
Cambridge Prevention Coalition
CMCA One-on-One Interview Summary

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Submitted to:
Cambridge Prevention Coalition

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CMCA PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (CMCA) is a community-organizing program designed to reduce adolescent access to alcohol by changing community policies and practices. Initiated in 1991, CMCA has proven that effectively limiting access to alcohol to people under the legal drinking age not only directly reduces teen drinking, but also communicates a clear message to the community that underage drinking is inappropriate and unacceptable.

CMCA employs a range of social organizing techniques to address legal, institutional, social, and health issues in order to reduce youth alcohol use by eliminating illegal alcohol sales to youth by retailers and obstructing the provision of alcohol to youth by adults.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

As described by Wagenaar and colleagues (1999)¹,

“[at] the heart of [community] organizing is careful building of interpersonal relationships, one-by-one. Rarely do people join local organizing efforts en masse; most often they come one at a time. Organizing efforts should pay careful attention, particularly in the early stages of the campaign, to making contact with as many individuals as possible. These initial contacts, usually called ‘one-on-one interviews,’ help ensure diversity of representation and a more accurate understanding of the issues that need to be addressed.”

In Cambridge, 170 one-on-one interviews were conducted between October 1, 2003 and September 30, 2004 as part of the CMCA initiative being implemented by the Cambridge Prevention Coalition (CPC). This included 102 interviews with adult community members and 68 interviews conducted with community youth.

Adult and youth participants were comprised of non-representative, convenience samples of individuals interviewed by staff members from the CPC, CASPAR Youth Services, Concilio Hispano, and Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers.

Adult Participant Characteristics

Of the 102 adult participants, 67% were female, and 86% were between the ages of 21 and 60 (with most falling into the 31-40 age range). The majority of participants described themselves as Hispanic/Latino (43%), White (20%), or Black/African American (9%). Almost all of the participants indicated that they lived in Cambridge (83%), and 40% indicated that they worked in Cambridge. When asked to indicate what groups or areas they represented or were a part of, 30% indicated the faith community, 25% parents, 21% community groups, 16% youth, 15% education, 12% social or human services, 10% business, and 6% health care. Relatively under-represented areas included higher education (4%), mental health care (4%), public health (3%), criminal justice or law enforcement (1%), government (1%), and media (1%).

¹ Wagenaar A.C., Gehan J.P., Jones-Webb R., Toomey T.L., Forster J.L., Wolfson M., & Murray D.M. (1999). Communities mobilizing for change on alcohol: Lessons and results from a 15-community randomized trial. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(3), 315-326.

Youth Participant Characteristics

Of the 68 youth participants, 57% were female, and 94% were in high school (most of whom were in 9th or 10th grade). The majority of participants described themselves as Black/African American (44%), White (23%), or Hispanic/Latino (15%). Over three-quarters (79%) indicated that they attended Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, and the average respondent had lived in Cambridge for approximately 11 years.

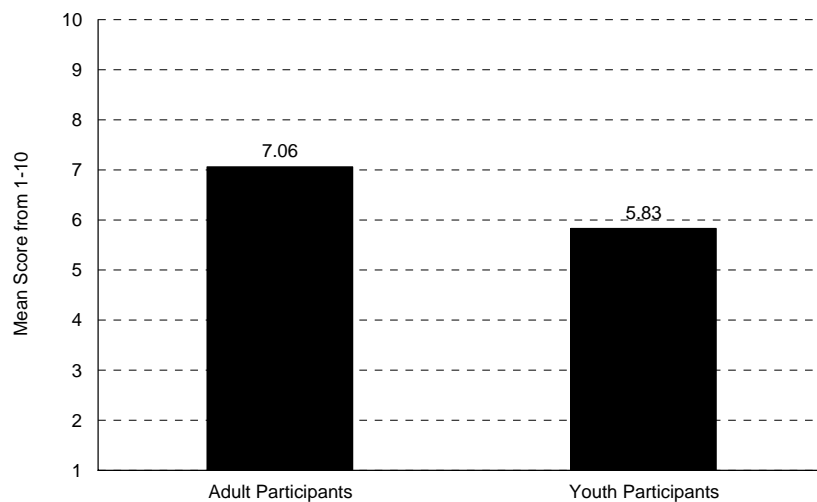
PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING UNDERAGE DRINKING

The first part of the one-on-one interview process was designed to get adult and youth participants to talk about underage drinking in the community. This included their perception of the extent to which they thought underage drinking was a problem in Cambridge, how underage drinking in Cambridge compared to other similar communities, youth participants' perception of their parents' and friends' reaction to underage drinking, perceived ease of access to alcohol for underage youth, perceived sources of alcohol for underage youth, and reasons that youth might choose to drink or to abstain from drinking.

