

Table of Contents

Survey Executive Summary_____	2
Executive Summary by County_____	3
Methodology_____	9
Demographics _____	11
Results_____	18
Perceptions of:	
Alcohol Use_____	18
Tobacco Use_____	19
Marijuana_____	21
Other Drug Use_____	23
Violence_____	24
Mental Health_____	25
Alcohol Availability and Accessibility_____	26
Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol_____	30
Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures_____	30
Support for Overall Prevention Efforts_____	34
Community Readiness to Address ATOD_____	36
Conclusions_____	37
Recommendations_____	38
Public Health Model and Environmental Strategies_____	39
Content Analysis of Written Survey Comments_____	41
 Attachment A (Survey)_____	 59

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SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Methodology:

- The Cooperative Service Education Agency #4 (CESA #4) and the La Crosse County Health Department (LCHD) sent out 3,600 surveys focusing on perceptions of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use in communities.
- Analysis was conducted on 692 surveys that were returned from residents of Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties.

Results:

- Overall, the majority of respondents were moderately or seriously concerned about the prevalence of binge drinking, tobacco use, and marijuana use in their communities.
- Over two-thirds of respondents believed alcohol was easily accessible to teenagers, and teenagers obtained alcohol through a non-family member over 21 years old.
- Eighty to ninety percent of respondents perceived binge drinking as a significant harm to persons of any age.
- Respondents strongly supported both alcohol and tobacco compliance checks for retailers.
- A majority of respondents supported increased penalties on drinking and driving laws.
- Three out of four respondents supported smoke-free worksites and restaurants.
- More than eighty percent of respondents agreed there should be more accessible programs for alcohol and drug use in their communities.
- On average, most respondents agreed their communities have started to talk about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug programs, but no significant action has been taken.

Recommendations:

- Successful campaigns have been conducted to help reduce family members providing alcohol to teenagers. Some of the future campaigns should be directed at the consequences of non-family adults providing alcohol to teenagers.
- Compliance checks for both alcohol and tobacco are strongly supported and should be continued in the region.
- Communities, based on the strong level of support, should promote increased access to alcohol and drug abuse programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR BUFFALO COUNTY

Perceptions of ATOD Use and Mental Health

- For most alcohol perception questions, the percentage of Buffalo County residents indicating a moderate or serious problem in the community was lower than the total average of all six counties.

Alcohol Availability and Accessibility

- Buffalo County had the highest rate of permissiveness for occasional drinking in both teenagers (18.2%) and young adults (57.7%). One-third (33.1%) of respondents agreed it was acceptable for parents to offer alcohol to their own teenagers.

Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol

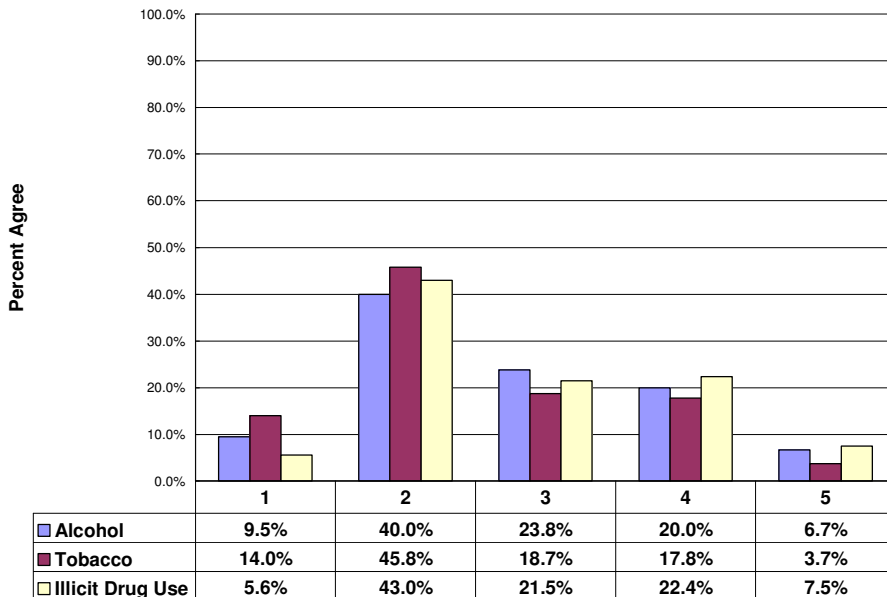
- More than 90% of respondents agreed binge drinking was harmful to teenagers and young adults, and more than 80% agreed it was harmful to adults.

Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures

- Buffalo County respondents reported the lowest amount of support of the six counties surveyed to support additional taxes on alcohol (42.7%).
- Twenty-seven percent of respondents thought there were enough healthy alternative activities for teenagers and young adults.

Community Readiness

- The greatest percentage of respondents agreed there is a problem with alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use, but no one in the community is doing anything about these issues. The next highest percentage of respondents indicated their community had either started to talk or take action on the issues.



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR JACKSON COUNTY

Perceptions of ATOD Use and Mental Health

- Jackson County respondents reported an average or slightly higher rate of concern for ATOD issues compared to the overall region.
- Seven out of ten respondents (70.6%) were concerned about the number of suicides in teenagers, compared to a regional average of four out of ten respondents (39.4%).

Alcohol Availability and Accessibility

- Jackson County had the highest rate of respondents (77.9%) who agreed alcohol was readily available to teenagers and retailers regularly supplied alcohol to teenagers (37.4%).

Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol

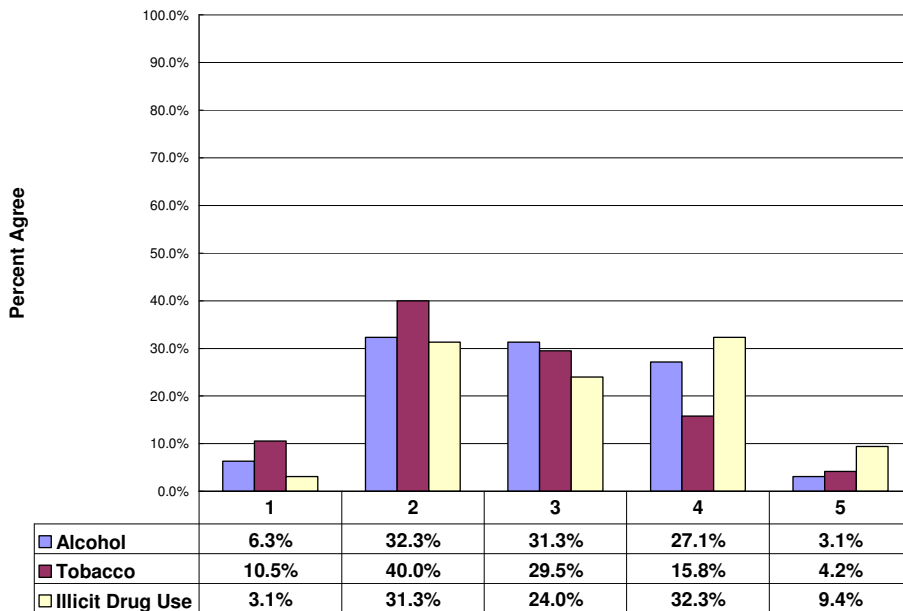
- More than 90% of respondents agreed binge drinking was harmful to teenagers and young adults, and more than 80% agreed it was harmful to adults.

Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures

- Sixty percent (60.4%) of respondents thought their community could reduce alcohol, tobacco, or other drug problems through prevention.

Community Readiness

- The greatest percentage of respondents agreed there is a problem with alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use, but no one in the community is doing anything about these issues. The next highest percentage of respondents indicated their community had either started to talk or take action on the issues.



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR LA CROSSE COUNTY

Perceptions of ATOD Use and Mental Health

- La Crosse County had a higher rate of respondents who perceived a moderate or serious problem for binge drinking behavior among all age groups compared to the survey average.
- La Crosse County respondents had the highest rate of concern for overall violence in the community.

Alcohol Availability and Accessibility

- Nearly 3 out of 4 respondents agreed alcohol was readily available to teenagers (72.4%).

Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol

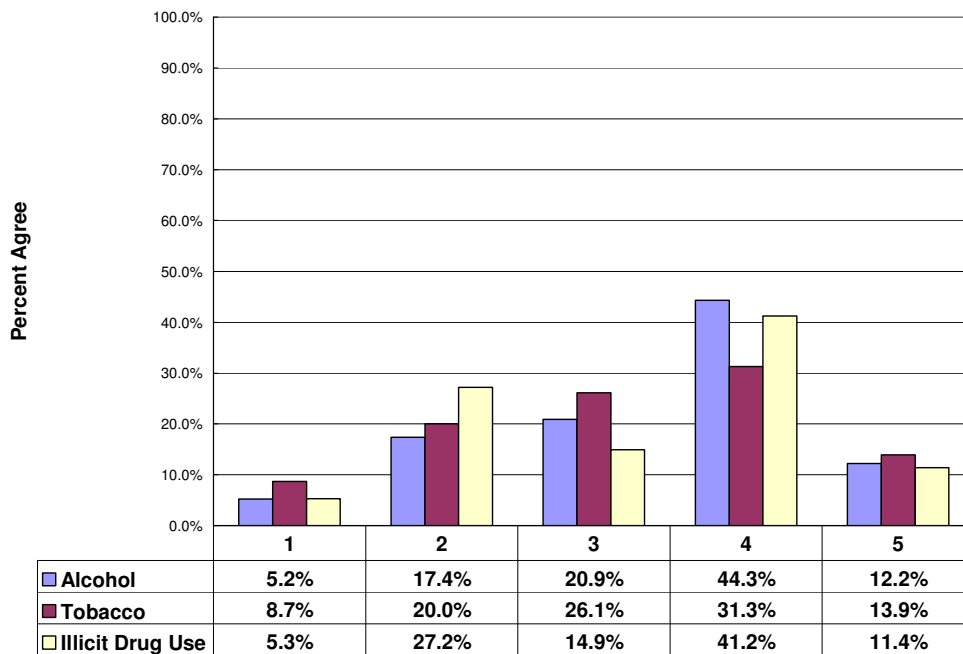
- Ninety percent or more of respondents agreed binge drinking was harmful to teenagers, young adults, and adults.

Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures

- More than 70% of La Crosse County respondents agreed the penalties on drinking and driving should be increased. More than 90% of respondents supported alcohol compliance checks, higher than any other county surveyed.

Community Readiness

- The greatest percentage of respondents agreed their community had started to take action on the issues of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use.



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MONROE COUNTY

Perceptions of ATOD Use and Mental Health

- Respondents from Monroe County expressed higher levels of moderate and serious concern for all drinking behavior among all ages than the survey average. More respondents from Monroe County indicated a moderate or serious problem with tobacco use in teenagers, young adults, and adults than any other county in the survey.

Alcohol Availability and Accessibility

- Nearly four out of five (78.2%) of Monroe County respondents agreed teenagers readily accessed alcohol through adult friends and siblings.

Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol

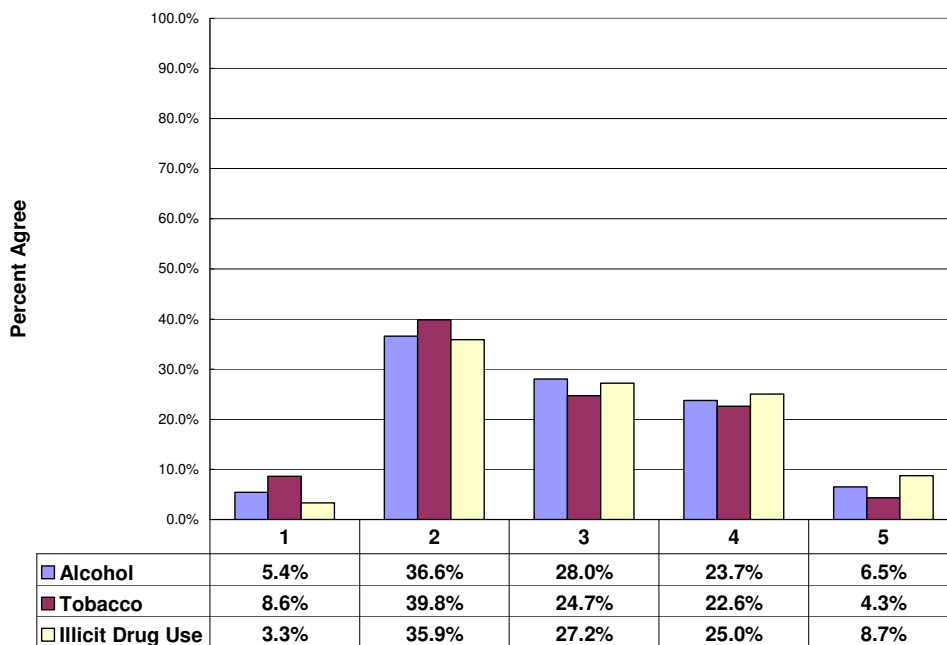
- Ninety percent or more of respondents agreed binge drinking was harmful to teenagers, young adults, and adults.

Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures

- A majority of respondents (62.6%) were not at all supportive of lowering the drinking age, 10.4% higher than the regional average of 52.2%.

Community Readiness

- The greatest percentage of respondents agreed there is a problem with alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use, but no one in the community is doing anything about these issues. The next highest percentage of respondents indicated their community had either started to talk or take action on the issues.



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR TREMPEALEAU COUNTY

Perceptions of ATOD Use and Mental Health

- A majority of Trempealeau County respondents considered occasional, moderate, and binge drinking as a moderate or serious concern among teenagers and young adults.
- Trempealeau County respondents reported lower rates of moderate or serious concern for tobacco use among all age groups than the regional average.

Alcohol Availability and Accessibility

- Sixty-two percent (62.1%) of Trempealeau County respondents agreed alcohol was readily available to teenagers, lowest of any county surveyed.

Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol

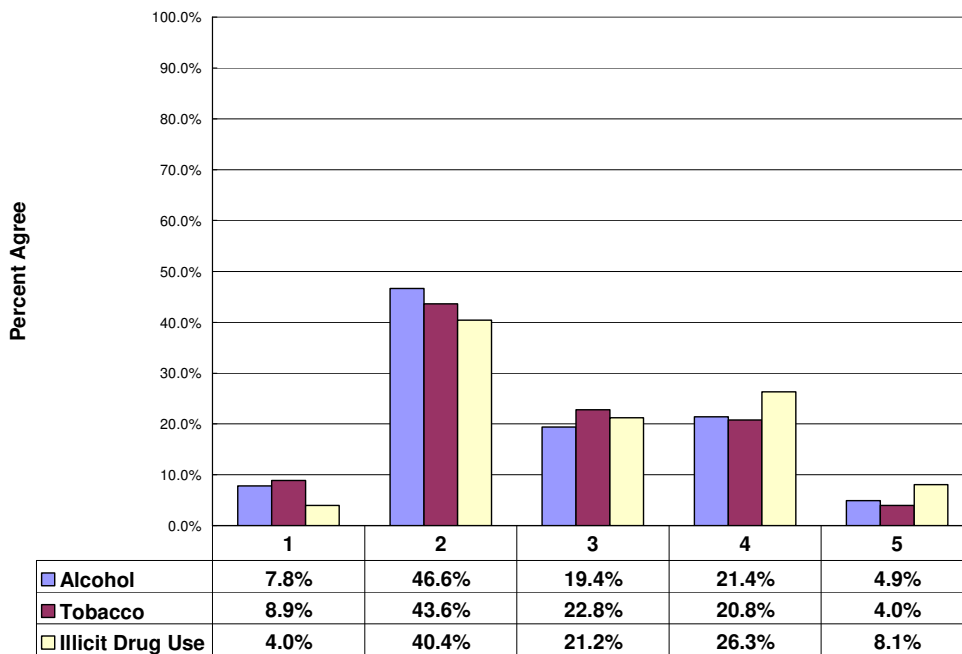
- More than 90% of respondents agreed binge drinking was harmful to teenagers and young adults, and more than 80% agreed it was harmful to adults.

Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures

- Approximately three out of four (78.7%) of respondents supported tobacco compliance checks.

Community Readiness

- The greatest percentage of respondents agreed there is a problem with alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use, but no one in the community is doing anything about these issues.



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR VERNON COUNTY

Perceptions of ATOD Use and Mental Health

- Vernon County respondents considered drinking behaviors (occasional, moderate, and binge drinking) as less of a moderate or serious problem than the overall region for teenagers and young adults. Fewer respondents also saw marijuana use among all ages as a moderate or serious problem compared to all of the other counties.

Alcohol Availability and Accessibility

- Sixty-two percent (62.4%) of Vernon County respondents agreed alcohol was readily available to teenagers.

