

Stronger state policies reduce alcohol-related motor vehicle deaths among teens

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Motor vehicle injuries are a leading cause of death among youth in the United States, and one in three deaths from automobile crashes are alcohol-related. However, stronger alcohol policies adopted by states appears to reduce the number of teens who die in alcohol-related crashes, according to new research being presented at the Pediatric Academic Societies 2016 Meeting.

Researchers who will present the abstract of the study, "Alcohol Policies and Motor Vehicle Injury Fatalities among Underage Youth in the United States," assembled a panel of policy experts from a range of disciplines, including law, sociology, economics, epidemiology and psychology, to evaluate the collective alcohol policies in each U.S. state and how effectively they reduced [alcohol consumption](#) and impaired driving. They then linked each state's collective policies to alcohol-related [motor vehicle](#) crash deaths, focusing on underage drivers between ages 16 and 20.

Results from the study showed that [states](#) with stronger alcohol policies had fewer alcohol-related motor vehicle deaths, suggesting that having tougher policies may protect youth from accidents, said lead author Scott E. Hadland, MD, MPH, a pediatrician at Harvard Medical School. He said previous studies examined the links between alcohol policies and youth who die in [motor vehicle crashes](#), but most looked at what happens when a single policy is changed, such as implementation of a new alcohol tax or establishing graduated driver's licensing laws.

"Our study was unique because it looked at the overall collection of alcohol policies in a state—the alcohol policy environment—to see how multiple policies acting at once may protect youth," he said. "In fact, policies targeting the overall population of adults and youth—policies like taxes, limits on hours and locations of sales, and strict rules on drinking and driving for everyone, not just youth—appeared to be the most protective."

More information: [www.abstracts2view.com/pas/view ...
hp?nu=PAS16L1_3465.2](http://www.abstracts2view.com/pas/view.asp?nu=PAS16L1_3465.2)

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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