



The Extra Mile

Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms



Youth Leadership Retreat
July 24th - 27th
Mahoney State Park
28500 W. Park Hwy Ashland, NE 68003

Miles to Go: Omaha's 1st Homicide of 2023 Connected to Alcohol *Capitol District had its second homicide in three years*

On May 7th, Omaha experienced its first homicide of the year. This occurred only a few weeks after Omaha received [recognition from CNN News](#) for its work in reducing gun violence. The Omaha Police Department and community organizations have worked hard to prevent gun violence and have seen the number of shooting victims cut in half. Omaha had 246 shooting victims in 2009, but in 2022 that number had dropped to 122. It is especially disheartening that Omaha's latest homicide happened within the Capitol District, an area of downtown Omaha that had a homicide in 2020. Project Extra Mile warned the city council that the area could become a magnet for crime in the absence of strict regulations to protect public health and safety. Unfortunately, those concerns fell on deaf ears and those fears have been realized.

The Capitol District is located near 12th Street and Capitol Avenue and is a collection of bars and restaurants. Normally, businesses that sell alcohol have a license that allows their customers to drink alcohol in their building and possibly outside in a fenced off area such as a patio. In restricting that consumption to a smaller confined area, it allows the business more control over the sale and service of alcohol – making it easier to spot customers that should no longer be served alcohol. In the Capitol District, all of these businesses share a large common space that allows customers to drink and interact with each other in an area that, because of its size, is less controlled. Security is present, but their primary focus is not to enforce our state's liquor laws but to simply prevent things

from spiraling out of control.

During the early morning of May 7th, a [fight broke out](#) between multiple women just outside of Moe and Curley's bar. 23-year-old Gom Gout was working his first shift as a security guard at this bar when he saw the altercation occur. According to reports, he approached the women with his hands up and attempted to break up the fight. That was when one of the women took out a gun and shot him in the chest. Omaha Police found the woman near the scene of the crime with the gun still in her possession. She has been charged with second degree murder.

Entertainment districts like Omaha's have caused problems for communities in other states. Ybor City, Florida was promised a better nightlife with increased tourism and economic activity. Instead, the community experienced increases in aggravated assaults, armed robberies, traffic, noise complaints, etc. When the City of Omaha was considering creating its own entertainment district, Project Extra Mile testified against this proposal and made several recommendations to prevent problems like those in Ybor City. These recommendations addressed alcohol pricing, the sizing of cups containing beer, ways to tie the sale of alcohol to the alcohol retailer, and more.

Sadly, the loss of innocent lives can happen when city leaders exclude community voices during planning for new economic development projects that rely heavily on alcohol sales. Alcohol-related harms can be prevented if policymakers put in place commonsense measures to protect public health and safety with limited-to-no impact on the business. In addition, evidence-based strategies such as increasing the price of alcohol and decreasing both the availability and advertising of alcohol in their communities can prevent tragedies like this from occurring.

Work Continues on New Nebraska Cancer Control Plan



On May 10th, Jolene Rohde with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Division of Public Health joined the coalition to share information on the Nebraska Comprehensive Cancer Control Program. The program has been funded since 2002 to design and implement "impactful, strategic, and sustainable plans to prevent and control cancer by working with key organizations and community members." It has six priority areas: (1) emphasis on primary prevention; (2) support early detection and treatment; (3) address public health needs of survivors; (4) demonstrate outcomes through evaluation; (5) promote health equity; and (6) implement policy, systems, and environmental approaches.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), between 2015, [720 Nebraskans died](#) annually due to alcohol. 71 of these deaths were estimated to be caused by alcohol. The [2017-2022 Nebraska Cancer Plan](#) targeted a two percent reduction in binge drinking from 19.5% to 17.5% by 2021 to reduce cancer deaths among adults 18 and older. This has not yet been achieved according to 2021 CDC data showing that [Nebraska's binge drinking rate was 19.5%](#), making us the sixth-worst state in the country.

Ms. Rohde also shared that the [American Society of Clinical Oncology \(ASCO\)](#) has stated that approximately 5-6% of new cancers and cancer deaths are directly attributed to alcohol but only 38% of Americans recognize that limiting alcohol intake will reduce their cancer risk. ASCO provides guidance on how to reduce alcohol-related harms like cancer: (1) regulate alcohol outlet density; (2) increase the price of alcohol; (3) maintain limits on days and hours of sale; (4) restrict alcohol advertising; (5) screening and brief intervention in clinical settings; and (6) enhanced enforcement of laws prohibiting sales to minors.

