

PREVENTING TEEN ALCOHOL USE

A recent study, "Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility," assesses the scope of underage alcohol use and outlines strategies to reduce the problem.

The study, sponsored by the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, finds that nearly 75% of twelfth graders and 39% of eighth graders have used alcohol in the past year. More than 25% of high school seniors report having consumed five or more drinks in a row in the past week. Nebraska figures are traditionally higher in all categories.

The report's recommendations include strategies that PRIDE-Omaha, Inc. has long endorsed:

- heightened adult supervision of children.
- responsive alcohol and entertainment industry efforts shielding young people from unsuitable messages about alcohol consumption.
- raising alcohol taxes significantly by federal and state governments.
- increasing retail alcohol compliance checks.
- enhancing efforts to prevent and detect false I.D. distribution and use.
- national public awareness campaign informing youth of the dangers to themselves and others caused by the consumption of alcohol.

~ American Medical News, October 6, 2003