accuracy of these analyses in future years.

Overall, enforcement activities appear highly variable across the states. Compliance checks and other enforcement activities related to furnishing (Cops in Shops, shoulder tap operations, underage alcohol–related fatality investigations, and enforcement of direct-shipment laws) are fairly widely implemented, although not necessarily at both the state and local levels. The total number of checks is modest, however. Just over 60 percent of those states conducting checks test 20 percent or fewer of their licensees. Sanctions for furnishing are predominantly fines, which are about five times more common than suspensions. Revocations are extremely rare; 65 percent of the states revoked one or no licenses. Data on MIP activities (an index of the enforcement of a variety of laws aimed at deterring underage drinking) revealed medians of 1.6 arrests per 1,000 underage drinking occasions, and 1,728 arrests per 100,000 in a population of 16- to 20-year-olds.

Programs Targeted to Youth, Parents, and Caregivers

States reported implementing a wide variety of underage-drinking-prevention programs for youth, parents, and caregivers. Many well-known programs were reported, including those

focused on life skills, refusal skills, media advocacy, community organizing, and environmental change. The programs are predominantly focused on individuals, with approximately one in four programs focused on environmental change. Data on numbers of program participants were limited, owing perhaps to inherent difficulties in estimating program participation for programs focused on entire populations or subpopulations (e.g., environmental change programs). Thirty-five percent of the states reported implementing programs to measure or reduce youth exposure to alcohol advertising and marketing.

Evaluation of underage drinking prevention programs is not comprehensive. Fifty-four percent of the programs the states described have been evaluated, and reports are available for 39 percent of these. As with enforcement, assessments of program effectiveness are limited by a lack of relevant data.

Ninety-two percent of the states reported they had best practice standards for underage-drinking-prevention programs. About 75 percent of states with standards reported that a state agency had established their best standards, and 66 percent indicated that they followed a federal standard. Close to half (47 percent) included SAMHSA and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) in their list of agencies from which standards were obtained

Collaborations, Planning, and Reports

Seventy-eight percent of states reported the existence of a state-level interagency body or committee to coordinate or address underage drinking prevention activities. However, of the states with such a committee, only about 1 in 10 included the governor, and 1 in 5 included a representative of the legislature. Thirty-eight percent of the states with interagency committees included community coalitions, and 50 percent included college or university administrations, campus life departments, or campus police. About one in four states included youth or local law enforcement. Thus, key decisionmakers and local stakeholders were underrepresented on the interagency committees.

States were asked whether they had prepared a plan for preventing underage drinking or issued a report on underage drinking in the past 3 years. Sixty-nine percent of the states had prepared a plan, and 61 percent had issued a report.

State Expenditures on the Prevention of Underage Drinking

States were asked to estimate state expenditures for two categories of enforcement activities and five types of programs targeted to youth, parents, and caregivers. The largest expenditure category is for community-based programs, followed by K–12 programs. While the median of expenditures for all enforcement activities (median = \$8,000) is higher than that for all programs

targeted to youth, parents, and caregivers (median = \$0)⁶⁹, the total dollar amount expended for these nonenforcement programs (approximately \$150 million) is more than 40 times the total dollar amount spent on enforcement (approximately \$3.7 million). Data reporting was incomplete, with response rates ranging from 20 to 66 percent (median = 48 percent) across the five expenditure categories for programs targeting youth, parents, and caregivers. Thus these results must be viewed with some caution. On the other hand, these data may be difficult for states to assemble given multiple funding streams and asynchronous fiscal years, among other issues.

Comparison of Enforcement Data: 2011–2014

In the 4 years in which the STOP Act State Survey has been implemented, the states varied greatly in their completion of datasets for all years. Fewer than half of the states provided information in all 4 years for six of the enforcement data categories selected for comparison. Forty-nine percent of the states provided MIP data and 63 percent provided state compliance check data for all 4 years. Fifty-six percent of the states that reported data for all 4 years reported a smaller number of MIP arrests in 2014 compared with 2011, and 56 percent of the states reported an increased number of compliance checks between 2011 and 2014. Less than 20 percent of the states reported on local compliance checks and state expenditures for compliance checks in all 4 years. In all penalty categories, larger percentages of the states reported reduced use of these penalties between 2011 and 2014 than reported increased use.

Comment

The data reveal a wide range of activity in the areas studied, although the activities vary in scope and intensity from state to state. Clearly, all states have areas of strength and areas where improvements can be realized. A recurrent theme is the inadequacy of some state data systems to respond to the data requested in the survey, especially for local law enforcement and expenditures. Accurate and complete data are essential both for describing current activities to prevent underage drinking and for monitoring progress in future state surveys.

Introduction

The STOP Act mandates this annual report on the states' performance in enacting, enforcing, and creating laws, regulations, and programs to prevent or reduce underage drinking. An annual survey of the states is conducted to collect data on many of the performance measures described in the STOP Act. Since 2011, this survey has collected data on the following topics derived directly from the STOP Act:

- Enforcement programs to promote compliance with underage drinking laws and regulations
- Programs targeted to youth, parents, and caregivers to deter underage drinking
- The amount that each state invests on the prevention of underage drinking

⁶⁹ The median is zero if more than half the responses are zero. The difference between the two types of expenditures can also be expressed by comparing the average (mean) expenditure: The mean expenditure for enforcement activities is around \$96,000, compared with a mean of nearly \$1.4 million in expenditures for programs targeted to youths, parents, and caregivers.

The survey instrument comprised approximately 90 questions divided into 4 sections consistent with the topics and performance measures described in the STOP Act.

1. Enforcement of underage drinking laws, including:
 - The extent to which states implement checks of retail outlets, assessing compliance with laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol to minors, and the results of these checks
 - The extent to which the states implement other strategies for underage drinking enforcement, including Minors in Possession, Cops in Shops, shoulder taps, party patrol operations or programs, and underage alcohol-related fatality investigations
 - Sanctions imposed for violations
2. Underage drinking prevention programs targeted to youth, parents, and caregivers, including data on the number of people served by these programs and whether these programs are evaluated
3. State interagency collaboration to implement prevention programs, state best-practice standards, and collaborations with tribal governments
4. State funds invested in the following categories, along with descriptions of any dedicated fees, taxes, or fines used to raise funds:
 - Compliance checks and provisions for technology to aid in detecting false IDs at retail outlets
 - Checkpoints and saturation patrols
 - Community-based, school-based, and higher-education-based programs
 - Programs that target youth within the juvenile justice and child welfare systems
 - Other state efforts as deemed appropriate

The survey questions were structured to allow states maximum flexibility in deciding which initiatives to describe and how to describe them. Open-ended questions were used whenever possible to allow states to “speak with their own voices.” The survey offered the opportunity to respond “Don’t Know” or “Data Not Available” in those instances where the requested information was not accessible.

This chapter offers a summary of the survey data collected across the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Each state’s full survey responses appear in the State Reports section of this report.

