



**EAST-CENTRAL DISTRICT  
Health Department**

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## **East Central District Health Department**

### **2016 Calendar Year Alcohol Report**

**Report Date: March 2017**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) has had a Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program since 2001. As part of this program, alcohol compliance checks have been conducted among alcohol retailers in the district to determine the level of compliance. This report addresses the response of enforcement of public health laws to address the use of alcohol which can have a major impact on individuals, families, and communities (The Community Guide, 2015).

Effects of substance abuse contribute to physical, mental, social and public health problems such as teenage pregnancy, crime, domestic violence, motor vehicle crashes, and physical fights (The Community Guide, 2015). This report touches on one of our strategic areas chosen by those participating in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) of 2015 that was supported by data from the 2014 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

This document includes four sections:

- I. Youth Substance Abuse Data From the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
- II. Results of Compliance Checks
- III. Community Health Improvement Plans
- IV. Summary

**I. Youth Substance Abuse Data from the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)**

Youth substance abuse was one of the five CHIP strategic areas for the ECDHD in 2012 and was selected as a priority again for the 2015-2018 CHIP process. This report deals with one component of the work being done in addressing the issue of the enforcement of alcohol compliance checks. It is important for the reader to understand some background information which is included below.

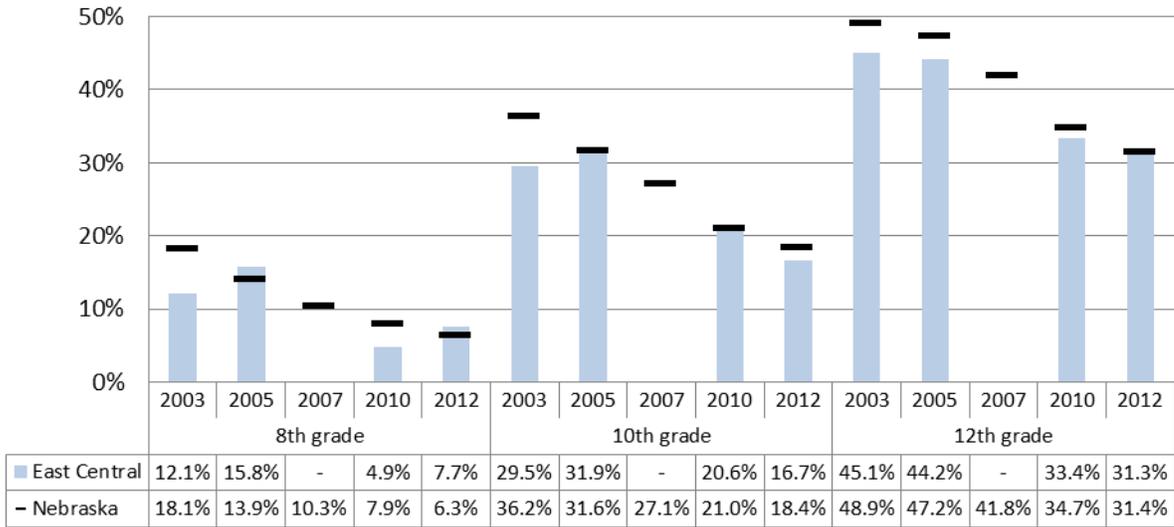
Substance Abuse / Youth Substance Abuse / Youth Substance Abuse Prevention

Complaints and concerns about youth alcohol substance abuse are widely documented in the 2014 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). In particular, data to support the need for this as a strategic area is included in the 2014 CHNA on pages 53-58. Compared to statewide data, a greater percentage of East Central participants in the *2011 Nebraska Community Themes and Strengths Assessment* perceived that alcohol use among those under 21 years old is a big problem in their community and that the community should do more to prevent underage alcohol use. However, a higher percentage of adults in the district also hold the perception that drinking is a “rite of passage for youth”.

