



# The Alcopop-Free Zone® Campaign: An Environmental Prevention Strategy

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## INTRODUCTION

The Alcopop-Free Zone campaign is an environmental prevention strategy that focuses on reducing the availability of youth-oriented alcopops, also known as flavored malt beverages (FMBs), in retail alcohol outlets to reduce underage drinking. It is implemented by active participation of diverse communities of youth and adults.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To learn why youth-attractive alcopops are a danger to public health
2. To learn to effectively create an Alcopop-Free Zone
3. To learn key steps and community organizing tools to make this environmental prevention strategy successful

## WHAT ARE ALCOPOPS?

- Sweet, carbonated, alcoholic beverages available in an extensive variety of flavors. AKA:

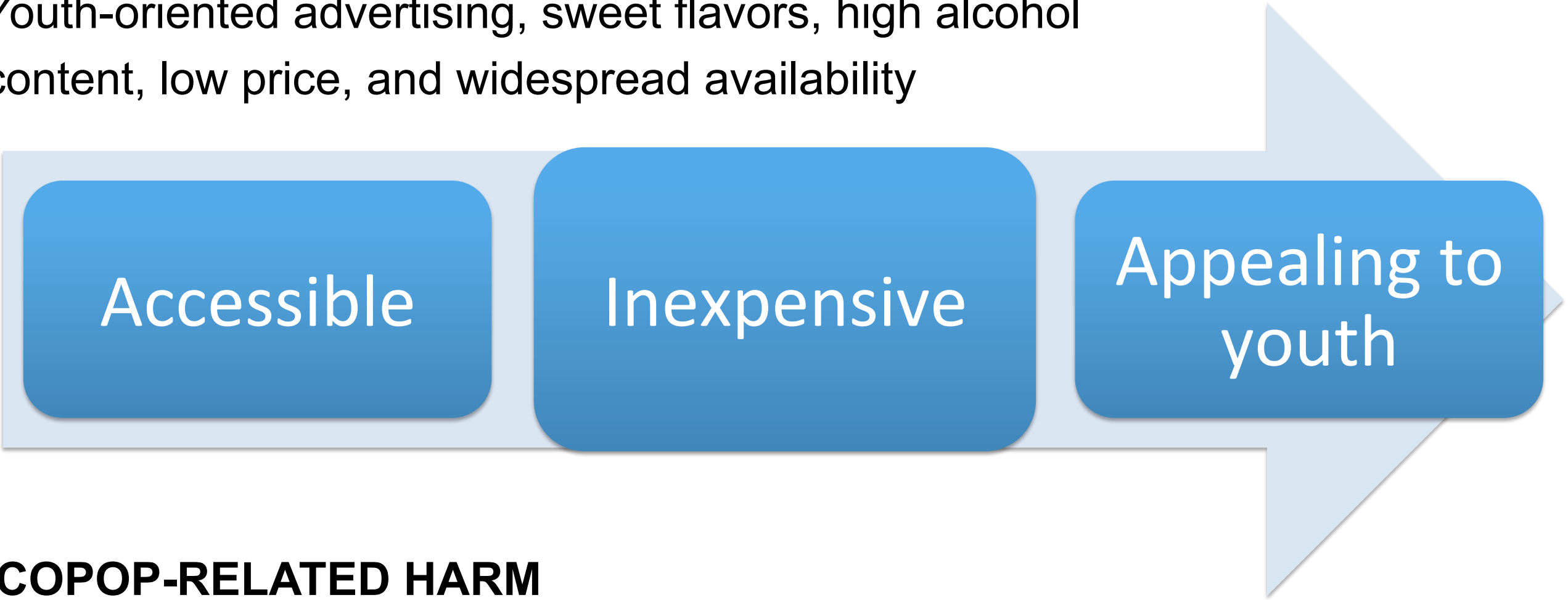
- Flavored malt beverages (FMBs)
- Flavored alcoholic beverages (FABs)
- Progressive adult beverages (PABs)
- Ready-to-drink beverages (RTDs)
- Designer drinks
- Malternatives



- Up to 25 oz., 14% ABV
- Sold in cans, bottles, pouches, tubes, etc.

## ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY = YOUTH APPEAL

- Accessible: Grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, etc.
- Inexpensive: Taxed at a stagnant \$0.05/12 oz. (U.S. Federal beer tax rate)
- Youth-oriented advertising, sweet flavors, high alcohol content, low price, and widespread availability



## ALCOPOP-RELATED HARM

Alcopops used disproportionately by youth:

- Nearly half of youth drinkers report drinking alcopops within the past 30 days<sup>1</sup>
- 16-20% of adults report drinking alcopops<sup>3</sup>
- Youth who drink alcopops drink more alcohol per day and drink on more days per month than youth who do not drink alcopops.<sup>1</sup>
- Binge drinking in adolescence may impair adult responses by blocking the development of adult behavioral and cognitive characteristics.<sup>4</sup>
- Nearly 80% of youth who drink alcopops binge drink.<sup>1</sup>

## ALCOPOP-RELATED HARM TO YOUTH

Compared to youth who do not drink alcopops, youth who drink alcopops:<sup>1</sup>

- Engage in more physical fights
- Obtain more alcohol-related injuries
- Obtain more injuries requiring medical attention

Alcopop price is associated with emergency department visits:<sup>2</sup>

- Lower taxes: more ED visits among young women
- Higher taxes: fewer ED visits among all ages and genders, most prominently age 18-24

1. Albers AB, Siegel M, Ramirez RL, Ross C, DeJong W, Jernigan DH. Flavored alcoholic beverage use, risky drinking behaviors, and adverse outcomes among underage drinkers: results from the ABRAND Study. Am J Public Health 2015;105(4):810-5.  
2. Gale M, Muscatello D, Dinh M, et al. Alcopops, taxation, and harm: A segmented time series analysis of emergency department presentations. BMC Public Health 2015; 15: 468.  
3. Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Self-regulation in the alcohol industry: Report of the Federal Trade Commission. 2014.  
4. Spear LP, Swartzwelder HS. Adolescent alcohol exposure and persistence of adolescent-typical phenotypes into adulthood: a mini-review. NeurosciBiobehav Rev 2014;45:1-8.

## HOW WE BUILD AN ALCOPOP FREE ZONE® CAMPAIGN

- Build local coalition of youth, alcohol policy advocates, public health leaders, schools, faith and community members
- Train youth members how to organize a campaign
- Youth run the meetings with general consensus
- Youth train each other on responsibilities; develop their own strategies and tactics
- Youth learn to effectively use traditional and social media
- Youth engage in DIRECT ACTION rallies and protests
- With each action at a local retailer, youth an adult support membership grows
- City and county governments, local police and probation departments give support
- Local politicians attend youth rallies to engage their voters
- City and county officials pass resolutions of support
- Retailers voluntarily sign pledges and take alcopops off shelves
- Campaign celebrates retailers who support the Alcopop-Free Zone®



## POSITIVE OUTCOMES

An Alcopop-Free Zone:

1. *Provides* research and educational materials about alcopop advertising and marketing to youth. The campaign brings together a community coalition of health care, education, youth and faith-based groups. The coalition approaches retailers to seek agreements to limit or eliminate alcopops from their shelves.
2. *Encourages* community engagement with petition signature drives, environmental scans, retailer accountability, and a series of community meetings aimed at passing county and city legislation calling for restrictions on alcopop sales and advertising.
3. *Creates* lasting partnerships with community health leaders and community-based organizations to support the concept of removing alcopops from retail stores.

## CONTACT

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