Methods

The state governors and the Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia were sent letters requesting confirmation of a designated representative for each jurisdiction to serve as the contact and be responsible for completing the survey. In most cases, this representative was the same person designated for the 2013 survey. Designated contacts are typically staff members from state substance abuse program agencies and state alcohol beverage control (ABC) agencies. The survey was uploaded to a web-based platform in four segments, and the designated contacts were sent a link to this platform. They were also sent a copy of the report compiled from their responses to the 2013 survey, so that data that remained unchanged between years could be readily copied into the web survey. Contacts were given technical instructions for filling out the survey.

The online survey was available for completion by the states beginning in March 2014. The CDM Group, Inc., a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) contractor, provided both telephone and online technical support to state agency staff while the

survey was in the field. Representatives from the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association provided review and support for any questions pertaining specifically to enforcement.

As with the 2011, 2012, and 2013 State Surveys, responses were received from all 50 states and the District of Columbia—a 100 percent response rate. Each state’s response was reviewed by senior staff members, who made inquiries when necessary about apparent omissions, ambiguities, or other content issues. The responses were also copyedited, and the edited responses were returned to each state by e-mail. The states either approved the proposed copyedits or provided their own changes, and they provided any requested clarifications.

Results

The individual state reports provide a full presentation of the survey data submitted by each state. This Results section provides summary information about all variables amenable to quantitative analysis. It is important to keep in mind that the states determined how much information to provide, and that the range of information the respondents provided was highly variable.

The results are grouped under five broad headings:

1. Enforcement Programs
2. Programs Targeted to Youth, Parents, and Caregivers
3. Collaborations, Planning, and Reports
4. State Expenditures on the Prevention of Underage Drinking
5. Comparison of Enforcement Data: 2011 to 2014

The final section, Comparison of Enforcement Data: 2011 to 2014, provides a limited comparison of state survey data collected between 2011 and 2014 for selected activities. It should be noted that not all states reported data for all years. This section should be viewed with this caution in mind.

In all cases, where numerical estimates are reported, the reporting period is the most recent year for which complete data were available to the state. Average values are reported as medians. The median is the numerical value separating the higher half of a sample from the lower half and is the best representation of the “average” value when, as is often the case with the state survey responses, the data include outliers (a data point that is widely separated from the main cluster of data points in a dataset).

Enforcement Programs

The STOP Act State Survey requested enforcement data⁷⁰ in four areas:

1. Whether the state encourages and conducts comprehensive enforcement efforts—such as compliance checks and shoulder tap programs—to prevent underage access to alcohol at retail outlets
2. Whether data are collected on local enforcement efforts to prevent underage access to alcohol
3. The number of compliance checks conducted on alcohol retail outlets, including random checks, checks in response to complaints, and checks resulting from previous compliance check failures, and the results of these compliance checks

⁷⁰See Appendix E for charts showing individual state responses to all enforcement program questions on the 2014 survey.

4. Enforcement of selected state laws aimed at deterring underage drinking (see Chapter 4.3: Policy Summaries) and penalties imposed for violation of these laws, using arrest data for MIP offenses to index enforcement of these laws

Exhibit 4.2.1 shows the percentage of states that collect data on compliance checks, MIP charges, and penalties levied against retail establishments for furnishing alcohol to minors. The large majority of states collect data on state compliance checks, MIP charges, and penalties imposed on retail establishments. However, the number of states that collect data on local enforcement efforts is limited. Thus, it is likely that the enforcement statistics that follow underestimate the total amount of underage drinking enforcement occurring in the states.

Compliance Checks

Compliance checks (or decoy operations) are defined as those enforcement actions in which trained underage (or apparently underage) operatives (“decoys”), working with law enforcement officials, enter retail alcohol outlets and attempt to purchase alcohol. States were asked to provide an estimate of the total number of retail licensees in their state so that the percentage of licensees checked annually could be measured. A median of 17 percent of licensed establishments are checked across all 37 states that conduct compliance checks and collect associated data.⁷¹ Exhibit 4.2.2 provides a state-by-state picture of the percentage of licensees checked. Just over 60 percent of those states conducting checks tested 20 percent or fewer of their licensees, indicating that checking is generally not comprehensive. Ninety-five percent of the states reported that checks were conducted at both on- and off-premise establishments.

In addition to questions about the number of state checks and check failures, states were asked whether they conduct random compliance checks. Of the 40 states that conduct and collect data on compliance checks, 78 percent indicated that some or all of the checks conducted were done randomly, as opposed to being conducted in response to a complaint or as part of a convenience sample. For nearly two thirds (65 percent) of the states that report conducting random checks, all state checks were conducted randomly.

Exhibit 4.2.1: Percentage of Jurisdictions that Reported Enforcement Data Collection at the State and Local Levels

	State collects data on compliance checks		State collects data on MIP arrests/citations	State collects data on MIP, including arrests/citations by local law enforcement agencies	State collects data on penalties imposed on retail establishments		
	State conducted	Locally conducted			Fines	License suspensions	License revocations
Percentage	78	29	80	31	73	78	67

⁷¹ Three states that conduct compliance checks and collect data on these checks did not provide sufficient information to calculate the percentage of all licenses checked.