<b>Adult Perceptions of Underage Alcohol Use</b>		
	<b>% Who Agree</b>	
	<b>East Central</b>	<b>Nebraska</b>
Alcohol use among individuals under 21 years old is a big problem in your community.	79.5%	72.0%
Your community should do more to prevent alcohol use among individuals under 21 years old.	80.5%	76.9%
Your level of agreement with the notion that drinking is a “rite of passage for youth,” meaning it is an important milestone as they move into adulthood.	22.0%	18.9%

A graph that depicts lifetime alcohol use among students in grades 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> in the East Central district (Boone, Colfax, Nance, and Platte counties) is noted in the following chart. The district has a 12<sup>th</sup> grade past 30-day alcohol use of 31.3%, which is nearly identical to the state of Nebraska. Tenth graders in the district reported a lower rate at 16.7% compared to the state at 18.4%. Students in eighth grade report a slightly higher rate at 7.7% compared to the state at 6.3%. Overall, the district of East Central has a higher 8<sup>th</sup> grade past 30-day alcohol use than the state and 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade levels have seen steady declines from 2003 to 2012 about equal to the state of Nebraska.

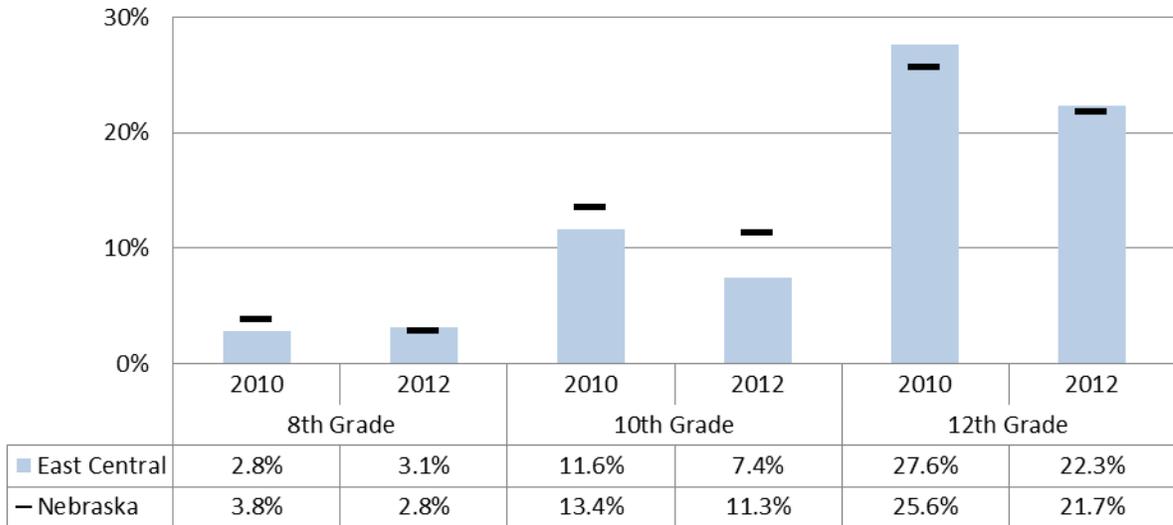
### Past 30-day Alcohol Use Among 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Graders



Source: Nebraska Partners in Prevention 2012 Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey

Another data set, listed below, illustrates what 30-day binge drinking rates look like in the four counties. Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a row. Other than 8<sup>th</sup> grade, which saw a slight increase from 2010 to 2012, binge drinking declined for 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders, with reports close to that of the state (12<sup>th</sup>) or below the state (10<sup>th</sup>).

