

How To Use The Maine Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your interest in this very important public health issue. Underage drinking and the devastating impact that it has on so many Maine youth is what the Maine Youth Empowerment and Policy Project (YEPP) is all about. We need your help to change the way alcohol is marketed locally to youth.

That local marketing practices are an important piece of the puzzle in encouraging underage drinking was made clear by the 2005 YEPP youth survey. Please refer to the summary report enclosed in this packet. If you want to see the entire survey and results go to the YEPP website at: <http://www.neias.org/YEP/>

In February 2006 the Maine Youth Empowerment and Policy Project met with a representative group of concerned Maine retailers. These retailers are already taking responsibility to curb first and second hand sales of alcohol to minors. Now, working with the Maine Youth Empowerment and Policy Project some of these retailers have committed to address the issue of point of sale marketing. Through this partnership, an alcohol marketing code of conduct was created.

The Youth Empowerment and Policy Group's goal was to produce a flexible code that local youth and prevention groups can use to work with merchants at the local level. We want to be able to reward stores that make their best efforts to curb the impact of alcohol advertising on youth.

Enclosed in this packet is:

- A copy of the Maine Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct that may be reproduced. NOTE: Retailer's are required to meet at least one of the six items listed on the code to receive an award. Please work with individual store owners to implement all or part of the Code.
- A printed copy of the static decal "OUR TOWN, OUR CHILDREN" award that can be given to stores that cooperate. Actual static decals can be can be requested from AdCare. *See details below.*
- Sample of the certificate that can be given to each store that cooperates. NOTE: The store name and coalition or community group name can be personalized. Please forward your request for a personalized certificate to AdCare. *See details below.*
- Summary of the 2005 YEPP youth survey.
- And a report form that will help YEPP monitor statewide progress.

You can request a copy of the following by contacting AdCare at 207-626-3615 or email Jessie Gogan, Program Manager at jgogan@neias.org or Adrienne Gallant, Program Coordinator at agallant@neias.org.

- A twelve minute video that YEPP produced. The video can be used to raise awareness of the issue with parent groups, school groups, service clubs, merchant associations or individual store owners: Anyone who will listen.
- Static decals of the “OUR TOWN, OUR CHILDREN” award that can be given to stores that cooperate. Please indicate how many you will need.
- A personalized certificate for each store that cooperates. Please forward store name and coalition or community group name with request.

We recommend the following plan of action; however, you will need to determine the best approach for your community.

1. Use the video and other methods to raise community awareness.
2. Meet with merchant groups and/or individual merchants to start a dialogue and partnership. Whenever possible have youth as part of the discussion. Merchants should be asked for their ideas on reducing marketing to youth. They can be asked to discuss the Code and which things they feel are most doable.

These first two steps are extremely important. Success will be based on your ability to develop or maintain relationships with your merchants. The Code is not some hard and fast set of rules you want to impose on merchants. It is meant to be flexible. The goal is not to eliminate or even limit alcohol advertising. The goals are to raise merchant awareness of the issue and whenever possible reduce marketing practices that are the most egregious in terms of targeting youth. We start with baby steps and can revisit the topic once people are feeling more comfortable.

3. Work with individual store owners to implement all or part of the Code.
4. Give OUR TOWN, OUR CHILDREN awards and certificates to these stores and whenever possible get local publicity for these stores and your efforts.
5. Send a completed reporting form to AdCare each time a meeting is held and/or an award is provided so we can track the progress being made in your communities.

Remember, for this to work you need to be firm but understanding with the storeowners. Some will have difficulty (i.e. due to store size) in complying with some parts of the Code. Some may say that they need to discuss this with corporate headquarters. If this occurs, ask them what they can agree to without getting permission. (Irving Oil and Puffin Stop headquarters have endorsed the Code) The most important point is to raise awareness of the issue and minimize the amount of youth oriented alcohol marketing that exists in your communities. Award the OUR TOWN, OUR CHILDREN to those stores that sincerely do their best.

