



## AADIF/MICAP

(517) 999-0013  
info@micap.org

### Officers:

President:  
Mr. Mike Tobias  
Perry, MI

Vice President:  
Pastor Donna Sperry  
Ionia, MI

Treasurer:  
Rev. William J. Amundsen  
Lansing, MI

Secretary:  
Eileen R. Ellis  
Lansing, MI

### Board of Directors:

Mr. Richard Braun  
Allen Park, MI

Mr. John Lauve  
Holly, MI

Vernon K. Smith, Ph.D.  
Scottsdale, AZ

# MICAP RECAP

*Volume 114, Number 2 - April 2019*

A Publication of the Michigan Council on Alcohol Problems,  
an entity of the American Alcohol and Drug Information Foundation.

*Michigan Council on Alcohol Problems  
Celebrating its 114<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2019*

## April is Alcohol Awareness Month: Here are the Facts

**By Vernon K. Smith, Ph.D., MICAP Board Member**

April has been designated as “Alcohol Awareness Month,” a time to focus on the impact of alcohol in our lives and in our communities.

It is well known that alcohol use contributes to significant issues in families, in the workplace, in health and healthcare. The cost of alcohol use and misuse is borne by every member of society, in the form of unnecessary illness, death and injury. We also pay in the form of out-of-pocket costs and in higher insurance premiums that cover the cost for car accidents, falls and alcohol-related illnesses such as cancer.

Sadly, families bear a significant share of the burden of alcohol use, especially when an adult drinks in excess and is unable to function effectively as an employee, parent or spouse.

In commemoration of Alcohol Awareness Month, it is appropriate to present the best information available about alcohol use today. Summarized below are key facts and statistics provided by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)<sup>1</sup>:

**How many Americans drink alcohol?** The most recent data from the NIAAA and the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, indicates that among all adults age 18 and older, 27% had consumed an alcoholic beverage in the last month, and 70% reported they drank alcohol in the past year.

**How often do Americans “binge drink” or engage in “heavy alcohol” use?** Binge drinking means drinking that brings the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08%. This typically happens after 4 drinks for women and 5 drinks for men within a few hours on the same day. Heavy alcohol use means binge drinking on 5 or more days in a month’s time. The data shows that 27% of adults reported they engaged in binge drinking in the past month, and 7% reported heavy alcohol use.

**What about Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)?** The NIAAA defines AUD as a “chronic, relapsing disease characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences.” The data shows that among adults, 8% of men and 4% of women have AUD, which translates to 10 million men and 5 million women. Only a small percentage, about 7%, of those with AUD actually seek and receive treatment.

*Continues on Page 2*

## April is Alcohol Awareness Month: Here are the Facts

Continued from Page 1

**What about underage drinking?** About a third of 15-year-olds report that they have had at least one drink. Of youth ages 12-20, about 20% reported drinking alcohol in the past month. Binge drinking is prevalent in this age group, with 13% reporting binge drinking in the past month. In addition, over 600,000 youth ages 12-17 have AUD.

Research shows significant consequences from underage drinking, including interference with normal brain development. In addition, underage drinking contributes to other significant consequences, including injuries, sexual assaults and deaths, including but not limited to car accidents.

**What about alcohol-related deaths?** The most recent data shows that 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes each year. We often think of alcohol-related fatalities from drunk driving, but of the total deaths, about 10,000 are due to alcohol impaired driving – about one-third of all traffic fatalities.

**How much does alcohol affect our health?** Most alcohol-related deaths are due to alcohol's affect on our body and our health. Drinking alcohol increases the risk of many cancers, including cancer of the liver, breast, mouth, esophagus, pharynx and larynx. The Winter 2019 issue of *Spectrum*, NIAAA's newsletter on alcohol-related research, summarizes alcohol's effect on our bodies in this way<sup>2</sup>:

*Breakthroughs in neuroscience have firmly established our understanding of alcohol use disorder (AUD) as a chronic brain disease. But when it comes to the adverse health effects of alcohol, the brain is not the only game in town.*

*Drinking too much—on a single occasion or over time—can take a serious toll on just about every or-*

*gan in the body. The liver is perhaps the most familiar of the nonbrain targets of alcohol-related harm. As the chief organ responsible for metabolizing alcohol, the liver is especially vulnerable to alcohol-related injury. In the United States, nearly half of liver disease deaths involve alcohol.*

The World Health Organization reported in 2014 that alcohol contributed to more than 200 diseases and injury-related health conditions. Globally, alcohol misuse was the leading risk factor for premature death and disability for persons ages 15 to 49 in 2010. For persons aged 20 to 39, about one-fourth of all deaths were alcohol-attributable.

**What are the costs of alcohol use and abuse?** The most recent estimate of the cost of alcohol misuse in America was \$249 billion, for the year 2010. Of this amount, three-fourths was due to binge drinking. The economic cost in 2019 may be substantially greater. However, the cost not measured in dollars and cents is the suffering we all feel from the premature illness and loss of family members and friends. More than 10 percent of U.S. children live with a parent with alcohol problems, and it is not possible to quantify the full economic cost of the consequences of alcohol use in the families.

