

Reducing Alcohol-Impaired Driving: Maintaining Current Minimum Legal Drinking Age (MLDA) Laws

Task Force Finding

Intervention Definition

Minimum legal drinking age (MLDA) laws specify an age below which the purchase and consumption of alcoholic beverages are not permitted. This review examined the effect of raising or lowering the MLDA. All states currently have an MLDA of 21 years.

Task Force Finding (August 2000)*

Maintaining or implementing the MLDA at 21 years rather than at a younger age is strongly recommended based on evidence from the United States, Canada, and Australia that the higher age requirement for legal drinking is effective in decreasing alcohol-related crashes and associated injuries among 18- to 20-year-old drivers. Other potential benefits include decreased alcohol consumption. No harms were reported and no qualifying economic information was identified from the literature.

*From the following publication:

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Recommendations to reduce injuries to motor vehicle occupants: increasing child safety seat use, increasing safety belt use, and reducing alcohol-impaired driving. *Am J Prev Med* 2001;21(4S):16–22.

Publications

Shults RA, Elder RW, Sleet DA, et al. Reviews of evidence regarding interventions to reduce alcohol-impaired driving. *Am J Prev Med* 2001;21(4S):66–88.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Recommendations to reduce injuries to motor vehicle occupants: increasing child safety seat use, increasing safety belt use, and reducing alcohol-impaired driving. *Am J Prev Med* 2001;21(4S):16–22.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. [Motor-vehicle occupant injury: strategies for increasing use of child safety seats, increasing use of safety belts, and reducing alcohol-impaired driving](#) [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5007a1.htm]. *MMWR Recommendations and Reports* 2001;50(RR07):1-13.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Motor vehicle occupant injury. In: Zaza S, Briss PA, Harris KW, eds. *The Guide to Community Preventive Services: What Works to Promote Health?* Atlanta (GA): Oxford University Press;2005:329-84 (Out of Print).

Disclaimer

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Document last updated September 24, 2013

Suggested citation:

The Community Preventive Service Task Force (CPSTF). *Reducing Alcohol-Impaired Driving: Maintaining Current Minimum Legal Drinking Age (MLDA) Laws*. The Community Guide [www.thecommunityguide.org]. The Community Preventive Service Task Force, Atlanta, Georgia, 2000. <https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc/164232>