Note: Many stores will want to talk about how they already comply with state law and are vigilant about sales to minors. They should be commended for this, but your task is to

help them see that alcohol marketing is a separate issue that only they can do something about.

So thank you and good luck. If you need more signs or anything else please contact Jessie Gogan, Program Manager or Adrienne Gallant, Program Coordinator at AdCare, 207-626-3615 or jgogan@neias.org or agallant@neias.org. Our goal is to have 35 stores aboard by next year.

The Maine Youth Empowerment and Policy Project

Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct:

- 1. It is the responsibility of every retail manager to be aware of how alcohol marketing in their stores may affect underage individuals and to minimize the impact of alcohol advertising on youth to the best of their ability.*
- 2. To the greatest extent possible, given store size and other limitations, placement of alcohol products and displays should be in areas less frequented by children. An effort should be made to keep alcohol products and displays away from areas that display candy and toys.*
- 3. Alcohol signage should be placed above children's eye level and should not be located in areas frequented by children, i.e. Store entrances, checkout areas, candy, and toy areas*
- 4. Displays featuring sports figures, blow-up items, and appeals to sex symbols should be minimized. As the retailers stated "price should sell the product".*
- 5. Outside signage should comply with state law.*
- 6. Local retailers need to regularly and consistently ask their distributors and vendors to comply with this code and provide materials that comply with this code.*

Our Town Our Children Award

This store works to help youth avoid underage drinking by protecting youth from the effects of alcohol marketing.



Sponsored by your local Prevention Coalition and the Youth Empowerment and Policy Project.

<http://www.neias.org/YEP/>

OUR TOWN, OUR CHILDREN AWARD

Family Friendly



Community Caring

Recognizing local stores that are making changes to help our young people avoid negative consequences of underage drinking.

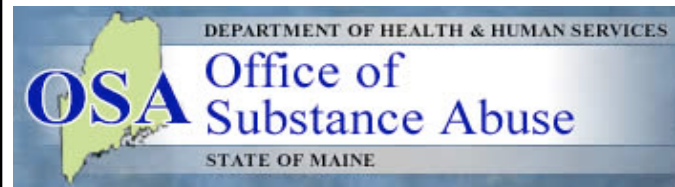
STORE NAME

is hereby recognized as a store that complies with the *Maine Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct*.

In order to protect our youth from the effects of alcohol marketing the *Code of Conduct* was Developed by the *Maine Youth Empowerment and Policy Project* in Collaboration with *Maine Retailers*.

This award is presented by:

Coalition or Community Group Name



Alcohol Marketing Report Summary

Purpose: to find out whether or not alcohol advertising plays a role in the high numbers of underage youth who are drinking.

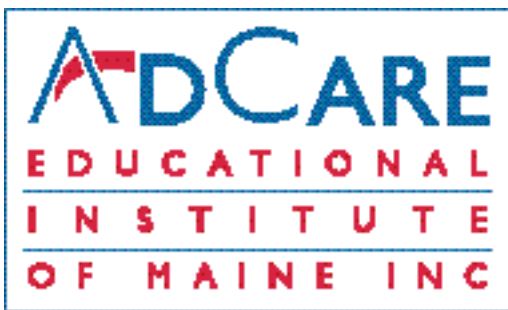
YEP surveyed about 500 young people aged 13-18 from all across the state. 19% were middle school youth (grades 7 & 8) and the rest were high school students with relatively equal numbers of males and females.

