



# The Extra Mile

Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms

## Going the Distance: Coalitions, Researchers, and Law Enforcement Attend Nation's Only Conference on Preventing Alcohol-Related Harms

Project Extra Mile (PEM) staff traveled to Arlington, VA on May 14-16 to attend the [Alcohol Policy 20 \(AP20\) Conference](#), which provides an opportunity every two years to learn the latest research from experts and how evidence-based strategies are saving lives and making communities healthier safer places to live. Conference sessions covered a variety of topics including but not limited to collaborating with law enforcement and regulatory agencies, 0.05 BAC laws, identifying new high-risk alcohol products, the alcohol-cancer link, efforts to require more information for consumers on alcohol labels, alcohol-involved gun violence, engaging community members through the liquor licensing process, and more. Some of these topics are highlighted below.



### Addressing Alcohol-Related Gun Violence in Baltimore

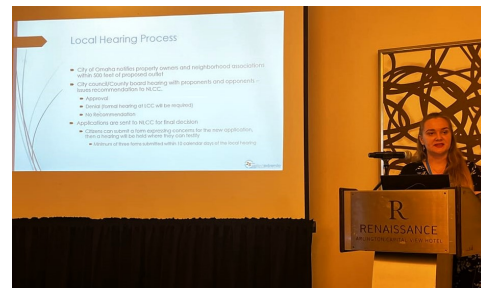
Last year, the Center for Gun Violence Solutions at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health [released new recommendations](#) to address alcohol use and firearms.

Researchers from this project shared that the recommendations were driven by three key findings: nearly 1 in 3 gun homicide perpetrators drank heavily before murdering their victims; 30% of gun homicide victims drank heavily before being killed; and a quarter of gun suicide victims were drinking heavily before they died by suicide. The recommendations included: limiting access to firearms by persons with a record of alcohol misuse; and limiting access to guns when and where alcohol is consumed.

Senator Cory McCray of Baltimore, Maryland was also a participant in this powerful panel discussion. He shared how his community's concerns drove him to seek policy solutions to address gun violence in his district. After researching the problems and its causes, the senator introduced Senate Bill 571 to address problem liquor outlets in the community. This bill reduced alcohol sales in a neighborhood within his district by seven hours, from 6 a.m. until 2 a.m. to 9 a.m. until 10 p.m. Within the first month of the bill going into effect, the neighborhood saw an [immediate 51% drop](#) in homicides, followed by an annual 23% decrease in all violent crimes in the neighborhood when compared to similar neighborhoods that did not implement the change.

### *Project Extra Mile's Involvement in the Liquor Licensing Process Spotlighted*

Project Extra Mile Policy & Research Coordinator Liene Topko took part in a concurrent session on *Building Community Partnerships for Change*. Each presenter brought a unique perspective to this topic and shared how having a broad coalition of partners can greatly reduce alcohol-related harms in communities. Project Extra Mile was proud to present with other national leaders about the importance of engaging key stakeholders in preventing alcohol-related harms.



Topko discussed the prevalence of alcohol-related harms in Nebraska and how the organization is engaging concerned citizens through the liquor licensing process, which is one of the main ways for addressing alcohol outlet density in Omaha and other areas of our state. Topko provided attendees with an overview of the licensing process and the variety of ways in which the organization engages in community organizing and how building the coalition's capacity through the licensing process can lead to increased engagement on broader policy issues.

### *Measuring and Impacting Alcohol Availability*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided an exciting preview of a new tool for measuring alcohol availability in communities across the country. The tool, expected to become fully operational in 2025, will aid communities in measuring alcohol outlet density. The CDC had previously published its [guide for measuring alcohol outlet density](#); however, many communities have been unable to perform a rigorous assessment of alcohol outlet density due to restrictions on the use of grant dollars for research.

The CDC hopes to have a solution to this problem that will provide communities an official snapshot of density that they can use to engage local leaders in the liquor licensing and policy areas. The online tool that will be free and publicly available will calculate and report on several indicators (distance, population, clusters) of density at both community and state levels. The CDC has been reaching out to liquor licensing authorities in all 50 states to obtain liquor license details that will be plotted and verified using four geocoders. Once achieved, comparing densities across jurisdictions would become easier and more accurate; high-density areas could be selected for intervention; the density data could then be more easily integrated with other datasets such as crime.

### *How the Alcohol Industry is Impacting What Products the Population Consumes*



Multiple sessions during the conference focused on emerging alcoholic products and the risks they pose for underage youth as well as the population at large. [Dover Youth to Youth](#) students discussed how they empower students in their middle and high schools to take action through gaining knowledge, building skills, and taking action. The group follows a four-step process, which begins with observing what is going on in their communities and the issues that need to be addressed. The group then educates themselves on the issues and potential solutions, as well as building awareness of the issues in the community as whole. Next, they collaborate to build their support group and have multiple voices sharing the same message in a variety of spaces. This community collaboration is imperative to build support and momentum for the last step which is to advocate for policy change. They work with policy makers at all levels, schools to the legislature, to bring about positive changes that decrease alcohol-related harm in their communities. During 2023, the group worked to raise awareness about alcoholic products having youthful packaging and flavors that target kids and has attempted to work with their Liquor Commission to change how drinks are advertised. The group also shared some examples of the products that the alcohol industry comes out with that are attractive to youth.