Exhibit 4.2.2: Percentage of Licenses Checked by State

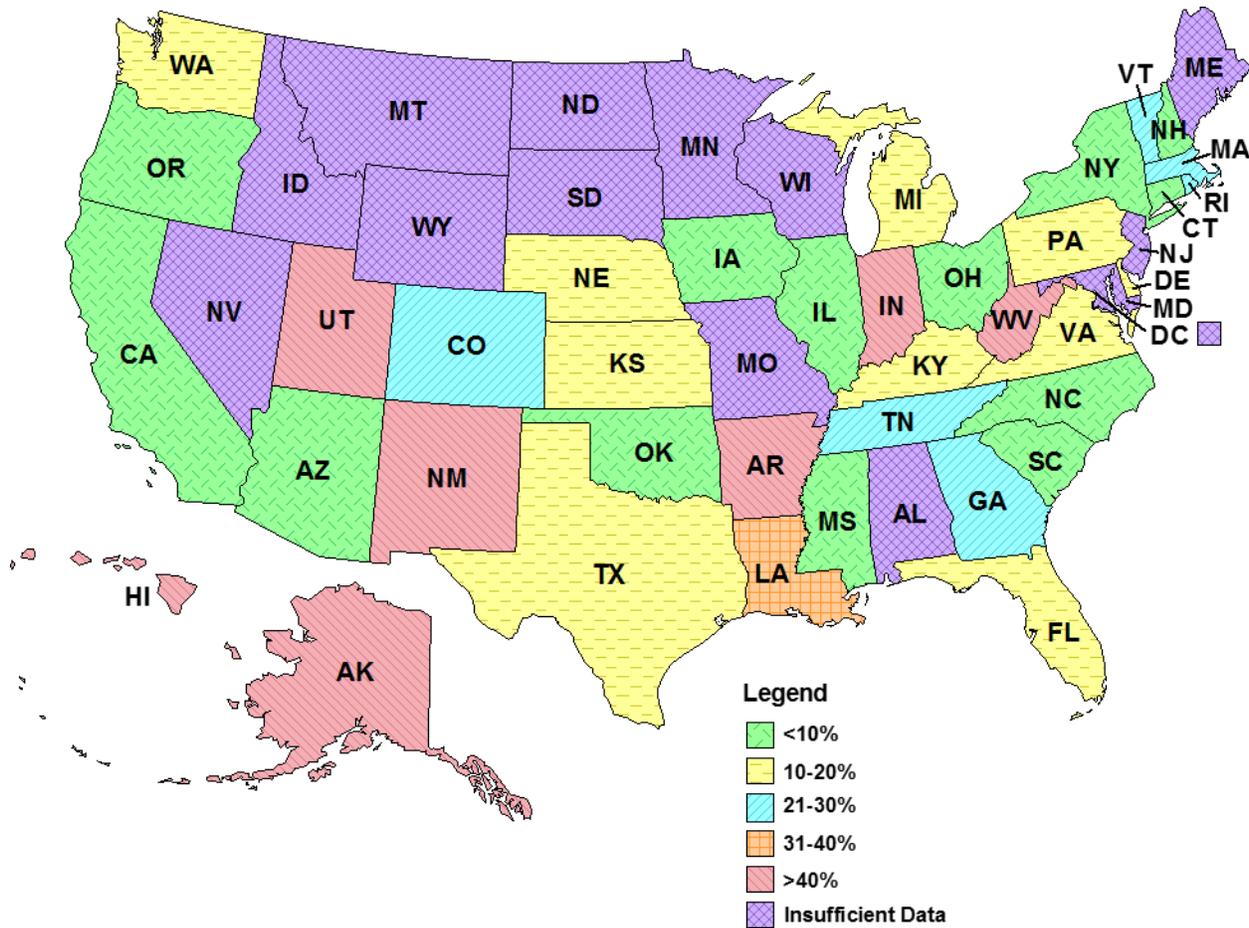


Exhibit 4.2.3 compares the number and failure rates of all state compliance checks, those state checks conducted randomly, and local compliance checks. Localities in 15 states also conduct compliance checks and collect data. Eight states report conducting and collecting data for *both* state and local compliance checks; 47 states conduct and collect data on either state or local compliance checks; and 4 states conduct neither state nor local checks. As shown in Exhibit 4.2.3, the number of licensees checked and licensee failures varies widely.

Exhibits 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 provide state-by-state licensee failure rates for all compliance checks conducted by state and local agencies based on data reported by the states. Most state-level checks report failure rates of 20 percent or less, with 10 states reporting higher rates. Exhibit 4.2.5 highlights the lack of data on local compliance checks for most states. Only 13 states report any data, with 12 of those states reporting rates of 20 percent or less.

As noted above, there is great variation among the states in the percentage of the total number of outlets checked during this period. Some states indicate that they make multiple checks on single outlets during the year in question, and this may be true of other states. Compliance check protocols also vary by state. For example, states use differing procedures and requirements for choosing underage decoys (see Compliance Check Protocols in Chapter 4.3, Policy Summaries).

Exhibit 4.2.3: Compliance Checks

	Number of licenses on which checks were conducted		Percentage of licenses on which checks were conducted that failed the checks	
State agencies all checks (n=37)	Median for those that collect data	1,302	Median for those that collect data	14
	Minimum	14	Minimum	3
	Maximum	12,487	Maximum	63
State agencies random checks only (n=20)	Median for those that collect data	1,549	Median for those that collect data	13
	Minimum	225	Minimum	3
	Maximum	12,487	Maximum	34
Local agencies (n=13)	Median for those that collect data	946	Median for those that collect data	12
	Minimum	145	Minimum	7
	Maximum	7,830	Maximum	21

Note: The “n” figures in this exhibit differ from the total numbers of states that answered “yes” to collecting and conducting state, random, and local compliance checks, because some states provided incomplete data.