Findings:

1. There were three basic findings:
 - Youth are exposed to an overwhelming amount of alcohol marketing from TV ads to t-shirts to community festivals.
 - These ads appeal to underage individuals and most youth feel they are targeted by this marketing.
 - Youth believe that alcohol advertising influences youth to drink.
2. Youth are greatly exposed to alcohol advertising and they remember the ads they see. 86.5% of youth remember alcohol ads on television, 73.2% remember print ads.
3. 69% of youth surveyed said that alcohol ads appeal to underage youth. 65% of youth believed that the industry was trying to appeal to youth through their advertising.
4. Youth remembered the certain themes in the ads--a great party was happening where people were having a good time, people in the ads were attractive or sexy and were physically attracted to one another.
5. Youth feel or think that drinking 1) is important for a good party, 2) is a good way to get a good-looking date, 3) will make you popular and 4) is fun.
6. Youth believe the primary reason companies advertise is to try to get people to try their product.
 - 79% of youth said they have been influenced to buy a product.
 - 68% of youth believe that alcohol ads encourage young people to drink.
7. Discovered that responsibility messages in the ads are lost on youth.

Recommendations:

1. Advertisements should have more appropriate adult themes and that
2. The industry should better monitor the types of ads being placed.
3. The industry should find a way of explaining that drinking has negative health impacts on youth and that people should wait until they are 21 to drink.



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Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in the Youth Empowerment and Policy Project's (YEPP) most recent work, the Alcohol Marketing Local Retailers Code of Conduct. As the project continues to gain momentum we are looking to collect data on how many awards have been distributed and other details important to the success of the code.

In order to simplify the collection process the group developed an on-line, user friendly survey. The survey takes approximately 5 minutes to complete and will help YEPP monitor the level of impact our work is having in different communities. We are encouraging everyone who is utilizing the code of conduct to complete the survey. All responses are confidential. We appreciate your assistance in this process.

The survey is available at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=622893323743>

Also, for your convenience a printed copy of the survey is attached. Please fax or mail the completed form to: Fax: 207-621-2550 or Mail: AdCare Educational Institute, 75 Stone Street, Augusta, ME 04330.

Thanks again for your assistance and we look forward to your continued collaboration on the Alcohol Marketing Local Retailers Code of Conduct. If you have any questions feel free to contact Jessie Gogan at jgogan@neias.org or Adrienne Gallant at agallant@neias.org or 207-626-3615.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessica Gogan".

Jessica Gogan,
Program Manager

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Adrienne D. Gallant".

Adrienne Gallant,
Project Coordinator

Community Report Form - Maine Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct

1.

Thank you for utilizing the Alcohol Retailer's Local Marketing Code of Conduct. Below please find a brief survey form that will take just a few minutes to complete. This information will help us to monitor the level of impact our work is having in different communities. All responses are confidential. Your input is critical to this process. THANK YOU for your help!!

1. Date met with retailer(s):

2. How long were the meeting(s)? (Round to the nearest quarter hour)

3. How many people were present at the meeting? (i.e. people receiving information NOT people presenting)?

4. Store name(s) of retailer(s) you met with:

5. Name of Community (City/Town where presentation occurred):

6. County where presentation occurred:

7. Name of group or individual conducting/hosting presentation:

8. Please identify yourself:

- Coalition Member
- Law Enforcement
- MYV Member
- Parent
- School Personnel
- YEP Member
- Other (please specify)

9. Contact information of the person submitting this report. (Please include: First Name, Last Name, Title, Agency, Street Address, City, State, Zip.)

10. Phone

11. Fax

12. Email

13. Did you use the YEP video for community awareness?

- Yes
- No

14. What was the general response to the information being presented?

15. Please briefly describe what approach you used to discuss the Code with local retailer(s). (ex. private meeting, approached store directly, etc.)

16. What types of resistance, if any, did you receive? (ex. local compliance, environmental factors, no resistance met, etc.) Be specific as possible.

17. How many stores were awarded the Our Town, Our Children Award?

18. If you answered Question 17 with 1 or more, please list the store(s) by name below:

19. Retailer(s) contact information. (Please include: First Name, Last Name, Title, Agency, Street Address, City, State, Zip.)

20. How many alcohol outlets are there in your community? (i.e. general store, liquor store, etc.)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- Other (please specify)

21. Any suggestions you have for YEP or other communities?