Perceptions of Harm Due to Alcohol

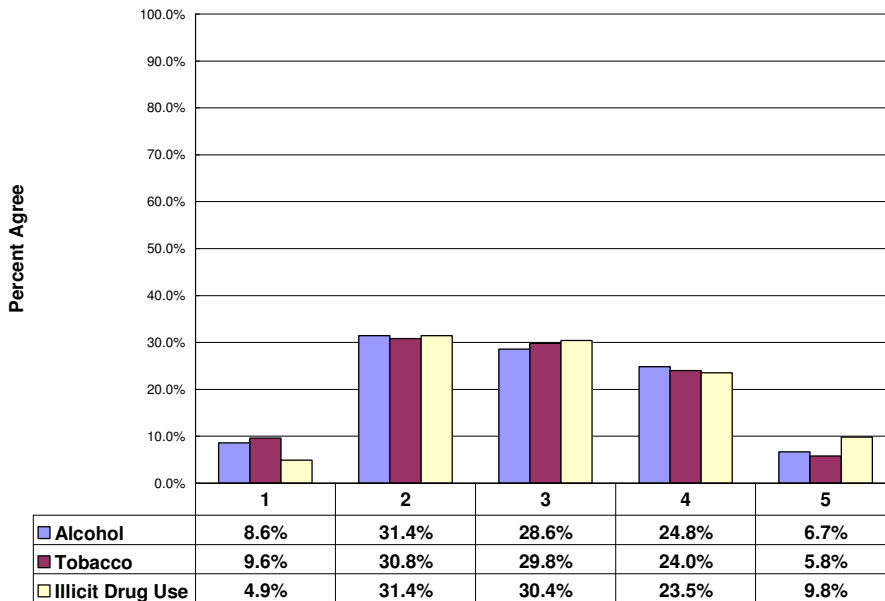
- Ninety percent or more of respondents agreed binge drinking was harmful to teenagers, young adults, and adults.

Level of Support for Alcohol and Tobacco Programs, Policies, and Procedures

- Compared to other counties, Vernon County had the highest level of support for increased taxes on both alcohol (62.1%) and tobacco (71.3%). Over 90% of respondents supported the creation of more accessible alcohol and other drug treatment programs. Respondents believed their community could reduce alcohol, tobacco, or other drug programs through prevention (85.5%), the highest of any county.

Community Readiness

- Nearly identical percentages of respondents thought either there was an alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drug use problem and no one was doing anything about it or their community had already started to talk about those issues.



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

METHODOLOGY

As a step toward environmental changes in communities in Western Wisconsin to reduce the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, members of the Cooperative Education Service Agency #4 (CESA #4), La Crosse County Health Department (LCHD), and Gundersen Lutheran Health System designed an instrument to measure community perceptions. The Western Wisconsin Community Perceptions Survey (CPS) was mailed to 600 households in each county including: Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon. The addresses were purchased from a direct mail marketing and printing firm (Winona Printing Company, Winona, Minnesota).

For each county, three hundred female and three hundred male names were randomly selected, for a total of 3,600 surveys. An equal number of surveys were sent to each county to ensure that combined county answers were not weighted towards counties with a higher population. Envelopes mailed to each household contained the survey (see attachment A for survey), an introductory letter signed by several community leaders describing the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. To protect anonymity of the respondents, no names or addresses were asked in the questionnaire and the return envelopes contained no return addresses. The introductory letter, survey, and study design were approved by the Gundersen Lutheran Scientific Research/ Human Subjects Committee, the Institutional Review Board for the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center (approval forms on file).

Project staff collected examples of existing community surveys and compiled a list of relevant question types and approaches upon which to base the Western Wisconsin Community Perceptions Survey. A committee was established to research and design the 71 question survey focusing on:

- Perceptions of alcohol, tobacco, other drug use, mental health, depression, and bullying in the community
- Alcohol availability
- Perceptions of harm involved in alcohol use
- Support for change to the legal and enforcement policies in communities
- Demographics of survey respondents

A pilot survey was developed after several strategic sessions in which the survey instrument was refined. Copies of the pilot survey were administered to a group of coalition members to judge for readability, length, clarity, and to provide feedback. The process resulted in several refinements to the survey, which eventually lead to approval for dissemination by the original committee.

The survey was sent out on March 25th, 2009, and a press release was issued to increase response rates. After 19 days, a reminder postcard was sent to each address and another press release was issued to further increase response rates. Returned surveys were manually entered using EpiInfo software obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov. Accuracy of data entry was verified by another staff member. A total of 694 (19.3%) surveys were returned and subsequently entered. Only surveys that arrived before June 10th were counted in the total response. Of the 694 surveys, two surveys were suppressed due to one survey of a respondent less than 18 years old and one with no legible year of birth included. Consequently, 692 (19.2%) of surveys were included in the analysis. In addition to category and ranking style answers, respondents also gave numerous comments which were entered into a Microsoft Word document (see attachment B). Results were calculated using the EpiInfo Software, version 3.5.1.

The following were the response rates by county:

County	Number of responses	Response rate
Buffalo	116	19.3%
Jackson	99	16.5%
La Crosse	123	20.5%
Monroe	105	17.5%
Trempealeau	111	18.5%
Vernon	119	19.8%
Unknown	19	N/A
Total	692	19.2%

Survey results include data from the Minnesota Institute of Public Health (MIPH), which conducted a similar survey in the same six counties in September 2005. Part of the 2005 study, funded through CESA #4, contained similar but not exact questions used in the 2009 Western Wisconsin Community Perceptions Survey on Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Use.

Please note: Select data from the 2005 MIPH report is presented, but not meant to directly compare with the 2009 Western Wisconsin Community Perceptions Survey. MIPH did not provide all-county data as part of the original report.