A new iteration of the Cancer Control Plan is currently in draft form. DHHS will be inviting community input once the draft has been completed, which is expected to occur later this year. To learn more about the alcohol and cancer link, visit our [website](#).

Research Brief: Profiling Year One Pandemic Alcohol Sales

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many changes to how alcohol is served. Due to the public health mandates, many businesses were restricted in terms of capacity and distancing requirements for customers. As a consequence, many governors expanded the ways in which alcohol could be sold in order to allow businesses to stay open during the COVID-19 pandemic. [Recent research](#) sought to determine the population coverage of alcohol delivery and to-go policies in 2019 and 2020 as well as identify characteristics associated with delivery and to-go purchases.

The researchers found that 7.5% of surveyed adults had alcohol delivered to their home and 14.5% bought it to-go. They found that the number of people who lived in states that allowed bars/restaurants to deliver alcohol rose by 284% and that number for to-go sales rose by 627%, reflecting that a significant number of states began allowing these types of sales for the first time during those years. According to the authors, "These policy changes are occurring faster than the scientific process, leaving policymakers to decide the fate of bills without knowing how they may affect public health during the first year of the pandemic." This is exactly what transpired in Nebraska. Despite our calls to enact measures with sunset clauses that would disallow these sales after a set time period following the conclusion of the pandemic, policymakers pushed forward with a permanent change to our statutes to allow these sales indefinitely. These decisions were made in the absence of any public health or safety data. At a minimum, having a sunset clause would have allowed for the collection of some data and analyses that could have shed light on how these changes were impacting communities across the state.

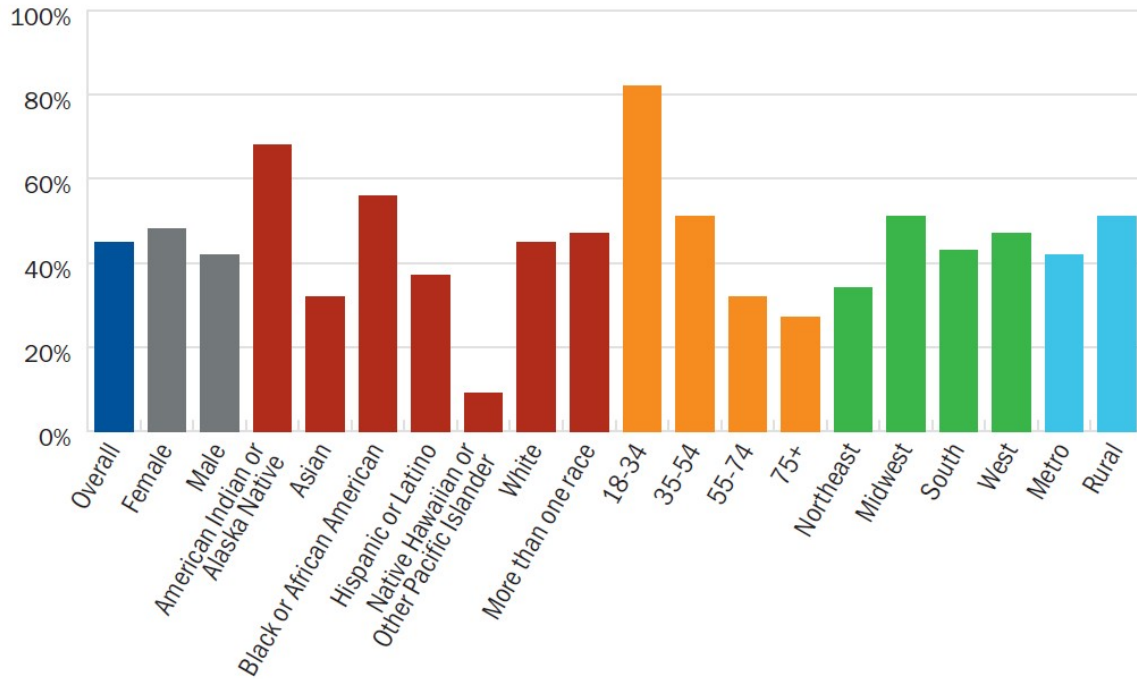
Researchers also looked at who was utilizing these new services. In states that allow alcohol deliveries, people that had some or more college education, more COVID-19 household economic burdens, and were excessive drinkers were more likely to have alcohol delivered. In states that allow alcohol to-go, people who were black and excessive drinkers were more likely to purchase alcohol to-go.

