

# ***Excellence in Prevention*** – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

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## **Name of Program/Strategy: Advertising Restrictions**

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### **1. Overview and description**

At the aggregate level, a central focus has been on trends in alcohol advertising, per capita consumption and drinking problems. Only a few studies have considered the effects of alcohol advertising restrictions on alcohol consumption or problems.

### **2. Implementation considerations (if available)**

### **3. Descriptive information**

|                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Areas of Interest</b>  | Substance abuse prevention |
| <b>Outcomes</b>           |                            |
| <b>Outcome Categories</b> | Alcohol                    |

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|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Ages</b>                      |   |
| <b>Gender</b>                    | Male<br>Female  |
| <b>Races/Ethnicities</b>         | American Indian or Alaska Native<br>Asian<br>Black or African American<br>Hispanic or Latino<br>White<br>Race/ethnicity unspecified |
| <b>Settings</b>                  |   |
| <b>Geographic Locations</b>      | Urban<br>Suburban<br>Rural and/or frontier<br>Tribal  |
| <b>Implementation History</b>    |   |
| <b>NIH Funding/CER Studies</b>   |   |
| <b>Adaptations</b>               |   |
| <b>Adverse Effects</b>           |   |
| <b>IOM Prevention Categories</b> | Universal   |

## **4. Outcomes**

### **Scientific Evidence**

Markowitz and Grossman (1998) concluded that restrictions on alcohol advertising and increases in illegal drug prices have no effects on violence.

Saffer (1991) investigated the effects of restrictions on broadcast alcohol advertising on alcohol consumption and alcohol problems (liver cirrhosis mortality, motor vehicle fatalities) in 17 European and North American countries. He found that countries with partial restrictions on alcohol advertising had lower alcohol consumption and fewer problems than countries with no restrictions. Countries with complete bans had lower rates than countries with partial restrictions. A reanalysis, however, suggested that there was reverse causation, with those countries experiencing low rates of alcohol problems being more likely to adopt alcohol advertising bans than were countries with high rates of alcohol problems (Young, 1993).

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A study of alcohol advertising restrictions in 20 countries over 26 years found that moving from no restrictions to partial restrictions or from partial restrictions to total bans reduced alcohol consumption between 5 percent-8 percent (Saffer & Dhaval, 2002).

Other recent studies have found no effects of advertising bans (Nelson & Young, 2001).

Saffer (2002) completed a review of published research literature on the potential effects of alcohol advertising on consumption and in particular the effects on youth drinking. He concluded that the results of the review suggest that alcohol advertising does increase consumption but that an alcohol advertising ban alone is insufficient to limit all forms of promotion and that a comprehensive ban would receive substantial public support.

Saffer and Dhaval (2002) concluded following an analysis of national alcohol consumption related to total advertising expenditures that alcohol advertising bans decrease alcohol consumption. They found that one more ban on beer and wine or on spirits advertising would reduce consumption by about 5 percent and one more ban on all alcohol advertising in a media would reduce consumption by about 8 percent.

Nelson (2003) used a panel of 45 states for the period 1982–1997. This study analyzes the importance of several restrictive alcohol regulations, including advertising bans for billboards, bans of price advertising, state monopoly control of retail stores, and changes in the minimum legal drinking age. In contrast to previous research, the study allows for substitution among beverages as a response to a regulation that targets a specific beverage. Nelson (2003) concluded that “bans of advertising do not reduce total alcohol consumption, which partly reflects substitution effects.”

Recently, it has been estimated that a total ban on alcohol advertising in the US would result in a 16.4 percent decrease in alcohol-related life-years lost, and a partial advertising ban would result in a 4 percent reduction in alcohol-related life-years lost (Hollingworth et al., 2006).

Tremblay and Okuyama (2001) conducted an analysis of the potential effect of spirits advertising on the demand for spirits as a result of spirits producers ending their voluntary ban on broadcast advertising. The authors argued that previous conclusions of policy economists that removing this voluntary ban had no effect on alcohol consumption was incorrect because it ignores the fact that advertising restrictions may affect industry competition as well as market demand.

Some natural experiments on partial advertising bans have not provided a sound basis for determining the unique potency of advertising (Montonen, 1996).

Studies of partial advertising bans in Canadian provinces (Ogborne & Smart, 1980; Smart & Cutler, 1976) failed to show clear impacts perhaps because advertising from outside the province was not restricted.

Other international studies found that bans produced no drop in consumption and that stricter rules did not produce lower rates of drinking (Simpson, Beirness, Mayhew, & Donelson, 1985).

In contrast, a major cross-national time-series study of advertising bans implemented in European Community countries during the 1970s showed significant effects, including lower levels of consumption and alcohol-related problems, as indicated by motor vehicle fatality rates (Edwards et al., 1994; Saffer, 1991, 1995, 1998).

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Apparently no studies have investigated the specific effects of advertising restrictions on drinking or drinking problems among young people.

The effects of advertising restrictions on young people’s drinking is best considered an open question.

- 5. Cost effectiveness report (Washington State Institute of Public Policy – if available)**
- 6. Washington State results (from Performance Based Prevention System (PBPS) – if available)**
- 7. Who is using this program/strategy**

| Washington Counties | Oregon Counties |
|---------------------|-----------------|
|                     |                 |

## **8. Study populations**

## **9. Quality of studies**

The documents below were reviewed for Quality of Research. The research point of contact can provide information regarding the studies reviewed and the availability of additional materials, including those from more recent studies that may have been conducted.

### **References**

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Hollingworth, W., Ebel, B. E., McCarty, C. A., Garrison, M. M., Christakis, D. A., & Rivara, F. P. (2006). Prevention of deaths from harmful drinking in the United States: The potential effects of tax increases and advertising bans on young drinkers. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 67, 1-9.

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***Excellence in Prevention*** is a project of Oregon Addiction and Mental Health Services and Washington Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery. Information is drawn from many sources, including the National Registry for Effective Prevention Programs (NREPP), sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

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## **10. Readiness for Dissemination**

## **11. Costs (if available)**

## **12. Contacts**

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