Survey Definitions:

Teenagers: ages 17 and younger

Young Adults: ages 18-20

Adults: ages 21 and older

Occasional Drinking: drinking one or fewer alcoholic beverages per week on average

Moderate Drinking: having no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men

Binge Drinking: five or more drinks for men and four or more drinks for women within a few hours

Community: left undefined, subject to respondent's interpretation

DEMOGRAPHICS

<u>All Counties</u>	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	692	
	Years old	
AVERAGE AGE	57	
AGE		
18-44	135	21%
45-64	288	45%
65 or older	215	34%
GENDER		
Female	434	66%
Male	226	34%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	17	3%
High school diploma	201	32%
Vocational school	65	10%
Some college	111	18%
College degree	140	22%
Post graduate/Professional	92	15%
ETHNICITY		
White	653	94%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	4	1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0.10%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4	1%
Other	5	1%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	97	16%
\$25,001-\$50,000	200	33%
\$50,001-\$75,000	148	24%
\$75,001-\$100,000	83	13%
Less than \$10,000	22	4%
Over \$100,000	64	10%
Total	614	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	1	0%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	201	31%

Buffalo County

	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	115	
	Years old	
AVERAGE AGE	58.9	
AGE		
18-44	18	17%
45-64	48	45%
65 or older	41	38%
GENDER		
Female	76	68%
Male	36	32%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	3	3%
High school diploma	37	35%
Vocational school	20	19%
Some college	20	19%
College degree	18	17%
Post graduate/Professional	8	7%
ETHNICITY		
White	111	97%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	1	1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	1%
Other	0	0%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	24	23%
\$25,001-\$50,000	28	27%
\$50,001-\$75,000	26	25%
\$75,001-\$100,000	12	12%
Less than \$10,000	4	4%
Over \$100,000	9	9%
Total	103	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	0	0%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	32	29%

Jackson County

	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	99	
AVERAGE AGE	Years old	
	56.6	
AGE		
18-44	21	23%
45-64	44	48%
65 or older	27	29%
GENDER		
Female	66	69%
Male	30	31%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	5	6%
High School diploma	32	37%
Vocational school	6	7%
Some college	22	25%
College degree	13	15%
Post graduate/Professional	9	10%
ETHNICITY		
White	93	94%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	1%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3	3%
Other	0	0%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	14	16%
\$25,001-\$50,000	34	39%
\$50,001-\$75,000	21	24%
\$75,001-\$100,000	11	13%
Less than \$10,000	0	0%
Over \$100,000	7	8%
Total	87	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	1	1%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	33	35%

La Crosse County

	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	123	
AVERAGE AGE	Years old	
	56.5	
AGE		
18-44	31	27%
45-64	45	39%
65 or older	40	35%
GENDER		
Female	71	61%
Male	45	39%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	0	0%
High School diploma	29	25%
Vocational school	10	9%
Some college	21	18%
College degree	34	30%
Post graduate/Professional	20	18%
ETHNICITY		
White	117	95%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	2	2%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0%
Other	1	1%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	15	13%
\$25,001-\$50,000	43	38%
\$50,001-\$75,000	23	21%
\$75,001-\$100,000	13	12%
Less than \$10,000	1	1%
Over \$100,000	17	15%
Total	112	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	0	0%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	41	35%

Monroe County

	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	105	
AVERAGE AGE	Years old	
	56	
AGE		
18-44	21	21%
45-64	48	49%
65 or older	29	30%
GENDER		
Female	71	71%
Male	29	29%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	2	2%
High school diploma	30	32%
Vocational school	10	10%
Some college	20	21%
College degree	15	16%
Post graduate/Professional	18	19%
ETHNICITY		
White	97	92%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0%
Other	1	1%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	11	12%
\$25,001-\$50,000	27	29%
\$50,001-\$75,000	26	28%
\$75,001-\$100,000	11	12%
Less than \$10,000	5	6%
Over \$100,000	12	13%
Total	92	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	0	0%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	33	33%

Trempealeau County

	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	110	
AVERAGE AGE	Years old	
	59.2	
AGE		
18-44	20	20%
45-64	42	42%
65 or older	38	38%
GENDER		
Female	70	66%
Male	36	34%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	2	2%
High School diploma	37	37%
Vocational school	10	10%
Some College	12	12%
College degree	23	23%
Post graduate/Professional	16	16%
ETHNICITY		
White	105	96%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	1	1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0%
Other	0	0%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	14	14%
\$25,001-\$50,000	30	30%
\$50,001-\$75,000	21	21%
\$75,001-\$100,000	17	17%
Less than \$10,000	8	8%
Over \$100,000	9	9%
Total	99	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	0	0%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	24	23%

Vernon County

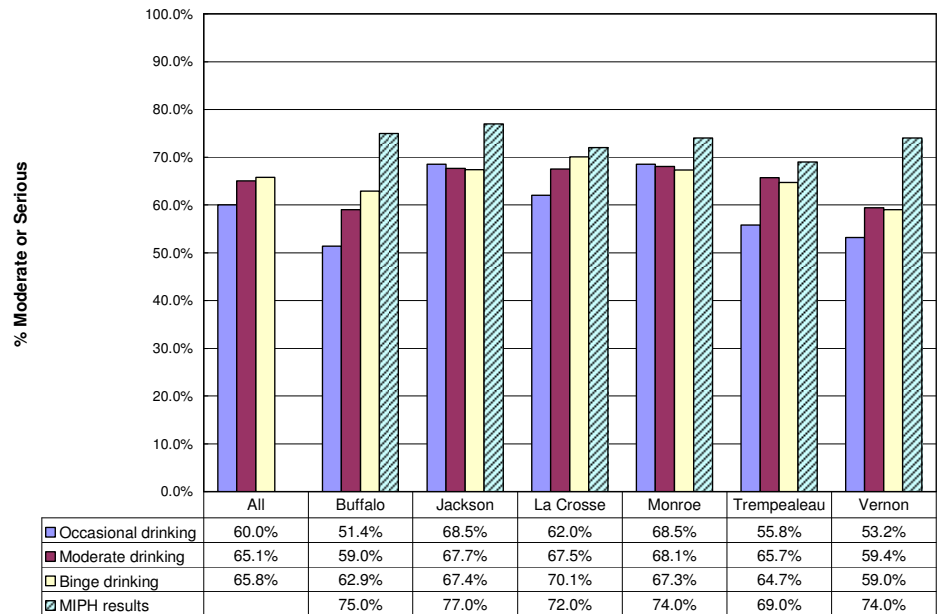
	Sample Size	Percent (%) of Distribution
TOTAL	119	
AVERAGE AGE	Years old	
	56.4	
AGE		
18-44	21	20%
45-64	50	47%
45-65	36	34%
GENDER		
Female	69	63%
Male	41	37%
SCHOOLING COMPLETED		
Didn't graduate high school	4	4%
High School diploma	33	31%
Vocational School	7	7%
Some college	14	13%
College degree	32	30%
Post graduate/Professional	16	15%
ETHNICITY		
White	111	93%
Black or African America	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0%
Other	2	2%
INCOME		
\$10,000-\$25,000	17	16%
\$25,001-\$50,000	34	32%
\$50,001-\$75,000	27	26%
\$75,001-\$100,000	15	14%
Less than \$10,000	4	4%
Over \$100,000	8	8%
Total	105	100%
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Yes	0	0%
PARENT OR PRIMARY CAREGIVER OF CHILD UNDER 21		
Yes	31	27%