Perceived Problem in Cambridge and Elsewhere

Adult and youth participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought that underage drinking was a problem in Cambridge on a scale from 1-10 with a score of one representing *Not a Problem* and a score of 10 representing *A Severe Problem*. As shown in Figure 1, both adult and youth participants perceived underage drinking in Cambridge as slightly higher than the mid-point on a scale from 1-10. Adult participants perceived it as slightly more of a problem (mean = 7.06) than youth participants (5.83).

Figure 1: Perceived Problem of Underage Drinking in Cambridge



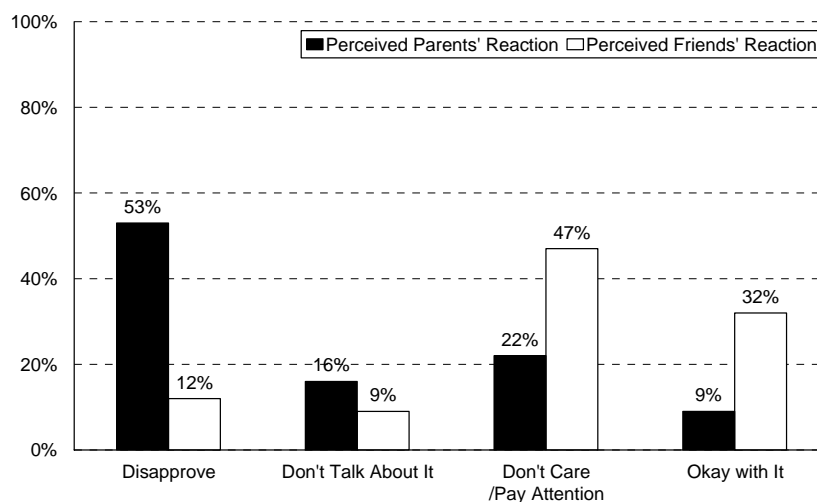
Adult participants were also asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived underage drinking in Cambridge as a problem as compared to other cities and towns in Massachusetts. Overall, 19% indicated that they thought that underage drinking was *less of a problem* in

Cambridge than in other cities and towns in Massachusetts, 61% felt it was *about the same*, and 20% felt that it was *more of a problem* in Cambridge.

Perceived Reaction to Underage Drinking from Parents and Friends

Youth participants were asked to indicate how they thought their parents and friends would feel about the issue of drinking before 21 years of age. As shown in Figure 2, the majority of youth participants indicated that they thought their parents would *disapprove* (53%), while thinking that their friends would either *not care* (47%) or be *okay with it* (32%). Interestingly, roughly one-third of youth participants (31%) felt that their parents would either *not care* or *not pay attention* (22%) to underage drinking, or be *okay with it* (9%).

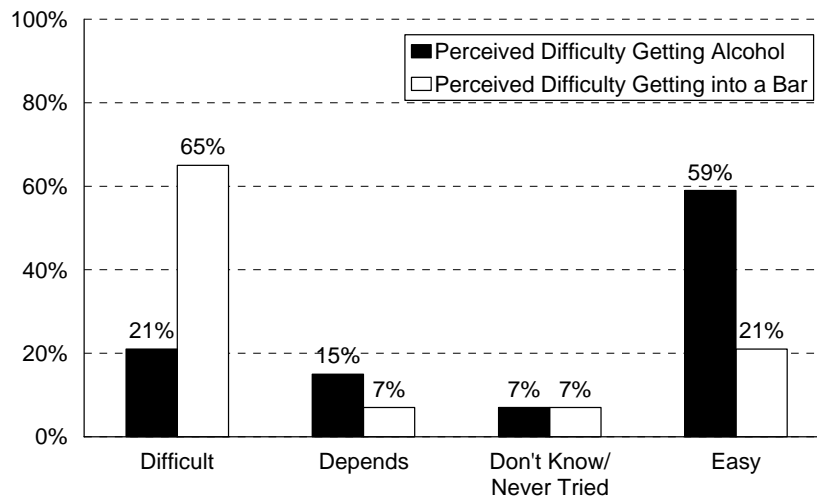
Figure 2: Youth Participant Perception of Parents' and Friends' Reaction to Underage Drinking (n=68)



Perceived Ease of Access to Alcohol

Youth participants were also asked to indicate whether or not they thought it would be hard to get alcohol and whether or not they thought it would be difficult to get into a bar. As shown in Figure 3, the majority of youth participants indicated that they thought it would be *easy* to get alcohol (59%), but that it would be *difficult* (65%) to get into a bar if they were under 21 years of age.