Exhibit 4.2.4: State Compliance Checks Failure Rate

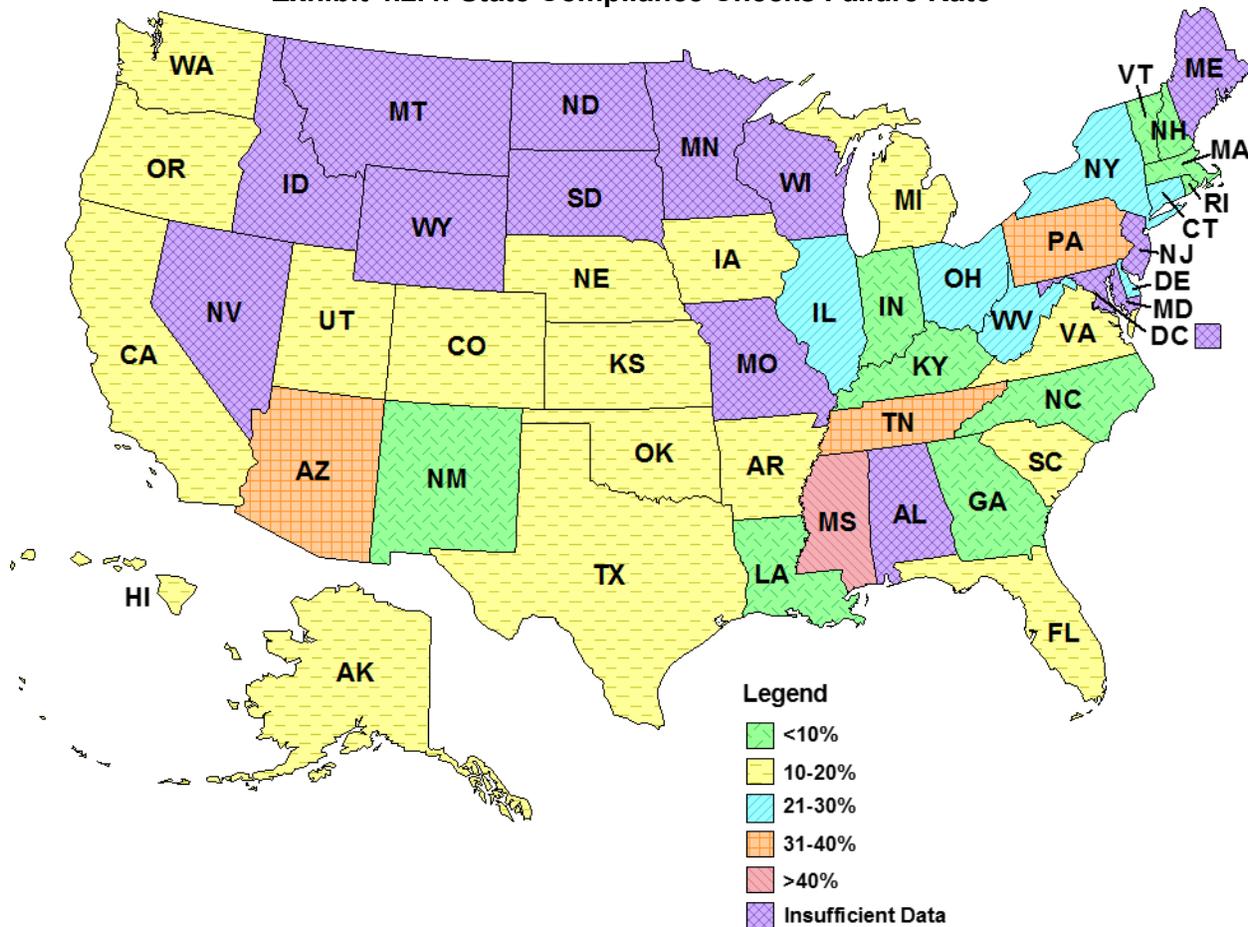
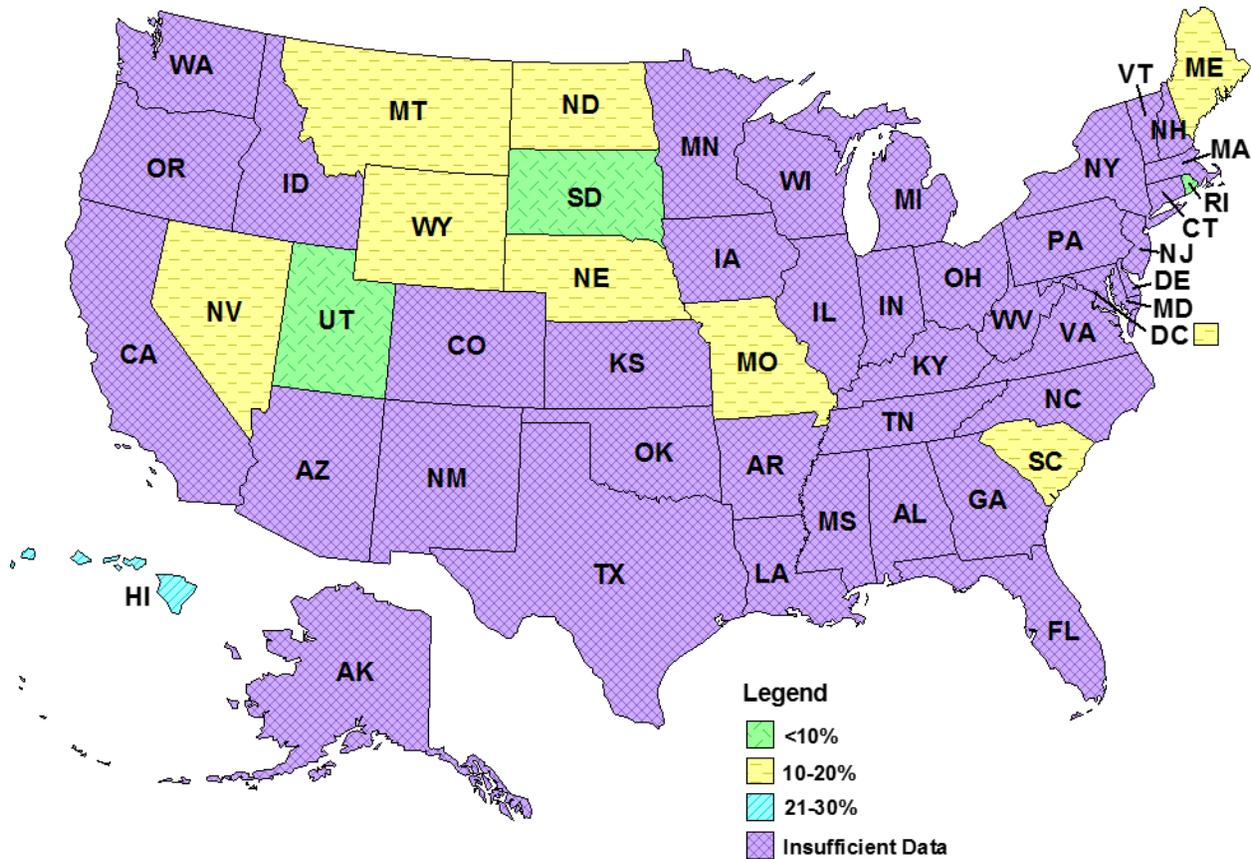


Exhibit 4.2.5: Local Compliance Checks Failure Rate



States may also conduct compliance checks randomly in response to complaints or as a result of a previous compliance check failure. Hence, differences in compliance check protocols may affect the number of outlets checked, the frequency of checks at a particular establishment, and the failure rates.

Other Enforcement Strategies

States were asked to report on four other state and local strategies to enforce underage drinking laws: Cops in Shops, shoulder tap operations, party patrol operations or programs, and underage alcohol-related fatality investigations. Definitions of these enforcement strategies follow. An expanded discussion of these strategies is found in the Enforcement section in Chapter 4.1:

- **Cops in Shops:** A well-publicized enforcement effort in which undercover law enforcement officers are placed in retail alcohol outlets
- **Shoulder tap:** Trained young people (decoys) approach individuals outside of retail alcohol outlets and ask them to make an alcohol purchase
- **Party patrol operations or programs:** Operations that identify underage drinking parties, make arrests and issue citations, and safely disperse participants
- **Underage Alcohol-Related Fatality Investigations:** Investigations to determine the source of alcohol ingested by fatally injured minors

As shown in Exhibit 4.2.6, the most common enforcement activities at both state and local levels are party patrol operations or programs and underage alcohol–related fatality investigations. Given that much of the enforcement of laws pertaining to minors in possession occurs at the local level, it is not surprising that more states report implementation of related programs (shoulder tap and party patrol operations) by local law enforcement than at the state level.

Exhibit 4.2.7 displays states that implement one, two, three, or all four of the strategies listed in Exhibit 4.2.6. Exhibit 4.2.8 displays states in which local law enforcement agencies implement one, two, three, or all four of the strategies.

Exhibit 4.2.6: Implementation of Other Enforcement Strategies

State enforcement: Percentage of states that implement:				Local enforcement: Percentage of states in which localities implement:			
Cops in Shops	Shoulder tap operations	Party patrol operations or programs	Underage alcohol related fatality investigations	Cops in Shops	Shoulder tap operations	Party patrol operations or programs	Underage alcohol related fatality investigations
35	18	51	71	33	47	67	51

