The Community Alcohol Personality Survey

Learn how to establish the size and shape of alcohol problems in your community and where to focus your efforts for the most impact.
Communities – they dot the landscape in a thousand different ways. Your community may be a college campus, a city or county, a military base, even a neighborhood. And as a member of your community, you may be struggling with the best way to chip away at the problems associated with youth and alcohol. With most communities, the problem is like an iceberg. We can see the tip of it, but have no idea how big it really is. As a result, the issue goes undetected, and unfortunately unresolved. Not because communities are lazy or apathetic, but because the depth and breadth of the problem is often not identified. *The Community Alcohol Personality Survey* will help you see the problem as it exists in your community. It will act as the fundamental basis that will give you immediate focus. And it will be the tool you will refer to over and over again.

**The Community Alcohol Personality Survey**

*is divided into three unique parts:*

**Part One – Identifying the Problem(s)**
This section helps uncover the underage drinking problems that are present in your community. The issue itself is so broad, it can easily feel overwhelming. But by identifying and prioritizing specific problems we can begin to find solutions that work.

**Part Two – Contributing Factors**
Problems from underage drinking do not just happen by themselves. There are countless underlying factors. This section will help you identify those contributing factors in your community.

**Part Three – Take the Community Alcohol Personality Survey**

*The Community Alcohol Personality Survey* (or CAPS) acts as a radar. It is a method of detecting how big the problem is and where the “hot” spots are. This survey will help you scan your community for the existing influences that “assist” kids in underage alcohol use. It will help you establish the size and shape of the problem, and where to focus your efforts for the most impact. The CAP Survey will also reveal how your community may be unwittingly contributing to the problem.

Once you have completed the three parts in *The Community Personality Survey*, you will have valuable information to begin building an action plan to reduce underage drinking in your community.
Part One – Identifying the Problem(s)
Check the problems that you see in your community as a result of underage drinking. Then prioritize your list into your top three problems.

Check all problems that apply.

☐ Emergency room admissions
☐ Worksite problems, (accidents, absenteeism, productivity, etc.)
☐ Assaults (fights, acquaintance rape, etc.)
☐ Over-consumption/alcohol overdose by teens
☐ Property damage/vandalism
☐ Vehicle crashes
☐ Domestic violence
☐ Suicide
☐ Underage access and drinking
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________

☐ School dropouts
☐ Pregnancy/sexually transmitted diseases
☐ Abuse/neglect
☐ Addiction
☐ Treatment issues (need of, demand)
☐ Drinking and driving
☐ Teen drinking parties
☐ Family problems (divorce, fights, etc.)
☐ Disturbing the peace
☐ (public intoxication at parks, beaches, events)
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________

Part Two – Identifying Contributing Factors
From the list of contributing factors, check the ones that apply to underage drinking in your community.

Check the contributing factors that apply.

☐ Parental/adult indifference/tolerance of underage drinking
☐ Judges not following through with sentencing of alcohol laws
☐ Judicial plea-bargains
☐ Lack of alternatives for kids
☐ Lack of law enforcement
☐ Lack of consistent enforcement of alcohol laws (limited consequences)
☐ Code of silence among youth
☐ Peer pressure to drink
☐ Kids surrounded with positive images of alcohol use
☐ Adults provide alcohol to kids
☐ Kids working in alcohol outlets
☐ Older friends provide alcohol to kids

☐ Lack of alcohol-free alternatives for youth
☐ Easy availability of alcohol
☐ School policies not consistently followed
☐ No sense of “community”
☐ “Open shelving” of alcohol in stores
☐ Business interests vs. public health
☐ Community tolerance/denial of underage drinking
☐ “Kids will be kids” attitude by adults
☐ Poor role modeling by adults
☐ Greater acceptance of alcohol use than other drugs
☐ Limited funding for “community coalition” and alcohol policy work.
☐ Other ______________________________
☐ Other ______________________________
**Part Three– Your Community’s Alcohol Personality**

This third part consists of a list of questions for you to answer about your community. Answer as honestly and thoroughly as possible. If you are part of a community coalition, photocopy the questions, let everyone answer individually and then discuss your answers. Remember, this section is about finding out the characteristics of your community and its relationship to alcohol. There are no right or wrong answers. Many times, we don’t realize the many ways our community unintentionally supports the use of alcohol. And while it may not be on purpose, it sends a strong message to our youth.