Figure 3: Youth Participant Perception of Difficulty Getting Alcohol and Getting into a Bar (n=68)



Perceived Sources of Alcohol

Adult and youth participants were also asked to indicate where they thought that underage youth obtained alcohol. For adult participants, this question was asked about underage youth in general. For youth participants, respondents were asked to answer this question for middle school age youth (10-14 years), high school age (15-18 years), and post-high school (18-20 years). Open-ended responses to these items were categorized into the peer, family, and community domains. As shown in Table 1, adult participants perceived that underage youth primarily obtained their alcohol from community sources (e.g., third-party sales), followed by their peers (e.g., friends; older friends), and family (e.g., steal from parents; parents buy).

Table 1: Adult Participant Perceptions of the Source of Alcohol for Underage Youth

Youth in General		
Community (53) Strangers/Third Party (33) Fake ID (11) Buy without ID (8) Steal it from Store (3)	Peer (43) Friends (15) Older Friends (15) Older Youth (6) Parties (7)	Family (43) Steal from Parents (24) Parents Buy (13) Older Siblings (5) Other Relatives (1)

Youth participants identified similar sources as the adult respondents, but tended to perceive that there were differences based on age. Specifically, youth participants perceived that middle school age youth obtained alcohol primarily through their peer group (e.g. friends), followed by the family domain, and community domain. For high school age youth, peers remained the most frequently mentioned source, but community sources were identified more often than the family. Finally, post-high school age youth were perceived to obtain their alcohol primarily through community sources (e.g., fake ID; buying without an ID), followed by the peer domain, and then the family (see Table 2).

Table 2: Youth Participant Perceptions of the Source of Alcohol for Underage Youth

Middle School (10-14 yrs)	High School (15-18 yrs)	Post High School (18-20 yrs)
Peers (47) Friends (22) Older People They Know (14) Older Friends (10) Parties (1)	Peers (41) Friends (18) Older Friends (14) Older People They Know (5) Parties (4)	Community (43) Fake ID (17) Buy without ID (15) Strangers/Third Party (8) Steal it from Store (3)
Family (29) Parents Buy (13) Steal from Parents (9) Older Siblings (5) Other Relatives (2)	Community (23) Strangers/Third Party (11) Fake ID (7) Buy without ID (4) Steal it from Store (1)	Peers (42) Friends (18) Older Friends (14) Older People They Know (7) Parties (3)
Community (16) Strangers/Third Party (11) Steal it from Store (3) Fake ID (1) Buy without ID (1)	Family (19) Parents Buy (8) Steal from Parents (4) Older Siblings (4) Other Relatives (3)	Family (12) Parents Buy (6) Home (3) Older Siblings (2) Other Relatives (1)

Reasons Youth Choose to Drink or Abstain

Another item asked youth participants to indicate whether or not they drank alcohol and to provide some reasons why they chose to drink or to not drink. Overall, 68% of respondents indicated that they do not drink and 32% that they do drink (at least on occasion). As shown in Table 3, the most common reason provided for not drinking was health reasons (e.g., drinking is bad for your health), followed by avoiding punishment (e.g., parents disapprove of drinking), the lack of desire to drink, past negative experience with alcohol, and social reasons (e.g., friends don't drink).

Table 3: Youth Participant Reasons for Abstaining (n=45)

Health (23)	Avoid Punishment (10)	No Desire (5)	Negative Experience (4)	Social (2)
Bad for Health (19)	Parents Disapprove (4)	Don't want to (5)	Bad Taste (3)	Friends don't drink (1)
Avoid Hangover (3)	Stay out of Trouble (3)		Bad experience (1)	People act stupid when drinking (1)
Not Gain Weight (1)	It's Illegal (3)			

Youth respondents who chose to drink mentioned having positive experiences with alcohol (e.g., drink for fun), drinking at social events, and peer pressure as reasons for drinking (see Table 4).

Table 4: Youth Participant Reasons for Drinking (n=21)

Positive Experience (12)	Social Reasons (5)	Peer Pressure (2)
For Fun (6)	Social Events (5)	Peer Pressure (2)
Tastes Good (4)		
Makes me Feel Good (1)		
Alleviate Stress (1)		

CURRENT PREVENTION EFFORTS AND RESOURCES

Adult participants were asked whether or not they were aware of any current efforts in Cambridge designed to reduce underage drinking and access to alcohol, and to identify some of the positive things that Cambridge already has in place that would help efforts to address underage drinking. In addition, both adult and youth participants were asked to identify their main source of information about what is going on in Cambridge.