RESULTS

In your community, how much of a problem are the following? Alcohol (Survey Questions 1a-1c):

Overall, the majority of respondents (60.0%) were moderately or seriously concerned with drinking by teenagers. There was more concern for binge drinking compared to occasional drinking, with the exception of Jackson County. Vernon County had the lowest rate of moderate or seriously concerned respondents regarding teenage binge drinking (59.0%), while La Crosse County residents had the highest rate of concern (70.1%).

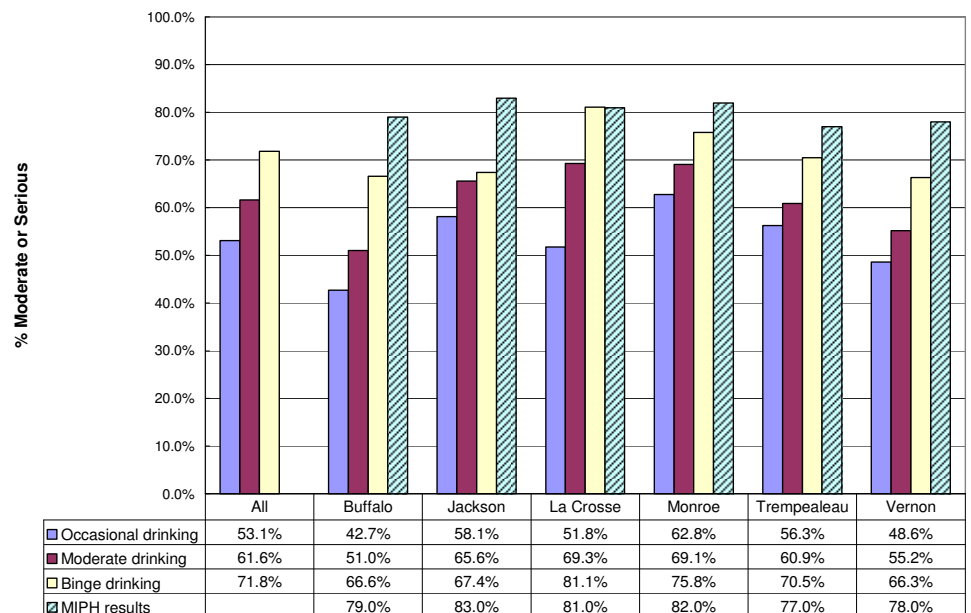
Table 1 Perception of Occasional, Moderate, and Binge Drinking by Teenagers Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



Alcohol (Survey Questions 1d-1f):

Respondents reported lower rates of concern regarding occasional and moderate drinking among young adults than teenagers. Combined, respondents were overall more concerned about young adult binge drinking (71.8%) compared to teenagers (65.8%). La Crosse County had the highest reported rate of concern for binge drinking among young adults (81.1%). Buffalo County reported the lowest rates of concern for young adult occasional (42.7%) and moderate (51.0%) drinking.

Table 2 Perception of Occasional, Moderate, and Binge Drinking by Young Adults Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem

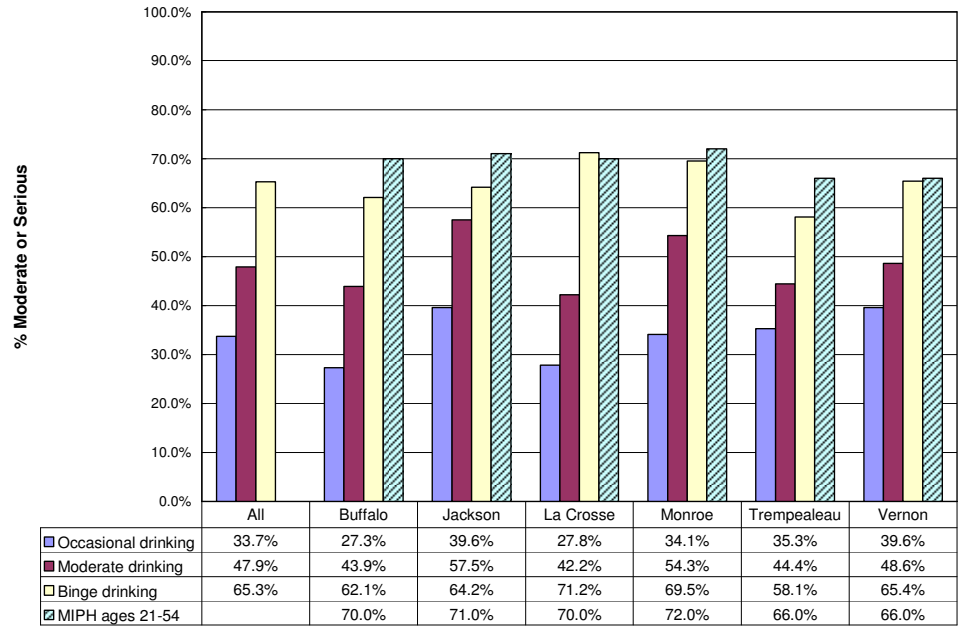


*2005 MIPH study used similar but not exact questions as in the 2009 CPS so rates cannot be directly compared.

