



ASAM

American Society of Addiction Medicine

Public Policy Statement on Prevention

The American Society of Addiction Medicine supports a wide variety of measures to prevent alcohol- and other drug-related problems in contemporary society, understanding that:

- A comprehensive and coordinated national program involving a combination of approaches will be required to combat these serious and complex problems.
- Extensive public education about the nature, causes, and prevention of alcoholism and other drug dependencies, and about the full range of alcohol- and drug-related problems, will be required by both the public and private sectors to develop support for comprehensive prevention. Physicians have an indispensable and ongoing role in this public education.
- Sound scientific research into the causes of these problems, and the careful evaluation of prevention measures undertaken, are needed in order to improve the fund of knowledge upon which more effective prevention strategies may be based. The American Society of Addiction Medicine, therefore, recommends that such research be given high priority by government, universities, foundations, and other research institutions.

The American Society of Addiction Medicine supports prevention policies and programs that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. Control of quality, availability, advertising and promotion of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages. Such controls should include:**
 - a. Establishing a national legal purchase age of 21 years for all alcoholic beverages.**
 - b. Curbs on advertising of all alcoholic beverages and tobacco products, including the voluntary elimination of radio and TV advertising, and intermediate measures, such as the establishment and enforcement of national standards for radio, TV and print advertising which eliminate use of young people, athletes, persons engaging in risky activity, and sexual innuendo.**
 - c. Eliminating sponsorship of youth-oriented concerts and all sports events by tobacco and alcoholic beverage manufacturers.**

- d. **Eliminating alcohol advertising and promotion on college campuses, where a high proportion of the audience reached is under the legal drinking age.**
 - e. **Eliminating alcohol advertising and promotion that portrays activities that can be dangerous when combined with alcohol use.**
 - f. **Banning special low-price promotions, such as cut rate "happy hours," "two-for-the-price-of-one drinks", or free drinks for female patrons.**
 - g. **Counter advertising, through paid and public advertising, including health warnings about alcoholism and alcohol-related problems, nicotine dependence, and tobacco product related health problems.**
 - h. **Requiring that alcoholic beverage containers display all ingredients and alcoholic content by volume, in addition to a rotating series of health warnings on:**
 - **Drinking and driving**
 - **Drinking and pregnancy**
 - **Alcohol and drug interactions**
 - **Links of excessive alcohol use to health-related disorders, including alcoholism cirrhosis, heart disease and cancer.**
 - i. **Health warning posters at point of sale.**
 - j. **Eliminating the sale of alcoholic beverages by gasoline retailers.**
 - k. **Adjusting taxes on beer and wine to equate with those for distilled spirits, and adjusting taxes on all alcoholic beverages for inflation experienced since 1951.**
 - l. **Devoting significant additional funds derived from increased taxes to the support of prevention and research.**
- 2. Control of the quality, distribution, and availability of psychoactive drugs, including:**
- a. **Measures to prevent the manufacture, importation and sale of illicit drugs.**
 - b. **Programs to prevent diversion of licit drugs for illicit sale and use.**
 - c. **Discouraging the inclusion of alcohol as an ingredient in the formulation of medicines, beyond the minimum required as a solvent.**
 - d. **Promoting safe and appropriate prescribing practices for drugs that may produce dependency.**
 - e. **Warning labels on prescription and over-the-counter drugs that describe possible adverse interaction with alcohol and other drugs. Warning labels that indicate the potential of drugs to produce dependence.**

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American Society of Addiction Medicine

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