- 1 Alcohol Facts and Statistics, NIAAA. The above article draws extensively and quotes directly from this NIAAA document, which documents the facts and statistics presented here in 34 footnotes and study references. Readers are encouraged to review the NIAAA document, which includes additional facts and statistics. Accessed March 16, 2019 at: <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/AlcoholFacts&Stats/AlcoholFacts&Stats.htm>
- 2 *Spectrum*, Winter 2019, accessed March 16, 2019 at: <https://www.spectrum.niaaa.nih.gov/features/features-02.html>

## Alcohol Policy Update as of March 13, 2019

Mike Tobias, MICAP President

There are three alcohol-related bills that MICAP is currently tracking. If you have opinions on these bills, please contact your State Representative and tell them what you think. MICAP is assisting Michigan Alcohol Policy Promoting Health and Safety on creating a database of advocates who are willing to talk to their state lawmakers on alcohol policy issues like increasing alcohol taxes, lowering the BAC limit to .05, as well as on pending alcohol-related legislation.

***If you are willing to contact your state lawmakers about some of these issues please contact MICAP at (517) 999-0013 or [info@micap.org](mailto:info@micap.org) and let us know.***

1. **HB 4019 (Michele Hoitenga, District 102, Man- ton, MI).** This bill would lower the age that a person can sell alcohol in Michigan from age 18 to age 17. The concern is that kids who are 17 are

Continues on Page 3

# Alcohol Policy Update as of March 13, 2019

Continued from Page 2

more likely to be pressured by their high school peers to sell alcohol to them. As of January 2018, 31 states as well as the District of Columbia, set the minimum age to sell beer for off-premises consumption at 18 and older. As far as the minimum age to sell beer for on-premise consumption (bars, restaurants) only one state, Maine, sets the age below age 18 to age 17. This bill is currently sitting in House Regulatory Reform.

2. **HB 4057 (Steve Marino, District 24, Harrison Twp.).** This bill would earmark additional revenue for the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders (SUDs). According to the fiscal analysis, "House Bill 4057 would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the state because future fiscal year general fund allocations would be subject to future appropriation." However, had this law been in

place in FY 2016-2017, nearly \$18 million would have been earmarked for SUD services. This bill passed House Health Policy and is currently sitting in the House Ways & Means Committee.

3. **HB 4112 (Hank Vaupel, District 47, Fowlerville).** This bill would require alcohol retailers to post a sign stating the following: "Pregnancy and alcohol do not mix. Drinking alcoholic beverages during pregnancy can cause birth defects." If the retailer is a restaurant or bar, then the retailer could post the message on their menu instead of posting a sign. Research regarding alcohol warning signs legislation (AWS) has shown to decrease alcohol consumption during pregnancy by as much as 11%. This bill passed the full House 100-10 and is currently in the Senate Regulatory Reform Committee.

## Getting to Know MICAP's Newest Board Member, John Lauve

John Lauve is a graduate of the University of Michigan's engineering program. He is a Vietnam Army Veteran and retired executive from General Motors. As a retiree, he spends some of his leisure time fighting government corruption.

John recognizes that MICAP plays an important role in exposing the needless harm resulting from the misuse of alcohol. He is also concerned about the control that the alcohol lobby exerts upon our elected officials and Michigan policy. Over the next few years, John is hopeful that MICAP will influence the following legislative initiatives:

- Motivate the Michigan Legislature to increase the excise tax on alcohol. The excise tax on beer has been frozen for more than 50 years and increasing alcohol taxes will save lives and reduce alcohol related harm.
- Consistent with the recommendation from the National Traffic Safety Board, motivate the Michigan Legislature to lower the blood alcohol content (BAC) limit to .05 for ALL operators driving cars and other heavy machinery. Below are some of the current BAC limits for the United States and other countries.

Country:	BAC Limit:
Russia	.00
China	.02
Japan	.03
United States of America	.04

(.04 is only for commercial truck drivers and pilots)	
France	.05
Utah	.05
(first state in the U.S. to adopt .05)	
USA (not including Utah)	.08
(for all operators that aren't commercial drivers or pilots)	
Canada	.08

*See the June 2017 MICAP Recap for more information on BAC levels.*

- To reduce or minimize the number of retailers that sell alcohol in Michigan. Per a recent year-end report from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission, Michigan has 14,500 outlets that sell beer and wine to go, of which 4,000 outlets that also sell liquor to go.
- Require those who sell alcohol to complete comprehensive training on how to check a minor's ID. Despite the fact that Michigan has a vertical license that helps retailers identify those who are underage, many retailers continue to sell alcohol to minors.

John has a lot of energy to advocate for good public policy that will save lives and reduce alcohol and other drug-related harm. John encourages MICAP supporters to contact their state policymakers on these issues and to please reward MICAP by sending them a \$5 bill to help do the work that needs to be done.



# **MICAP/AADIF**

Michigan Council on Alcohol Problems  
American Alcohol and Drug Information Foundation  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 10212, Lansing, MI 48901

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LANSING, MI  
PERMIT NO. 1624

## **We've Made Donating to MICAP even Easier!**

MICAP has been hard at work over the past year and thanks to your generous donations we have been able to update our website to make donating even easier. We are providing a PayPal option on our website that is simple and secure to use. Just click on the PayPal button on our website home page, provide your name, address, along with payment specifics and that's it! It's easier than writing a check and very secure.

In order to continue these types of upgrades to our website, MICAP depends 100% on gifts from people like you. Our work year-round depends directly on these gifts. MICAP could not do its work without your financial support, which truly makes a difference. Please help us to continue this important work!

MICAP is a non-profit 501©(3) organization. Your gift to MICAP is tax deductible to the extent allowed by the tax code. Make your donation now at: [www.micap.org](http://www.micap.org). From the bottom of our heart, we thank you.