**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Alcohol (Survey Questions 1g-1i):**

Results showed less concern for adult (ages 21 and older) occasional and moderate drinking than young adults and teenagers. Survey respondents reported a high rate of concern for binge drinking among adults (65.3%), similar to that of young adults (71.8%) and teenagers (65.8%). In all counties, a majority of respondents expressed concern for binge drinking in adults. Moderate or serious concern of adult binge drinking was highest in La Crosse County (71.2%) and lowest in Trempealeau County (58.1%).

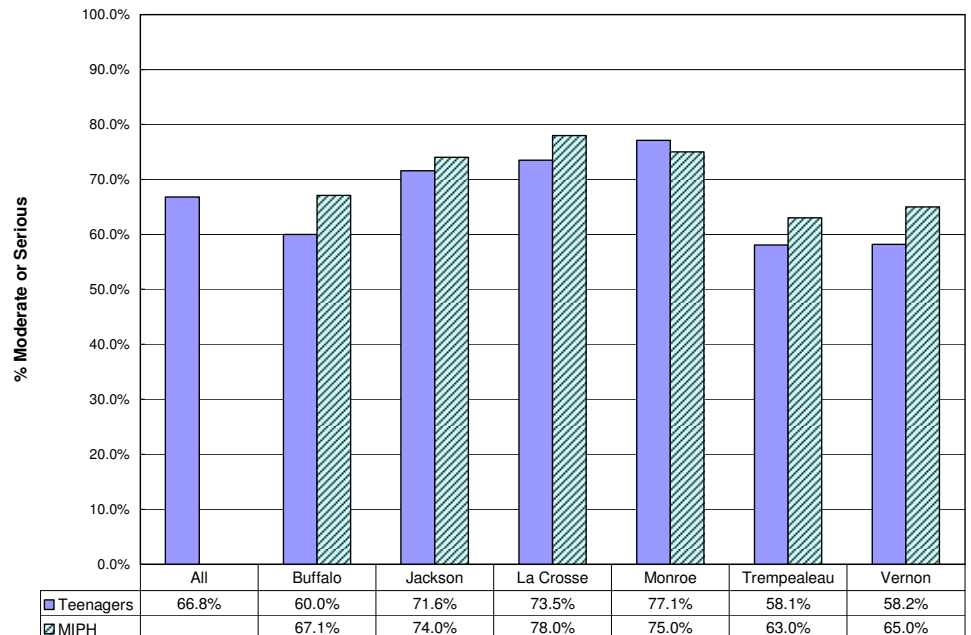
Table 3 Perception of Occasional, Moderate, and Binge Drinking by **Adults** Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



Tobacco (Survey Question 2a):

Overall, approximately two-thirds of all respondents (66.8%) considered teenage tobacco use to be a moderate or serious problem. Jackson, La Crosse, and Monroe Counties had the highest rates of concern, with Monroe County having the highest at 77.1%. Trempealeau County and Vernon County had the lowest rates of concern (58.1% and 58.2%, respectively), followed closely by Buffalo County (60.0%).

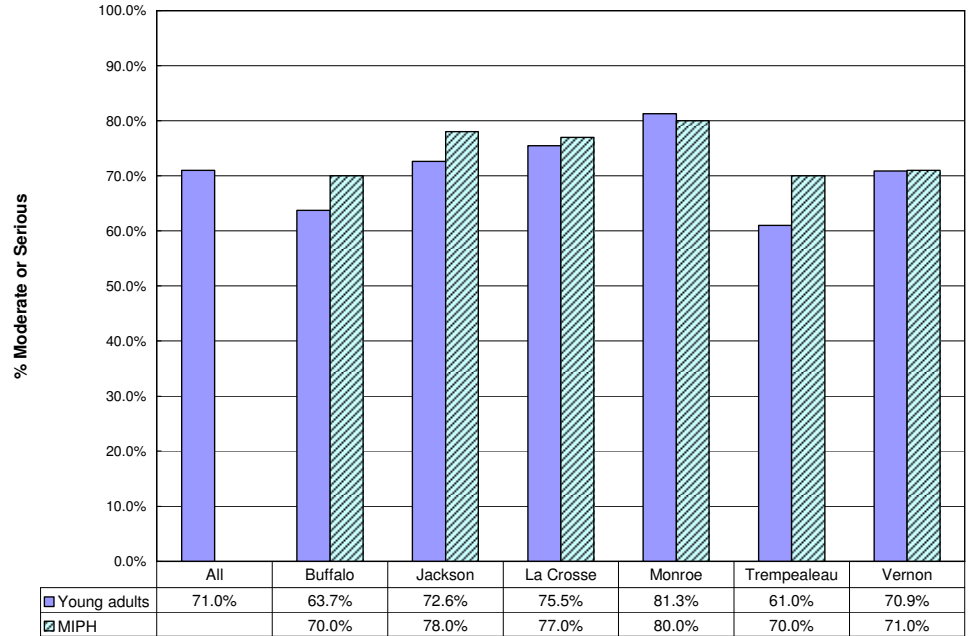
Table 4 Perception of Tobacco use by **Teenagers** Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Tobacco (Survey Question 2b):**

Moderate or serious concern for tobacco use by young adults was higher than teenagers overall in the region. Monroe County had the highest percentage of concern at 81.3%, while Trempealeau had the lowest rate (61.0%). Vernon County reported the greatest difference in the rate of concern for young adults (70.9%) when compared to teenage tobacco use (58.2%).