1. **How well does your community monitor the location of alcohol advertising?**
   This includes billboards, storefronts, point-of-purchase displays in stores, sports stadiums, bus and train stations. Think about the location of the advertising— is it near schools, parks or other family-oriented places.

2. **Is the type of local alcohol advertising monitored?**
   Is it appropriate for all ages; does it target minority populations?

3. **How well does your community monitor the location of alcohol outlets and bars?**
   Are establishments located near schools, churches, parks, community centers, malls, youth-oriented establishments such as arcades?

4. **Is alcohol served at community events?**
   If so, what size are the containers, where is it served, who is serving it?

5. **Is alcohol allowed in public places – parks, stadiums, outdoor events?**
   Yes ☐  No ☐
6. Is alcohol served at school sponsored events such as sports booster events and fundraisers? Yes ☐  No ☐

7. Do local bars offer happy hour specials, drink promotions (2 for 1) and other drink specials? 
   If so, how are they advertised?

8. What is the alcohol availability at stadiums, arenas, outdoor concerts and other large venues? 
   How is it monitored? Is “bring your own” alcohol prohibited?

9. What are current laws in your community for an adult who provides (supplies) alcohol to someone under 21? 
   (Try to obtain the laws for the first, second and third offense.) How do you feel about these laws?

10. What are the current laws in your community for minors in possession of alcohol? 
    (Try to obtain the laws for the first, second and third offense.) How do you feel about these laws?

11. Is alcohol mentioned as a contributing factor in media coverage? (accidents, assaults, 
    domestic violence, etc.)

12. Does law enforcement conduct alcohol compliance checks with alcohol retailers to ensure that retailers 
    are taking steps to avoid alcohol sales to people under 21? If yes, what were the most recent alcohol 
    compliance results?
Planning Process

Once you have completed Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3, you will have important perceptions and information regarding youth and alcohol in your community. The next step is to gather as much data as you can to support your findings. For example, perhaps you have found that underage sales are a contributing problem. Go to the police department and find out if compliance checks are done. What are the results of these compliance checks? Other places to find support data might be schools, emergency rooms and local substance abuse offices. It's important to find as much current data as possible to support your findings.

Analyze your findings

1. Look at the top three problems you’ve identified.
2. Match them with the corresponding contributing factor(s).
3. Tie your problem and contributing factors to actions.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Contributing Factor(s)</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Easy Access</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>* “Open-house” party ordinances</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* “Adult provider” law</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Older friends</td>
<td>* Fines, community service</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Outlets/bars</td>
<td>* Responsible alcohol sales and service training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Community events and festivals</td>
<td>* Compliance checks</td>
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<td>* Keg registration</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Fines and license revocation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Limit cup size</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Limit hours of sale</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Require photo ID to purchase alcohol</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* Ensure that servers are trained</td>
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Repeat this process for the other two remaining problems. When you are done, you should have three charts that clearly show the problem aligned with contributing factors and then the policy and/or action that needs to happen to solve the problem.

NOTE: You may find your community already has some of the policies “on the books” but are not consistently being implemented. The action then becomes finding out why and working to support consistent implementation.
Strategies for Action on Alcohol Issues

I. Strategies Aimed at Affecting Community Norms

1. Eliminate or limit alcohol beverage industry sponsorship at public events (e.g. a beer company sponsoring a boat race).

2. Obtain restrictions on alcohol advertising in stadiums, on billboards, buses and other mass transit.

3. Restrict “point of sale” (stores, outlets, etc.) advertising that appeals to youth.

4. Obtain alcohol advertising bans near schools and other areas where youth gather.

5. Obtain community sponsorship for alcohol-free activities for youth.

6. Restrict alcohol sales at community events – Eliminate or limit alcohol use at community events or in public areas (e.g., at county fairs, in parks or at beaches).