Research Brief: Alcohol-Induced Deaths Continue to Increase

The Trust for America's Health released their [Pain in the Nation 2023 Report](#) last month. The report looked at death rates due to alcohol, drugs, and suicide as well as overall mental health. Deaths due to alcohol, drugs, and suicide continue to rise in the United States. Between 2020 and 2021 the age-adjusted rate of combined deaths increased by 11%. In 2021 total deaths from alcohol, drugs, and suicide was 209,225 with 54,258 (26%) being alcohol-induced deaths. As clarified in the report, "alcohol-induced deaths include alcohol poisoning, liver disease, and other diseases; it does not include alcohol-attributable deaths, such as alcohol-related violence, accidents, or vehicle fatalities."

The mortality rate, as it pertains to alcohol-induced deaths, increased by 10% in 2021 among all demographic groups. This was the 12th consecutive year of increase with an overall increase of 86% since 2011. Groups with the highest increases included American Indian or Alaska Native people (91.7), adults ages 55-74 (36.5), adults ages 35-54 (23.9), those living in non-metro areas (21.1), males (20.9), and those living in the West (20.3). (Rates reflect deaths per 100,000.)

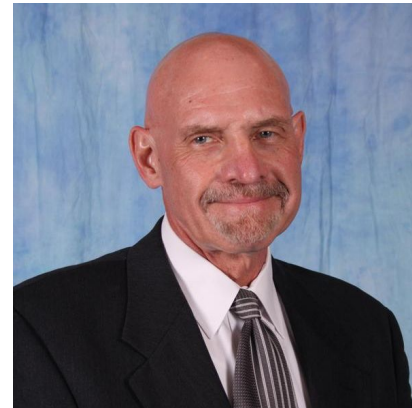
FIGURE 9: Percent Change in Alcohol-Induced Mortality Rates by Select Demographics and Region, 2018–2021



Source: TFAH analysis of National Center for Health Statistics data

Coalition Member Spotlight - Don Hoes

Don Hoes is the Community Outreach Representative for Keystone Treatment Center and has been a part of the Coalition since Spring 2016. In his position, he assists individuals, families, and behavioral health professionals to find counseling as well as outpatient/inpatient treatment services for gambling, alcohol, and substance use disorders. “Being part of the Project Extra Mile Coalition allows Keystone and other recovery service providers to stay informed of alcohol use trends, regulations, and legislation.”



Please join us!

Park in Lot E off of Dodge St. across from the Community Engagement Center!

Omaha Metro Coalition Meeting

Wednesday, June 14th

9:00 a.m.

Please join us
in person as we welcome

Michelle Cowan,
bestselling author of
Better, Not Bitter,



the story of healing after the loss of her husband at the hands of a drunk driver who had been over-served alcohol at a North Omaha bar. Michelle will discuss the investigation, her family's advocacy for a full Dram Shop law in Nebraska, and how Project Extra Mile and the community supported her.

Thank you for your involvement!

Meeting Location:

**UNO's Community
Engagement Center**

6400 University Drive South

Room 230, Omaha, NE

Parking Lot E

For more information:

(402) 963-9047



www.projectextramile.org • info@projectextramile.org

**PROJECT EXTRA MILE
2023 COALITION
MEETINGS**

LOOKING FORWARD TO CONNECTING WITH YOU IN 2023

**JANUARY 18TH
FEBRUARY 8TH
MARCH 8TH
APRIL 12TH
MAY 10TH
JUNE 14TH
NO MEETING IN JULY
AUGUST 9TH
SEPTEMBER 13TH
OCTOBER 11TH
NOVEMBER 8TH
DECEMBER 13TH**



**MEETINGS HELD AT
UNO'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER
6400 UNIVERSITY DRIVE SOUTH, ROOM 230**



Project Extra Mile | 6001 Dodge Street, CEC 228, Omaha, NE 68182-0600

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