Exhibit 4.2.7: Number of Enforcement Strategies Implemented by States

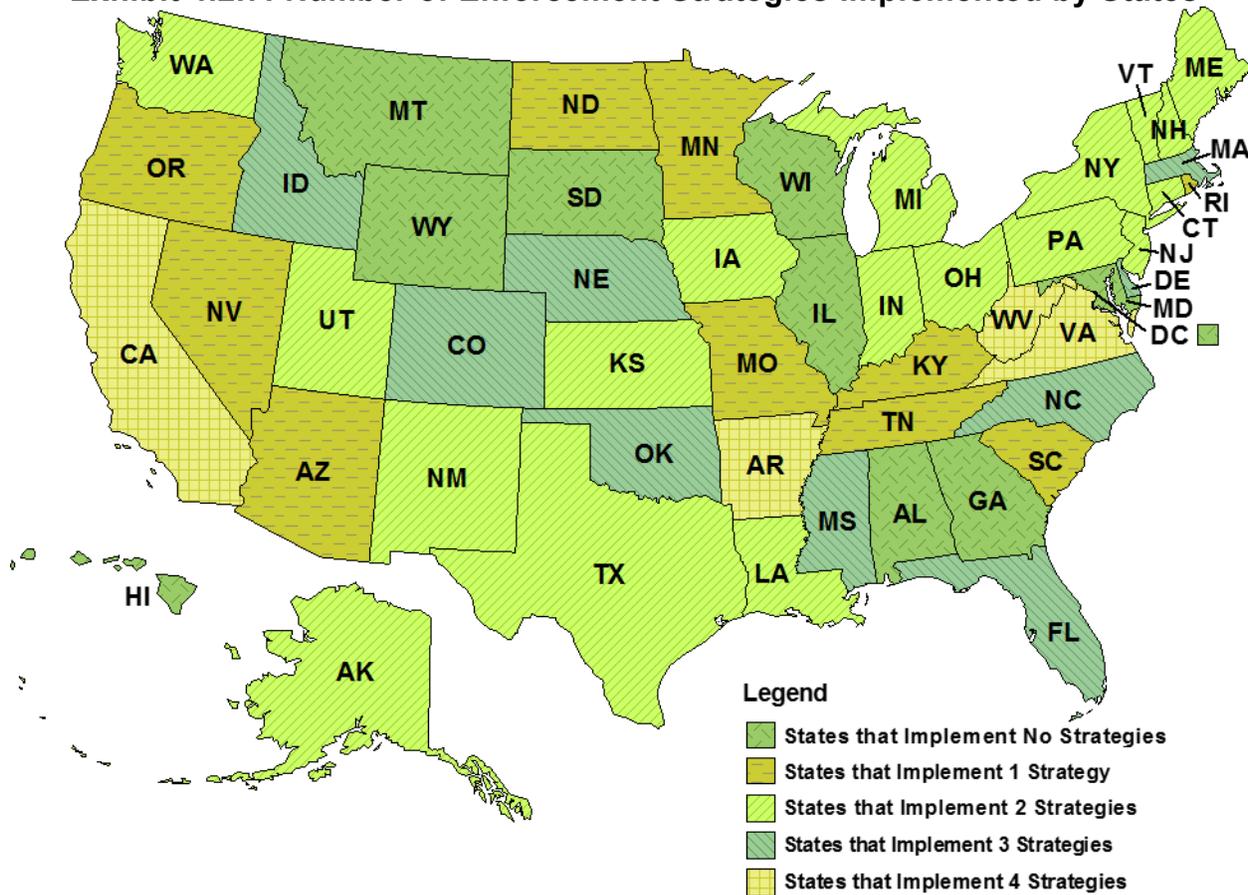
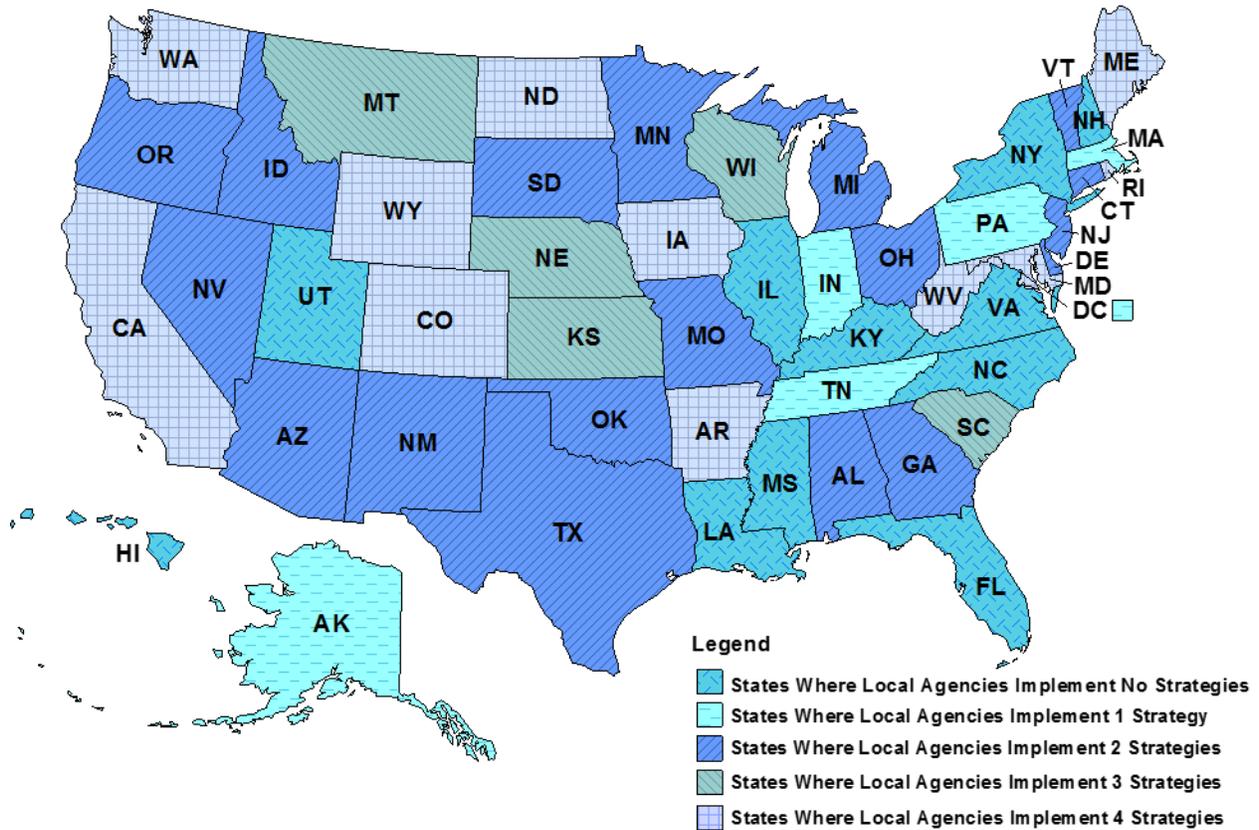


Exhibit 4.2.8: Number of Enforcement Strategies Implemented by Local Law Enforcement Agencies



In addition, all states regulate or prohibit direct sales and direct shipment of alcohol from producers to consumers, typically through internet orders and delivery by common carriers. (These laws do not address home delivery or Internet sales by retailers.) States were asked whether they have a program to investigate and enforce direct-sales or direct-shipment laws and whether these laws are also enforced by local law enforcement agencies. As shown in Exhibit 4.2.9, fewer than half (47 percent) of the states report having direct-shipment enforcement programs, and only 4 percent report that local law enforcement also enforce these laws.

Exhibit 4.2.9: Enforcement of Direct-Shipment Laws

State has a program to investigate and enforce direct sales/shipment laws (%)		Laws are also enforced by local law enforcement agencies (%)
Yes	47%	4%
No	35%	24%
Don't know/No answer	18%	73%

Sanctions Imposed on Retail Establishments for Violations

The state survey requested information on penalties imposed on retail establishments for furnishing to minors (see Exhibits 4.2.10–4.2.14). (Note that the “*n*” figures in these exhibits differ from the total number of states that answered “yes” to collecting data on fines, suspensions, and revocations, because some states provided incomplete data.)

As would be expected, fines are the most common sanction, imposed about five times as often as suspensions. However, revocations are rare. Of the states that collect data on revocations, 65 percent revoked one or no licenses. Eighty-four percent of the states revoked fewer than six licenses.