Current Prevention Efforts or Groups in Cambridge

Adult participants were asked to identify groups or current efforts to prevent underage drinking and access to alcohol in Cambridge. The most common responses tended to identify social service agencies in the community (e.g., Concilio Hispano, CASPAR), followed by community programs (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous), school efforts (e.g., school prevention programs), liquor store efforts (e.g., carding policies), police efforts, the church, and the media. A large number of respondents also indicated that they were not aware of any current efforts (see Table 5).

Table 5: Current Prevention Efforts or Groups in Cambridge Identified by Adult Participants

<p>Not Aware of Any Current Efforts (25)</p> <p>Social Service Agencies (18) Concilio Hispano (5) CASAPAR (4) Social Service Agencies (3) Cambridge Health Alliance (2) Cambridge Cares About AIDS (1) Centro Presente (1) North Charles (1) YMCA (1)</p> <p>Community Programs (10) Youth Programs (3) STARS Program (2) Alcoholics Anonymous (1) After-School Programs (1) Driver's Education (1) Rehabilitation Services (1) Server Training (1)</p>	<p>Schools (6) Prevention Programs (5) Extra-curricular activities (1)</p> <p>Liquor Stores (3) Retail Stores (3)</p> <p>Police (2) Law Enforcement (2)</p> <p>Church (2) Clergy (2)</p> <p>Media (1) Media (1)</p>
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Prevention Resources in Cambridge

Adult participants were also asked to identify some of the positive things that Cambridge already has in place that would help efforts to address underage drinking. The most common response concerned the community programs in Cambridge, followed by prevention programming in the community (e.g., school health classes), community awareness and support for the issue, monetary resources in the community, people in the community, service organizations (e.g., CASPAR), enforcement practices, and media groups (see Table 6).

Table 6: Prevention Resources in Cambridge Identified by Adult Participants

<p>Community Programs (10) Youth groups (5) MSYEP (2) Teen Centers (2) After-school programs (1)</p> <p>Prevention programming (6) School Health Class (4) DARE (1) STARS program (1)</p> <p>Community Awareness/Support (3) Awareness/public support (3)</p>	<p>Monetary Resources (2) Resource/grant-rich community (2)</p> <p>People (2) Parents (1) Teachers (1)</p> <p>Service Organizations (2) CASPAR (2)</p> <p>Enforcement (1) Police Presence (1)</p> <p>Media (1) Prevention Advertisements in Cambridge (1)</p>
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Sources of Information

Adult and youth participants were both asked to identify their main source of information about what is going on in Cambridge. Among adult participants, *Newspaper* was the most frequent response (37%), followed by *Cambridge Community Television* (26%), *Other Television Stations* (25%), *Radio Stations* (12%), and *Cambridge City Channel #15* (8%). Among youth participants, the main source of information was *Friends* (59%), followed by *Parents* (41%), *Teachers* (15%), *Cambridge City Channel #15* (9%), and *Radio Stations* (7%).

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE AND WHO SHOULD HELP?

Following the resources discussion, adults participants were asked to indicate what they thought would be a realistic first step in addressing underage drinking in Cambridge. Youth participants were asked a similar question about what programs or activities they thought would interest youth more than drinking. Both adult and youth participants were also asked to indicate what groups or organizations should be involved in efforts to prevent or reduce underage drinking in Cambridge.

Potential Steps to Address Underage Drinking in Cambridge

As shown in Table 7, adult respondents most frequently identified youth prevention education (e.g., school-based education; youth programs; peer interventions) as a potential step to address underage drinking in Cambridge. Additional areas included increased community awareness and coordination (e.g., community forums; increased parent education/awareness), increased

community opportunities (e.g., availability of work internships for youth), media campaigns (e.g., counter-advertising campaigns), and alcohol retail interventions (e.g., stricter identification checking policies).

Table 7: Potential Steps to Address Underage Drinking Provided by Adult Participants

<p>Youth Prevention Education (33) School-Based Education (13) Youth Programs (12) Peer Interventions (5) Athlete/Celebrity Speakers (2) Centers to Educate and Entertain Youth (1)</p> <p>Community Awareness/Coordination (27) Community forums (13) Increase Parent Awareness/Education (8) Define the Issue as a Community (3) Assess Reasons for Use (1) Information on Negative Effects of Drinking (1) Identify Provider/Referral Networks (1)</p>	<p>Community Opportunities (8) Availability of Work Internships for Youth (5) Increased Funding for Prevention (3)</p> <p>Media Campaigns (6) Counter-Advertising Campaign (5) Drinking and Driving campaign (1)</p> <p>Alcohol Retail Interventions (4) Stricter ID Checking Policies (3) Liquor Store Interventions (1)</p>
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Similarly, youth participants were asked to indicate what programs or activities they thought would interest youth more than drinking. The most frequent response was sports, followed by youth programming (e.g., after-school programs), places to hang-out, employment opportunities, and community activities (e.g., family activities). See Table 8 for details.