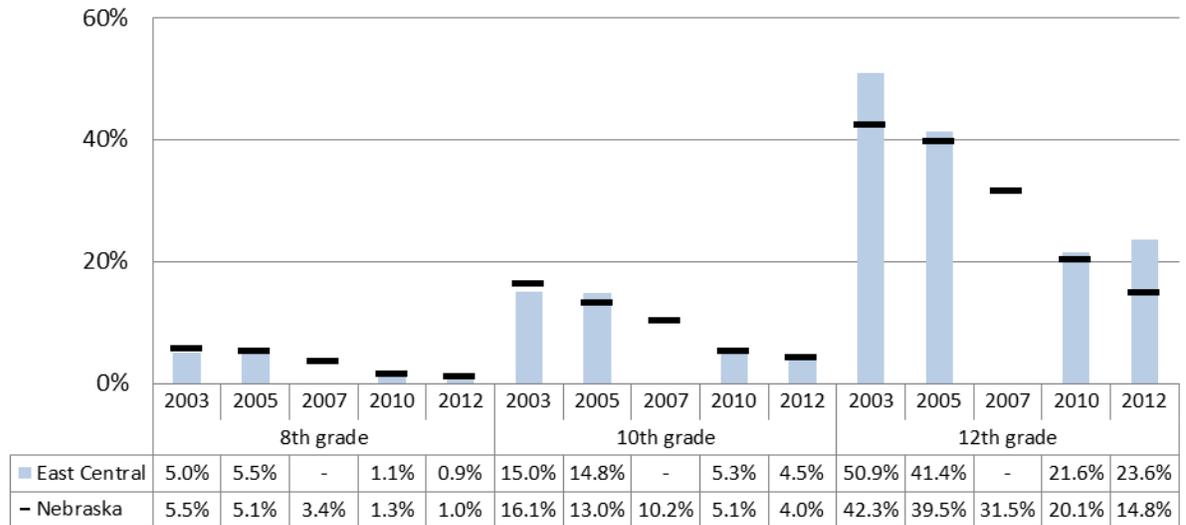
### Past 30-day Binge Drinking Among 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Graders



\*Binge drinking defined as having 5 or more drinks in one sitting

The data set below indicates that overall there has been a reduction in the percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the four county district who have driven under the influence of alcohol from 2003 to 2012. However, the percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> graders who had driven under the influence in 2012 was slightly higher in the district (4.5%) as compared to the state (4.0%). The data set below indicates that the rate of 12<sup>th</sup> graders who drive a vehicle under the influence of alcohol in the district (23.6%) is significantly higher than the state average (14.8%).

### Past Year Alcohol Impaired Driving Among 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Graders

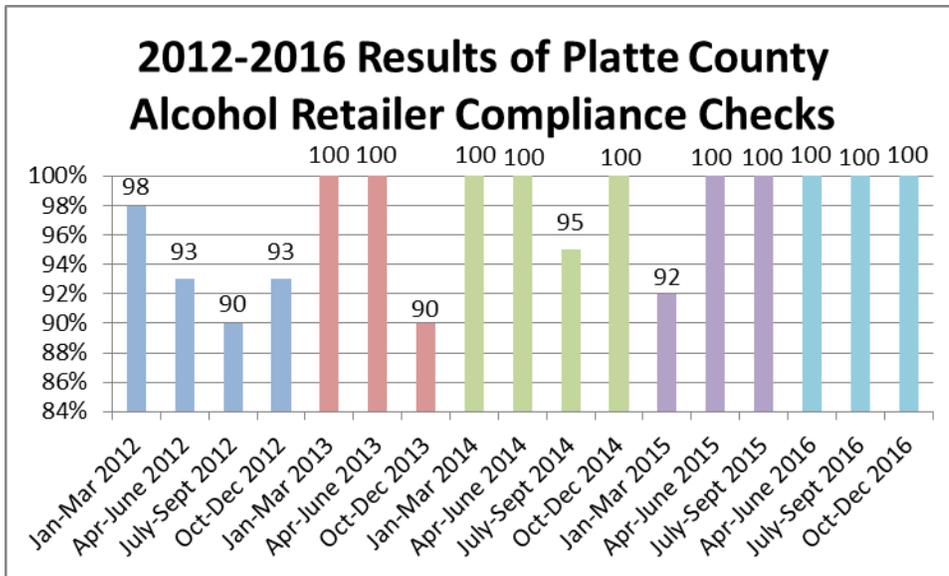


Source: Nebraska Partners in Prevention 2012 Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey

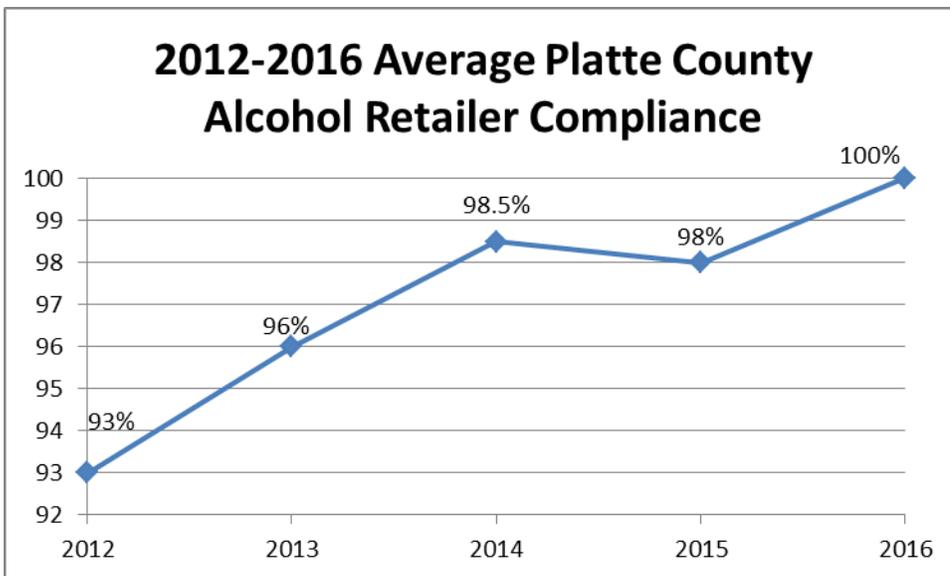
## II. Results of Compliance Checks

### Compliance Check Data from Platte County

The first graph displays the alcohol retailer compliance rate on a quarterly basis for the time frame of the five year period of 2012-2016 for Platte County. Note that during the quarter of July through September 2013, October through December 2015, and January through March 2016 compliance checks were not conducted. Rates did vary in the four year time frame with no rates lower than 90% compliance, which was the result of both the July through September 2012 and October through December 2013. The highest rate of compliance, 100%, was from ten of the seventeen quarters within five years and for all quarters in 2016.



When looking at the annual percentage of retailer compliance during the 2012-2016 enforcement checks, it can be seen that over the last five years, compliance has gradually increased among retailers from a 2012 percentage of 93%, to 96% in 2013, and was pretty consistent at 98.5% in 2014 and 98% in 2015, finally reaching the goal of 100% in 2016. This chart reflects that with consistent alcohol compliance checks, retailers comply with the law to a greater extent.



As can be seen with the above chart, aggregate data from the 2012-2016 ECDHD retailer compliance checks suggests that these checks are a proven strategy to ensure the law is enforced which will aid in reducing the availability of alcohol to underage youth in the district (The Community Guide, 2015).

#### IV. Conclusion from the CHIPs

Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs) regarding youth substance abuse were developed for Platte County after the release of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) data above. The county CHIPs are carried out by a local coalition under the direction of the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program at East Central District Health Department (ECDHD). This department works toward decreasing youth substance abuse rates and it does so in partnership with Healthy People 2020 objectives as listed on its website. The Healthy People 2020 goal for Substance Abuse is “*to reduce substance abuse to protect the health, safety, and quality of life for all, especially children*” (Healthy People, 2015).

During the Platte County CHIP process, substance abuse was discussed at length and its relationship with other district and county wide problems. These problems included teenage pregnancy rates, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), domestic violence, child abuse, motor vehicle crashes, aggression and fighting, and crime and suicide. It was felt that by addressing substance abuse, many of these other community problems would be addressed as well.

- a) Service Gap Analysis- The following was identified during the CHIP meeting as a gap for substance abuse enforcement:
  - i) Youth involvement in the coalition and prevention efforts.
  