7. Implement community media campaigns, conduct media advocacy and counter advertising campaigns on alcohol issues that impact your community.

8. Develop community support for enforcement of underage drinking laws.

II. Strategies Based in Schools and in Other Youth Organizations

9. Support widespread awareness of school policies regarding alcohol use on school property or at school-sponsored events.

10. Support media literacy programs to make youth more sophisticated about manipulative advertising techniques.

III. Strategies Related to the Commercial Availability of Alcohol

11. Restrict minors’ access to bars and nightclubs – Prohibit or severely limit people under the age of 21 from entering bars and nightclubs, which should be clearly distinguished from restaurants.

12. Restrict the age of alcohol servers and sellers – Require that all retail alcohol outlet employees who are engaged in the sale or service of alcohol be at least 21 years of age.

13. Prohibit all commercial sales, gifts or other methods of furnishing alcohol to minors without exception.

14. Restrict the location of alcohol outlets – Create buffer zones that extend at least 1,000 feet to separate alcohol outlets from schools, youth facilities and residential neighborhoods.

15. Regulate home delivery and internet/mail-order sales – Prohibit home delivery of alcohol and either prohibit or strictly regulate internet/mail-order alcohol sales.

16. Mandate responsible beverage service training programs – Initiate, and over time, mandate community-wide responsible alcohol sales and service training programs that educate merchants regarding alcohol sales and service techniques and responsibilities.
17. Support compliance check programs – A compliance check is a tool to identify alcohol establishments that are selling alcohol to youth or intoxicated individuals. These are normally conducted by law enforcement agencies or state alcohol licensing authorities. The purpose is to identify, warn, educate and if necessary, penalize retailers who sell to underage youth.

18. Apply appropriate penalties to outlets that sell and bars that serve to people under 21 – Impose legal penalties on retail licensees for violations of sales-to-minor laws, which increase with severity for repeated offenses.

19. Place controls on the hours of sale of alcoholic beverages.

20. Make the provision of alcohol to minors an offense.

IV. Strategies Aimed at Reducing Social Public Availability of Alcohol

21. Implement beer keg registration – Keg registration ordinances are used primarily to identify and penalize adults who purchase beer kegs and allow underage youth to consume the alcohol. At the time of the keg purchase, retailers are required to record the keg identification number, the purchaser's name, address, telephone number and driver's license number.

22. Implement “shoulder-tap” programs that enforce laws against buying alcohol for minors – “Shoulder-tap” programs address the issue of adults that are willing to purchase and provide alcohol to underage youth. Working with local law enforcement, underage “decoys” approach individuals over the age of 21 and ask them to purchase alcohol on the decoys behalf. Adults who do this are generally ticketed by law enforcement personnel. The purpose of the program is to deter adults from purchasing alcohol for minors.

23. Implement “Open-house” party ordinances – “Open-house” party ordinances hold adults responsible for underage drinking on their property or on premises under their control. These ordinances can also apply to hotel and motel rooms as well as private homes and the surrounding properties.

24. Implement special police “party patrols” to contain underage parties and ticket both minors and any adults who provide alcohol to youth.

25. Apply penalties to people under 21 who use false identification to purchase alcohol.

26. Make the provision of alcohol to minors an offense.

27. Improve laws regarding minors in possession of alcohol.


29. Support sobriety checkpoints.

30. Increase the price of alcohol through excise taxes.
**Evaluation**

1. What problem did you address?  
   (problem identification)

2. What action did your group implement?  
   (strategy)

3. How did your action step change things?  
   (assessment)

4. How did your action step help reduce youth access and underage drinking?  
   (outcomes)

5. How did you verify what is different?  
   Examples include: changes in data; changes in laws, ordinances, polices and practices; changes in community environments.

6. Have you designated someone to track changes in policies and practices to insure implementation?  
   How are observations being communicated to others?
## Getting to Know your Community

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<tr>
<th>Title/Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Interest?</th>
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