



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Pembina County Public Health

Strategic Plan to Reduce Underage Drinking

2023-2026

Reducing underage drinking cannot be accomplished by one organization or community. Rather the solutions come through widespread collaboration and engagement with unified goals. Pembina County Public Health Department envisions that the strategies outlined in this plan will be utilized by current and potential partners in communities, schools, faith-based groups, coalition members, and health care organizations.

According to the Behavioral Health ND Data Book 2023, alcohol use among youth and young adults can result in irreversible changes impacting problem-solving skills, performance at school, and potentially their body, mood and mental health. Research shows that individuals who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely than individuals who start drinking at the age of 21 to meet criteria for alcohol use disorder at some point in their lives.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Goal 1	Reduce the rate of underage drinking in the RRV Region amongst 7-8 th graders by 1%.
Objective 1	Include evidence-based alcohol prevention education program in schools to 6-7 th grade classes.
Objective 2	Enhance knowledge of MIP laws by law enforcement with trainings.
Objective 3	Implement city/county policy that is proven to reduce underage drinking.

“Check-in” around Oct 1st, 2025

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Goal 1	Decrease youth/social access to alcohol through taking it from parents or another individual giving to them. YRBS, 2017 states 12.2% of 9-12 students in the RRV region say someone gave alcohol to them and 7.8% say they gave someone money to buy for them.
Objective 1	Provide information, resources, and support to families. Using Parent’s Lead Materials
Objective 2	Change parental attitudes and acceptance of underage drinking

Objective 3	Increase law enforcement visibility @ high risk events.
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SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

Goal 1	Increase perception of risk. According to the Behavioral Health Data Book 2023, 57% of ND adults believe it is not at all difficult for youth to sneak alcohol from their home or friend's home.
Objective 1	Provide info to parents on the dangers and health effects of underage drinking to increase the # of parents who express disapproval of using alcohol before age 21 focused on strengthening family norms against underage drinking and using traditional media such as newspaper, radio, and billboards.
Objective 2	Increase prevention strategies and provide information to schools, businesses, and other appropriate organizations during high risk times/events when alcohol consumption by youth is higher.
Objective 3	Communicating with Pembina County communities about the importance of NDTip and how it enhances our efforts to reduce underage drinking.

Keep track- # items disseminated, # of people reached, # of meetings.

In order to accomplish each goal within a three-year time frame, objectives were chosen with short (end of year 2024), intermediate outcomes (end of year 2025), and long-term outcomes by (July 2026).

Studies show a relationship between underage drinking behaviors and the drinking behaviors of adult relatives, adults in the same household, and adults in the same community and state.

Among adolescents whose peers drink alcohol, those whose parents binge drink are more likely to drink alcohol than those whose parents do not. (CDC)

Youth who drink alcohol are more likely to experience:

- School problems, such as higher rates of absences or lower grades.
- Social problems, such as fighting or lack of participation in youth activities.
- Legal problems, such as arrest for driving or physically hurting someone while drunk.
- Physical problems, such as hangovers or illnesses.
- Unwanted, unplanned, and unprotected sexual activity.
- Disruption of normal growth or sexual development.
- Physical and sexual violence.
- Increased risk of suicide and homicide.
- Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes and other unintentional injuries, such as burns, falls, or drowning.

- Memory problems.
- Misuse of other substances.
- Changes in brain development that may have life-long effects.
- Alcohol poisoning.

In general, the risk of youth experiencing these problems is greater for those who binge drink than for those who do not binge drink. (CDC)

Outcomes

It is imperative that all Pembina County residence work together to achieve the goals of this plan.

Target Populations

-Guardians/Families

- Model responsible drinking practices and have conversations around these responsible drinking practices.
- Set and enforce clear standards, including standards about alcohol use.
- Do not allow underage drinking in the home, before to monitor it and have it locked away.
- Support involvement in extra-curricular and community activities.
- Have age appropriate conversations about alcohol and other drugs using materials from Parent's Lead.

-Law Enforcement

- Prioritize enforcement of underage drinking laws.
- Get involved in your local community coalition if one exists.

-Faith-based organizations

- Periodically include information on underage drinking in your Sunday Bulletin.
- Get involved in local community coalition.
- Raise congregation's awareness of underage drinking and other alcohol related problems.

-Businesses/retailers

- Be sure to check IDs for anyone looking under age 40.
- Be sure to train your employees on checking IDs and laws related to alcohol sales and service.
- Store alcohol responsibly, i.e. visible to clerk or monitored by security cameras, or locked.

- Limit alcohol advertising, especially at youth level near youth-focused items.

-Schools

- Talk with community coalition and plan events with them about what works to reduce underage drinking.
- Instruct all coaches and extracurricular advisors to send strong, clear, no alcohol use message to the students entrusted to their care.

-Healthcare Providers

- Screen underage patients presenting with alcohol-related illnesses for substance use disorders.
- Support and participate in community efforts to reduce underage drinking.
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