The survey asked states to report the lowest and highest fine imposed, and the shortest and longest number of suspension days. Exhibits 4.2.11 and 4.2.13 illustrate great variation among the states in the amount of fines and the length of license suspensions imposed.

Exhibit 4.2.10: Fines Imposed on Retail Establishments for Furnishing to Minors

Number of outlets fined for furnishing		Total amount of fines in dollars across all licensees
Median for those that collect data (<i>n</i> =30)	179	\$154,900
Minimum	0	\$0
Maximum	1,259	\$963,000

Exhibit 4.2.11: Lowest and Highest Fines Imposed on Retail Establishments for Furnishing to Minors

Lowest fine imposed	Dollar amount of fines across all licenses
Median for those that collect data (<i>n</i> =32)	\$310.00
Minimum	\$0
Maximum	\$2,000.00
Highest fine imposed	Dollar amount of fines across all licenses
Median for those that collect data (<i>n</i> =31)	\$4,000
Minimum	\$300
Maximum	\$80,000

Exhibit 4.2.12: License Suspensions Imposed on Retail Establishments for Furnishing to Minors

Number of outlets suspended for furnishing		Total days of suspension across all licensees
Median for those that collect data (<i>n</i> =32)	22	72
Minimum	0	0
Maximum	200	2,610

Exhibit 4.2.13: Shortest and Longest License Suspensions Imposed on Retail Establishments for Furnishing to Minors

Shortest suspension imposed		Number of days across all licenses
Median for those that collect data (n=31)		2
Minimum		0
Maximum		30
Longest suspension imposed		Number of days across all licenses
Median for those that collect data (n=31)		30
Minimum		0
Maximum		150

Exhibit 4.2.14: License Revocations Imposed on Retail Establishments for Furnishing to Minors

Number of outlets revoked for furnishing	
Median for those that collect data (n=31)	0*
Minimum	0
Maximum	41

*The median will be zero if more than half the responses are zero.

Sanctions for furnishing to minors can be put into perspective by considering rates per 100,000 drinking occasions among youth who are 16 to 20 years old. Exhibit 4.2.15 presents these rates for 28 states that collect complete sanctions data (fines, suspensions, and revocations).

Minor in Possession Offenses

States were also asked to provide statistics on MIP offenses. As noted earlier, arrest data for MIP offenses provide an index of the enforcement of laws designed to deter underage persons from drinking. Some states reported data that included arrests/citations issued by local law enforcement agencies; others did not.

The first three rows of Exhibit 4.2.16 present the number of arrests/citations reported by all states that collect such data. These data may not provide an accurate picture of MIP enforcement, because much of it is conducted at the local level and, therefore, is not represented in state data. The last three rows of Exhibit 4.2.16 present data only from those states that collect both state and local data. When only those states that collect local data are considered, the median number of arrests/citations increases by 58 percent, highlighting the importance of local enforcement efforts and data.

Exhibit 4.2.15: Retailer Sanctions for Furnishing to Minors

Sanctions per 100,000 drinking occasions	
Median for those that collect data (n=28)	7.22
Minimum	0.27
Maximum	15.74

Exhibit 4.2.16: Number of Minors Found In Possession of (or Having Consumed or Purchased per State Statutes) Alcohol

	Number of arrests/citations
Median for all states that collect data (n=40)	823
Minimum	2
Maximum	22,434
Median for states that collect both state and local data (n=15)	1,975
Minimum	67
Maximum	22,434

To explore the meaning of these data, two indices were calculated for states with both state and local MIP enforcement. The first index compares the rates of MIP arrests/citations with an estimate of yearly drinking occasions among 16- to 20-year-olds.⁷² The second index reflects arrests per 100,000 youth in each state who are 16 to 20 years old. The results appear in Exhibit 4.2.17.

Sanctions Against Youth vs. Sanctions Against Retailers

Comparing rates of MIP arrests and rates of retailer sanctions (totals of fines, suspensions, and revocations) highlights enforcement priorities. Twenty-two states provided the complete dataset needed for this analysis (Exhibit 4.2.18).

Exhibit 4.2.17: State and Local Arrests/Citations for Minors in Possession: 16- to 20-Year-Olds

	Number of arrests/citations	Arrests/Citations per 1,000 drinking occasions	Arrests/Citations per 100,000 population 16 20
Median for those that collect data (n=15)	1,975	1.60	1,728
Minimum	67	0.03	32
Maximum	22,434	7.8	8,399

Exhibit 4.2.18: Ratio of State and Local MIP Arrests to Retailer Sanctions

	MIP arrests per retailer sanctions
Median for those that collect data (n=22)	4
Minimum	0.03
Maximum	988

In most states, MIP arrests greatly outnumber retailer sanctions, indicating that priority is given to individual arrests over enforcement at the retail level. The ratio of MIP arrests to retailer sanctions (indicating a priority on retailer enforcement) was less than one in four states.

⁷² This estimate is based on the calculations of Wagenaar and Wolfson (1994). Using *Monitoring the Future* data, they estimated a rate of 90 drinking occasions per 100 youth per month.

Programs Targeted to Youth, Parents, and Caregivers

States were asked to list general prevention programs that have underage drinking as one objective funded or operated directly by the state. The survey provided space to provide detailed descriptions of up to 15 programs, plus additional space to briefly list any other programs that the states wanted to highlight. States were also asked:

- The numbers of youth, parents, and caregivers served by each program (if the program was aimed at a specific, countable population)
- Whether the program has been evaluated
- Whether an evaluation report is available and where the report can be found

Specific populations served were defined as follows:

Youth: People younger than 21 years old

Parents: People who have primary responsibility for the well-being of a minor (e.g., biological and adoptive parents, grandparents, foster parents, extended family)

Caregivers: People who provide services to youth (e.g., teachers, coaches, health and mental health care providers, human services and juvenile justice workers)

In addition to program descriptions, states were asked whether they had programs to measure and reduce youth exposure to alcohol advertising and marketing, and best practice standards for selecting or approving underage-drinking programs.

Program Content

States varied widely in the number of programs described, in part because some states provided detailed information on local variations of some program types (e.g., community coalitions), whereas others described umbrella programs. Many well-known programs were reported, including those focused on life skills, refusal skills, media advocacy, community organizing, and environmental change. Prevention initiatives developed by individual states were also well represented.

As a method for summarizing the types of programs states are implementing, all programs were coded into one of four categories:

- **Programs focused on individuals**—Programs designed to impart knowledge, change attitudes and beliefs, or teach skills. Although individual youths or adults (usually parents) are the focus of these programs, the programs are almost always conducted with groups (e.g., classrooms, Boys/Girls Clubs, PTAs, members of a congregation). Also in this category are programs for offenders (MIP, driving while intoxicated [DWI]). Certain kinds of education and skills development were considered part of the environment. These include training for alcohol sellers and servers, health care workers, public safety personnel, and others whose activities affect large numbers of people.
- **Programs focused on the environment**—Programs that seek to alter physical, economic, and social environments, which may be focused on entire populations (e.g., everyone in a state or community) or a subpopulation (e.g., underage people, youth who drive). The main mechanisms for environmental change include state laws and local ordinances and their enforcement, institutional policies (e.g., enforcement priorities or prosecutorial practice, how alcohol is to be served at public events, carding everyone who looks younger than 35 years old, alcohol screening of all ER injury admissions), and changing norms. These changes are

generally designed to decrease physical availability of alcohol (e.g., home delivery bans, retailer compliance checks), raise economic costs (drink special restrictions, taxation), and limit social availability, such as policies that affect the extent to which alcohol and alcohol users are visible in the community (e.g., banning alcohol in public places and at community events, banning outdoor alcohol advertising).