- b) Assets and resources identified for enforcement:
  - i) Back to Basics Coalition which has the following agencies or businesses represented:
    - Region 4 Behavioral Health Systems
    - Peace Lutheran Church
    - Columbus Police Department
    - Columbus Public Schools
    - Columbus Community Hospital
    - Platte County Sheriff
    - City of Columbus
    - Good Neighbor Community Health Center
    - Keep Columbus Beautiful
    - East Central District Health Department Cancer Prevention Program
    - East Central District Health Department Tobacco Free Platte/Colfax County
    - Kevin Harm, Nurse Practitioner
    - Center for Survivors
    - Time 4 Change
    - Concerned citizens
    - Walgreens
    - Jackson Services
    - Platte County Diversion

- Youth for Christ
  - Boone County Health Center
- c) Funding for the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program is currently received by two different grants. Region 4 Behavioral Health Systems has provided ECDHD with funds from July 2016 to June 2017 in the amount of \$37,575 for this program. Another new funding source designated solely for Platte County is that of Partnership For Success (PFS) in the amount \$32,000 for the time period of October 2016 through September 2017.

- With adequate enforcement the community will address the following selected Healthy People 2020 Objectives related to this strategic area (Healthy People, 2015):
- i) Reduce the proportion of adolescents who report that they rode, during the previous 30 days, with a driver who had been drinking alcohol.
  - ii) Reduce the proportion of adults who drank excessively in the previous 30 days.
  - iii) Decrease the rate of alcohol-impaired driving (.08+ blood alcohol content [BAC]) fatalities.

Selected Evidenced Based Interventions that Support Enforcement. There are proven actions that can be taken to decrease alcohol available to youth and they are as follows:

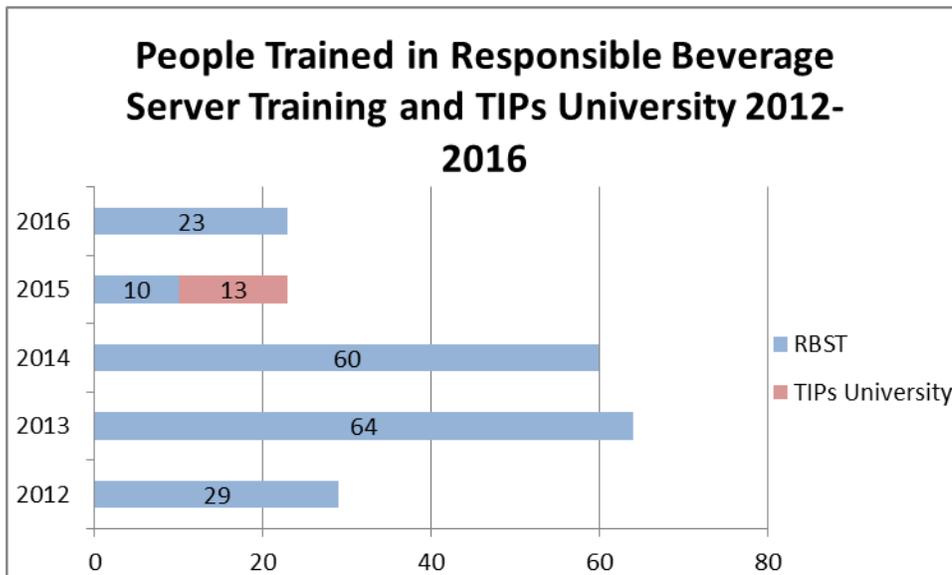
- i) Decrease the rate of alcohol-impaired driving (.08+ blood alcohol content [BAC]) fatalities.
  - (1) Multi-component interventions to reduce alcohol-impaired driving can include any or all of a number of components, such as sobriety checkpoints, training in responsible beverage service, and limiting access to alcohol.
  - (2) Sobriety Checkpoints: At sobriety checkpoints, law enforcement officers use a system to stop drivers to assess their level of alcohol impairment.
  - (3) Responsible Beverage Server Training: These programs provide education and training to servers of alcoholic beverages with the goal of altering their serving practices to prevent customer intoxication and alcohol-impaired driving. Practices may include offering customers food with drinks, delaying service to rapid drinkers, refusing service to intoxicated or underage consumers, and discouraging intoxicated customers from driving (County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2015).
- ii) Preventing Excessive Alcohol Consumption: Enhanced Enforcement of Laws Prohibiting Sales to Minors.
 