## Miles to Go: Alcohol Compliance Checks Result in 16 Businesses Selling Alcohol to Minors

*Three retailers sold twice within the last six months*



Local and state law enforcement agencies conducted compliance checks over the last three months in Cass, Douglas, and Washington counties to ensure that retailers are refusing the sale of alcohol to minors -- a time when youth are celebrating the end of school and beginning summer.

75 percent of the businesses that were cited for selling alcohol to minors did not check the minors' ID's -- an important first step for preventing illegal alcohol sales to

youth and the associated harms.

"Our number one priority is keeping youth safe, especially this time of year," said Omaha Police Lieutenant Neal Bonacci. "We strongly encourage alcohol retailers to train their employees to ask for ID's and verify the identity and age of the person attempting to purchase alcohol. If a business has any doubt, they can refuse the sale of alcohol to the young person."

Overall, 16 (15%) out of 110 businesses checked in Cass, Douglas, and Washington counties were cited for selling alcohol to minors. A summary sheet of the enforcement results and a full list of businesses checked are available by clicking [here](#). Five of the businesses cited are facing enhanced penalties due to prior sales to minors within the last four years -- the time frame used by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission (LCC) to assess penalties:

- California Taco, 3235 California St, Omaha (12/23);
- Casey's 3529, 16610 Bestmann Dr, Plattsmouth (3/23);
- Crystal Beverage Mart, 4807 S 20th St, Omaha (4/21);
- Havana Garage, 1008 Howard St, Omaha (12/23); and

- La Isla Restaurant 3, 4835 S 24th St, Omaha (12/23).

For the full release [click here](#).

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## Last Chance to Register for the Youth Leadership Retreat!

*Registration closes on June 12th*



The 2024 Youth Leadership Retreat has been scheduled for June 25-27 at the Lutheran Church of the Master West Campus in Omaha. Longtime partner and trainer, [Nigel Wrangham](#), will be leading the sessions to help students learn how to become leaders in their schools and communities. Students will have an opportunity to discover their role in preventing underage drinking in a fun and interactive way, identify local issues facing youth and develop their skills for change, as well as learn how advertising and media influence underage alcohol use and how youth can be the change they want to see in the world.

**Registration is limited and closes on June 12th!** So take advantage while spots remain for this fun event! For more information and to register, please visit our [website](#).

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## Coalition Member Spotlight - Ashley Pick

This month's spotlight is Ashely Pick, project manager and traffic records coordinator at the Nebraska Department of Transportation – Highway Safety Office (HSO). She has been in her position since March 2023 and helps coordinate data from the state's core safety database as well as review the data to gain an initial understanding of potential challenges. This information aids in identifying motor vehicles problems that may be unique to our state and enhances partnerships between agencies to address problems. Prior to joining the HSO, Ashely spent eight years at the Nebraska Department of Labor in a variety of roles. When asked about being part of the coalition, Ashely shared, "By fostering collaboration among various stakeholders, including local governments, law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, schools, and community organizations, Project Extra Mile effectively addresses the complex issues associated with alcohol misuse. Through education, advocacy, and evidence-based interventions, the coalition not only raises awareness about the risks of alcohol consumption but also implements strategies to promote responsible behavior and create safer environments." Thank you for being a valuable member of the coalition, Ashley!



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**Please Join Us!**



CELEBRATING  
**25** YEARS  
1995-2020

**projectextramile**  
PREVENTING ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

## OMAHA METRO COALITION MEETING

**June 12, 2024 @ 9:00 AM**



**UNO's Community Engagement Center  
6400 University Drive South  
Room 201**

**Please join us as  
we discuss how the  
price of alcohol  
impacts our  
communities.**



**More Information :**  
[www.projectextramile.org](http://www.projectextramile.org)

**402-963-9047**  
[info@projectextramile.org](mailto:info@projectextramile.org)

**PROJECT EXTRA MILE  
2024 COALITION  
MEETINGS**

JANUARY 17TH  
FEBRUARY 14TH  
MARCH 13TH  
APRIL 10TH  
MAY 8TH  
JUNE 12TH  
NO MEETING IN JULY  
AUGUST 14TH  
SEPTEMBER 11TH  
OCTOBER 9TH  
NOVEMBER 13TH  
DECEMBER 11TH

**LOOKING FORWARD TO CONNECTING WITH YOU IN 2024**



**MEETINGS HELD AT  
UNO'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER  
6400 UNIVERSITY DRIVE SOUTH**



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