- **Mixed**—Cases where both individual and environmental approaches are a substantive part of the effort. So-called “comprehensive” prevention programs are a relevant example.
- **Media campaigns**

In total, 282 programs (89 percent of all programs) were described in sufficient detail to allow coding. The results are presented in Exhibit 4.2.19. As shown, programs focused on individuals were more than twice as common as programs focused on the environment. States tended to favor either an individual or an environmental approach in the programs they described; 45 percent of the states that reported any programs that could be coded focused exclusively on one or the other.

Numbers Served

States were asked to estimate the numbers of youths, parents, and caregivers served by programs aimed at specific populations. These data were incomplete, with 53 percent of the states ($n=27$) providing data for at least one program for youths served, 37 percent ($n=19$) for parents served, and 16 percent ($n=8$) for caregivers served. These data may be difficult for certain types of programs to estimate. In particular, the target populations for programs focused on the environment may be entire populations or subpopulations. Estimating the actual numbers reached is therefore problematic. Exhibit 4.2.20 gives the reported number of youths, parents, and caregivers served across all states that reported data.

Evaluation Data

For each program, states were asked whether the program has been evaluated and whether an evaluation report is available. Summary data for these questions appear in Exhibit 4.2.21. Clearly, the states vary widely in their emphasis on evaluation.

Exhibit 4.2.19: Types of Programs Implemented by the States

Program category	Percentage of programs implemented
Focused on individuals	57
Focused on the environment	24
Mixed focus	14
Media campaigns	5

Exhibit 4.2.20: Reported Numbers of Youths, Parents, and Caregivers Served

	Youths served	Parents served	Caregivers served
Median	668	0	0
Minimum	0	0	0
Maximum*	3,571,867	12,799,553	1,000,585

*Maximum numbers served are high in those instances where states reported that a program served the entire state population, or in those instances in which individuals may be served by the program multiple times.

Exhibit 4.2.21: Evaluation of Underage Drinking–Specific Programs

	Percentage of state programs evaluated	Percentage of evaluated programs with reports available
Median	60	33
Minimum	0	0
Maximum	100	100

Programs To Measure and Reduce Youth Exposure to Alcohol Advertising and Marketing

States were asked whether they have programs to measure or reduce youth exposure to alcohol advertising and marketing. Thirty-five percent ($n=18$) of the states reported they had such programs, which tend to implement four approaches:

1. Environmental scans to assess the degree of youth exposure to alcohol advertising
2. Counter-advertising initiatives
3. Eliminating environmental advertising aimed at youth
4. Social marketing

Best Practice Standards

States were asked whether they have adopted or developed best practice standards for underage-drinking-prevention programs and, if so, the type of agency or organization that established the standards. Ninety-two percent ($n=47$) reported they had best practices standards. As shown in Exhibit 4.2.22, state agencies play a significant role in their establishment, followed by federal agencies. Fifty-five percent of those states with best practices standards reported that more than one type of agency was responsible for their establishment. Close to half (47 percent) included SAMHSA and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) in their list of agencies.

Collaborations, Planning, and Reports

The STOP Act Survey included two questions about collaborations. The first question asked whether states collaborated on underage drinking issues with federally recognized tribal governments (if any). Fifty-three percent ($n=27$) said they did collaborate, 16 percent said they did not collaborate, and the remainder reported no federally recognized tribes in their states.

Exhibit 4.2.22: Agencies Establishing Best Standards

Type of agency establishing best practice standards	Percentage of states adhering to best practice standards
Federal (n=31)	66
State (n=35)	74
Nongovernmental (n=8)	17
Other (n=6)	13

The second question asked whether the states had a state-level interagency body or committee to coordinate or address underage-drinking-prevention activities. Seventy-eight percent of the states reported that such a committee exists, although the composition of the committee varied somewhat from state to state. Most states' interagency committees included a variety of state agencies directly involved in underage-drinking-prevention policy implementation and enforcement, as well as educational- and treatment-program development and oversight. These include the states' departments of health and human services and alcohol beverage control, their substance abuse agency, and their state police/highway patrol. Of interest is the extent to which the committee included representatives of the governor, legislature, and attorney general, given that they are so critical in setting priorities, providing funding, and generating political and public support. As shown in Exhibit 4.2.23, about 1 in 10 states with a committee included the governor, 1 in 5 a legislative representative, and 1 in 3 an attorney general.

Exhibit 4.2.24 shows the extent to which the interagency committee included relevant entities and constituencies outside of state government. Half of the states with interagency committees included college/university administrations, campus life departments, or campus police. About one in four states included youth, and local law enforcement, and just over one third included community coalitions or concerned citizens.

States were asked whether they had prepared a plan for preventing underage drinking or issued a report on underage drinking in the past 3 years. About two thirds of the states had prepared a plan, and around 60 percent had issued a report. The majority of states provided a source for obtaining the plans or reports (see individual state reports).

Exhibit 4.2.23: Composition of the Interagency Group—State Government Entities

	Office of the Governor	Legislature	Attorney General
Percentage of states with a committee (n=40)	10	18	33

Exhibit 4.2.24: Composition of the Interagency Group—Other Entities

	Local law enforcement	College/University administration, campus life department, campus police	Community coalitions/ Concerned citizens	Youth
Percentage of states with a committee (n=40)	23	50	38	28

State Expenditures on the Prevention of Underage Drinking

States were asked to estimate state expenditures for two categories of enforcement activities and five types of programs targeted to youths, parents, and caregivers. Exhibit 4.2.25 provides the data in \$1,000 units reported for the enforcement activities, program activities, and an “other” category. An entry of zero in the “Minimum reported” row means that at least one state that maintains data reports no expenditures in that category.

The largest expenditure category is for community-based programs, followed by K–12 programs. At the median of expenditures for all enforcement activities (\$8,000) is higher than that for all programs targeted to youths, parents, and caregivers (\$0), the total dollar amount expended for these nonenforcement programs (approximately \$150 million) is more than 40 times the total dollar amount spent on enforcement (approximately \$3.7 million).⁷³

States were also asked whether funds dedicated to underage drinking are derived from taxes, fines, and fees. Ninety-four percent of the states provided data for these questions. The use of these funding sources for underage-drinking-prevention activities is limited (see Exhibit 4.2.26).