Enhanced enforcement programs initiate or increase the frequency of retailer compliance checks for laws against the sale of alcohol to minors in a community. Known as Compliance Checks, this is a strategy in which underage youth, making no attempt to conceal their age or lie about their age, attempt to purchase alcohol from a licensed retailer (The Community Guide, 2015). Compliance checks are conducted by and coordinated with local law enforcement and violators receive legal or administrative sanctions. Results of retailer compliance checks are published in the Columbus Telegram, the districts largest local newspaper.

### Responsible Beverage Server Training (RBST)

RBST is an education program for owners and managers to make positive policy changes in establishments (County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2015). Examples of policy changes that support the overall goal of reducing youth substance abuse include training requiring identification checks for customers that look under age, eliminating alcohol promotions which may appeal to youth, holding regular meetings for staff and/or providing educational information to patrons.

The community coalition has done quite a bit of work with this strategy. In the first quarter of 2012, a group of five individuals in the Platte County community were trained as RBST trainers (four law enforcement and the staff member identified in that grant as project manager). Each trainer license is valid for one year and is renewable if each trainer provides one class. The coalitions have the needed trainers, and a limited supply of trainee books and supplies in stock to meet the needs for a small number of start-up classes to be held in the future. In 2012, two RBST classes were conducted and 29 individuals were trained. In 2013, the popularity of the class grew as eight classes were provided and 64 individuals were trained on RBST. The number of RBST trainers also increased by three, two of which were from the Columbus Police Department and one from the Platte County Sheriff's Department. In 2014, six classes were provided and 60 individuals were trained. Participation in RBST Training declined to 10 individuals trained in 2015. Thirteen individuals were trained in TIPs (Training for Intervention Procedures) for the University at Central Community College – Columbus in 2015 as well. TIPs for the University is a training for college students to learn how to make good choices when faced with issues surrounding alcohol use. The resident hall director and assistants were trained so they are better equipped to help students reduce high-risk drinking behaviors. In 2016, 23 individuals were trained in a RBST course.



### Sobriety Checkpoints

Reducing the number of impaired drivers should correlate positively with accidents and thereby increase the safety of these minors. One effective way of reducing alcohol impaired driving is the use of law enforcement officers to stop drivers and gauge their level of alcohol impairment at checkpoints. Law enforcement officers in Platte County and the Columbus Police Department have held sobriety checks in the past in connection with the health department.

In 2013, sobriety checkpoints yielded 314 contacts, 68 warnings, 2 arrests and 14 citations (2 of these contacts, or 14%, were alcohol violations such as open container). Sobriety checkpoints require a great deal of funding to cover the manpower for such an operation. For this reason, the coalition budget has not been able to contribute to doing checkpoints for the last several years.

## **IV. Summary**

Youth alcohol substance abuse is a public health issue ECDHD has been working on for sixteen years. ECDHD continues to work on trying to change the statistics shown in this report for a healthier community, healthier youth. Data from the 2012-2016 alcohol compliance checks indicate that with consistent checks, retailers tend to be in greater compliance.

ECDHD leads a monthly youth substance abuse prevention coalition known as Back to BASICS (Bringing Awareness to Substance Abuse Issues in our Communities). ECDHD also educates adults on the importance of being positive role models for the youth in our community. Being a positive role model for youth includes educating our youth on the dangers associated with underage use as well as showing responsible usage among those who choose to use alcohol. ECDHD believes that it is important to engage youth at a young age about the dangers and risks associated with underage alcohol use and for parents to stand strong and united in their zero tolerance of underage alcohol consumption. Through education we hope to empower parents to realize how strong their voice and influence is with their own children, as well as the importance of positive influences and role models in the other adults who spend time working with our youth. If you are interesting in learning more about Back to BASICS and/or becoming a member of the coalition, contact East Central District Health Department at 402-563-9656 and ask to speak with Caitlin Schneider, Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator.

## References

County Health Rankings and Roadmaps. (2015). *Responsible beverage server training*. Retrieved from <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/responsible-beverage-server-training-rbsrbst>

Healthy People 2020. (2015). *Substance abuse*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/substance-abuse>

The Community Guide. (2015). *Preventing excessive alcohol consumption: Evidence based interventions for your community*. Retrieved from <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/What-Works-Alcohol-factsheet.pdf>