Table 8: Alternatives to Drinking Provided by Youth Respondents

<p>Sports (34) Sports: 34</p> <p>Youth Programming (15) After-School Programs (8) Youth Groups (4) Fieldtrips/outings (2) Mentor Programs (1)</p>	<p>Hang-Out Places (7) Places to hang out (5) Dance/Hip-Hop Places (2)</p> <p>Employment Opportunities (4) Employment Opportunities (4)</p> <p>Community Activities (3) Church Groups (1) Community Service (1) Family Activities (1)</p>
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Key Groups or Organizations That Should Be Involved

Adult participants were asked to indicate what key groups they thought should be involved in underage drinking prevention efforts. The largest number of respondents identified community organizations/programs (e.g., Concilio Hispano, CASPAR), followed by the schools, the clergy, local government, the enforcement community, parents, healthcare providers, the retail community, past users, sports organizations, and local business (see Table 9).

Table 9: Key Groups That Should Be Involved According to Adult Participants

<p>Community Organizations/Programs (34) Community-Based Organizations (11) Concilio Hispano (8) CASPAR (4) Alcoholics Anonymous (3) Big Brothers/Big Sisters (2) YMCA (2) Youth Centers (2) MADD (1) Youth/Parent Organizations (1)</p> <p>Schools (25) Schools (20) Teachers (4) Administrators (1)</p> <p>Clergy (20) Church (20)</p> <p>Local Government (14) Local Government (13) Housing Development (1)</p>	<p>Enforcement Community (10) Police (10)</p> <p>Parents (8) Parents (6) Parent Associations (2)</p> <p>Health Care Providers (5) Health Clinics (3) Mental Health Providers (2)</p> <p>Retail Community (3) Liquor Stores: 2 Assoc of Bars and Rest: 1</p> <p>Past Users (2)</p> <p>Sports Organizations (2)</p> <p>Local Business (1)</p>
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Youth participants were also asked to indicate who they thought should be involved in trying to prevent underage drinking. The most common response was parents, followed by community organizations/programs, the enforcement community, other youth, local government, the retail community, past users, schools, and the media (see Table 10).

Table 10: Key Groups That Should Be Involved According to Youth Participants

<p>Parents (22) Parents (22)</p> <p>Community Organizations/Programs (16) Community Programs (16)</p> <p>Enforcement Community (10) Police (9) Courts (1)</p> <p>Youth (8) Other Youth/Peers (8)</p>	<p>Local Government (5) Local Government (5)</p> <p>Retail Community (4) Distributors (4)</p> <p>Past Users (3) Former Alcoholics (3)</p> <p>Schools (2) Schools/Teachers (2)</p> <p>Media (1) Newspapers/Television (1)</p>
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BARRIERS/OBSTACLES TO PREVENTION

A final question asked adult participants to identify some of the barriers they saw to seriously reducing underage drinking in Cambridge. The most commonly identified barrier or obstacle to prevention was community norms, followed by lack of communication, limited prevention funding, too much unsupervised time, limited youth programming, social pressures on youth, lack of enforcement, media advertising, and availability (see Table 11).

Table 11: Barriers or Obstacles to Underage Drinking Prevention Identified by Adult Participants

<p>Community Norms (15) Limited Community Support for Prevention (11) Parental Denial (2) Passive Parents (2)</p> <p>Lack of Communication (11) Youth Opposition (5) Youth Lack or Respect for Adults (4) Lack of Communication (1) Lack of Understanding of Causes of Use (1)</p> <p>Limited Prevention Funding (9) Lack of Funding (6) Lack of Resources for Youth Programs (3)</p> <p>Unsupervised Time (9) Too much time unsupervised (9)</p>	<p>Limited Youth Programming (7) Lack of Opportunities for Youth (7)</p> <p>Social Pressures (6) Peer Pressure (5) Youth Stress (1)</p> <p>Lack of Enforcement (4) Alcohol Retailers (2) Lack of Enforcement (2)</p> <p>Media (4) Alcohol Advertising (4)</p> <p>Availability (3) Availability of Alcohol (1) Older Friends Buying Alcohol (1) Adults Buying Alcohol for Youth (1)</p>
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