Exhibit 4.2.25: 12-Month Expenditures* (in thousands) for Enforcement Activities; Programs Targeted to Youths, Parents, and Caregivers; and Other Programs†

	Enforcement activities		Programs targeted to youths, parents, and caregivers					Other programs
	Compliance checks	Checkpoints and saturation patrols	Community based programs	K 12 programs	College/ university programs	Juvenile justice System programs	Child welfare system programs	
Number of states providing data	25	14	29	25	23	17	15	18
Median expenditure*	\$37K	\$0	\$72K	\$0	\$10K	\$0	\$0	\$0
Minimum reported	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Maximum reported	\$1,100K	\$509K	\$50,044K	\$35,090K	\$445K	\$4,678K	\$1,122K	\$4,500K
Percentage of states providing data that invest in this category	68	43	66	48	52	29	20	50

*The median is zero if more than half the responses are zero.

†These data must be viewed cautiously. Response rates ranged from about 20 percent to about 68 percent. Thus the extent to which some of these data reflect national trends is unclear.

⁷³ The median of the combined expenditures for programs targeted to youths, parents, and caregivers is affected by the number of states reporting zero expenditures, as is clear from Exhibit 4.2.25.

Exhibit 4.2.26: Sources of Funds Dedicated to Underage Drinking

Source	Number of states providing data	Percentage reporting yes*
Taxes	44	18
Fines	43	16
Fees	44	16

*Percentages reflect only those states that provided data for these questions.

Comparison of Enforcement Data: 2011 to 2014

The STOP Act State Survey is now in its fourth year of data collection. The following exhibits offer a snapshot of the results for 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 for several key components of the enforcement data. Caution should be used in interpreting these data. Data collection and reporting vary greatly from year to year among the states, so it is not possible to compare all states over these 4 years. Fewer than half the states provided information in all 4 years for six of the datasets.⁷⁴

Forty-nine percent of the states provided minor in possession data over all four years. As shown in Exhibit 4.2.27, of these states, 44 percent reported a larger number of MIP arrests in 2014 than in 2011, and 56 percent reported a decrease in the number of arrests. Increases and decreases in the number of arrests were not necessarily continuous over the 3 years. For 84 percent of the states, there was some variation across the years.

Exhibit 4.2.28 shows that 63 percent of the states provided state compliance check data for all 4 years. Fifty-six percent of the states reported an increased number of compliance checks between 2011 and 2014, and 43 percent reporting a decreased number. As with MIP arrests, increases and decreases were not continuous across the years; 81 percent of the states reported some fluctuation. Fewer data are available addressing compliance checks conducted by local law enforcement. Only eight states provided data for all years. Of this small group, 88 percent reported a decrease in the number of local compliance checks between 2011 and 2014.

Five states reported their expenditures for compliance checks in all 4 years. Of these states, equal percentages (29 percent) indicated that expenditures increased or remained the same between 2011 and 2014, whereas 14 percent reported that these expenditures decreased.

Exhibits 4.2.29–4.2.31 describe state reporting on penalties for retail establishments between 2011 and 2014. In all penalty categories, larger percentages of the states reported reduced use of these penalties than reported increased use. Given that revocations are relatively infrequent, it is not surprising that 33 percent of all states reporting showed no change between 2011 and 2014. Given the great variation in reporting rates for all 4 years (22 percent to 47 percent), these data should be viewed with caution.

⁷⁴See Appendix E for detailed charts of all state enforcement data reported from 2011 to 2014.

Exhibit 4.2.27: Minors in Possession 2011–2014

	Number	Percentage
States reporting in all 4 years (n=25)		
States showing increased arrests across all 4 years	1	4
States showing decreased arrests across all 4 years	3	12
States showing variation across all 4 years, but increased number of MIP arrests between 2011 and 2014	10	40
States showing variation across all 4 years, but decreased number of MIP arrests between 2011 and 2014	11	44
States not reporting in all 4 years (n=26)		

Exhibit 4.2.28: State Compliance Checks 2011–2014

	Number	Percentage
States reporting in all 4 years (n=32)		
States showing increasing number of compliance checks across all 4 years	3	9
States showing decreasing number of compliance checks across all 4 years	3	9
States showing variation across all 4 years, but increased number of compliance checks between 2011 and 2014	15	47
States showing variation across all 4 years, but decreased number of compliance checks between 2011 and 2014	11	34
States not reporting in all 3 years (n=19)		

Exhibit 4.2.29: Fines on Retail Establishments 2011–2014

	Fines: total number	Fines: total dollar amount
	States reporting in all 4 years (n=14)	States reporting in all 4 years (n=14)
States showing consistent increases over all 4 years	7% (n=1)	0% (n=0)
States showing consistent decreases over all 4 years	14% (n=2)	7% (n=1)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but increases between 2011 and 2014	36% (n=5)	43% (n=6)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but decreases between 2011 and 2014	43% (n=6)	50% (n=7)

Exhibit 4.2.30: License Suspensions of Retail Establishments 2011–2014

	Suspensions: total number	Suspensions: total number of days
	<i>States reporting in all 4 years (n=23)</i>	<i>States reporting in all 4 years (n=11)</i>
States showing consistent increases over all 4 years	13% (n=3)	9% (n=1)
States showing consistent decreases over all 4 years	17% (n=4)	9% (n=1)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but increases between 2011 and 2014	22% (n=5)	27% (n=3)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but decreases between 2011 and 2014	48% (n=11)	55% (n=6)

Exhibit 4.2.31: Revocations of Retail Establishment Licenses 2011–2014*

	Revocations: total number
	<i>States reporting in all 4 years (n=24)</i>
States showing consistent increases over all 4 years	0% (n=0)
States showing consistent decreases over all 4 years	0% (n=0)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but 2011 and 2014 were equal	33% (n=8)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but increases between 2011 and 2014	21% (n=5)
States showing variation across all 4 years, but decreases between 2011 and 2014	46% (n=11)

Discussion

A key conclusion to be drawn from the STOP Act State Survey is that the states have demonstrated a commitment to the reduction of underage drinking and its consequences. This commitment is evident in the fact that all states completed the survey, reported numerous program activities, and in many cases provided substantial detail about those activities (see individual state summaries). The lengthy survey required the cooperation of multiple state agencies, including those charged with enforcement of underage drinking laws and policies and those involved in prevention of underage consumption. The fact that the survey has had a 100 percent response rate over its 4-year existence is evidence of the seriousness with which the task of preventing underage drinking is taken by the states.

Although the data provided by the state survey is informative and useful, it should be noted that enforcement activities appear highly variable across the states. Compliance checks and other enforcement activities related to furnishing (Cops in Shops, Shoulder Tap operations, underage alcohol-related fatality investigations, and enforcement of direct-shipment laws) are fairly widely implemented, although not necessarily at both the state and the local level. However, the total number of checks is modest. Just over 60 percent of those states conducting checks test 20 percent or fewer of their licensees. Sanctions for furnishing are predominantly fines, which are about five times more common than suspensions. Revocations are extremely rare; 65 percent of the states revoked one or no licenses.

Some of the variability found in the enforcement data may be due as much to data unavailability as to whether the activities were actually conducted. As discussed in the enforcement results

section, the number of states that collect data on local enforcement efforts is limited. Given that much of the enforcement of laws pertaining to furnishing minors and minors in possession occurs at the local level, it is likely that the enforcement statistics reported here actually underestimate the total amount of underage drinking enforcement occurring in the states. Regular and complete collection of both state and local enforcement data is critical to building an accurate picture of the national effort to prevent underage drinking.