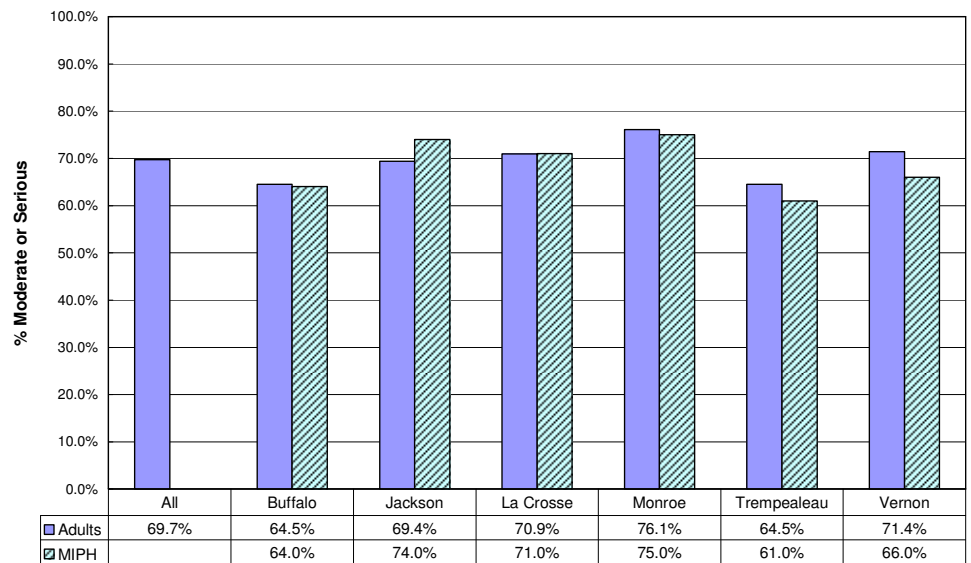
Table 5 Perception of Tobacco use by Young Adults Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



Tobacco (Survey Question 2c):

Within the region, 69.7% of respondents considered tobacco use by adults a moderate or serious problem. Monroe County, as with teenagers and young adults, had the highest rate of concern (76.1%) for adult tobacco use. Buffalo and Trempealeau Counties had the lowest rates of concern for young adult and adult tobacco use.

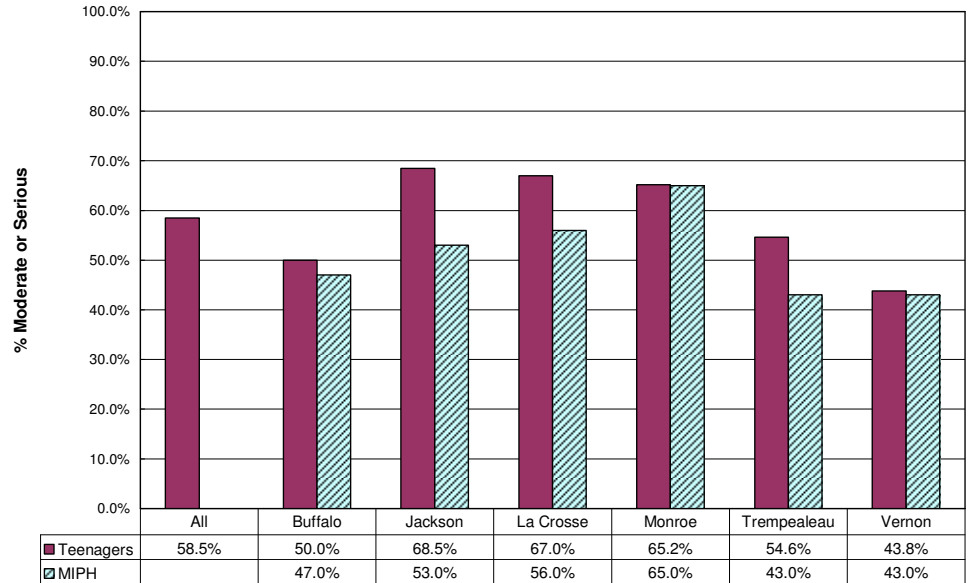
Table 6 Perception of Tobacco use by Adults Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Marijuana (Survey Question 3a):**

Overall, 58.5% considered marijuana use by teenagers to be a moderate or serious problem. Jackson County had the highest percentage (68.5%), while Vernon County residents had the lowest percentage (43.8%).

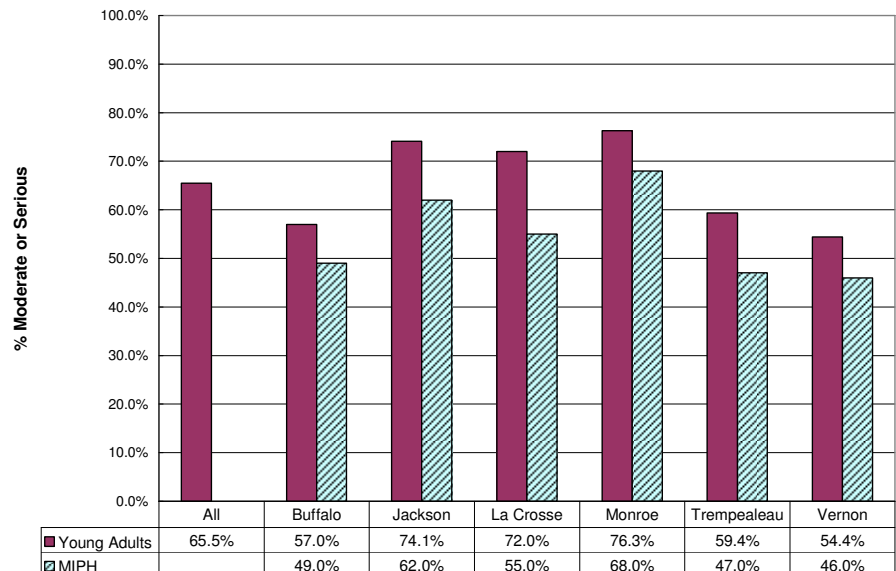
Table 7 Perception of Marijuana use by Teenagers Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



Marijuana (Survey Question 3b):

Nearly two-thirds (65.5%) of all respondents believed marijuana usage in young adults was a moderate or serious problem, a higher percentage than for teens (58.5%). More than three-fourths (76.3%) of Monroe County respondents were moderately or seriously concerned regarding marijuana use in young adults, compared to 54.4% in Vernon County.

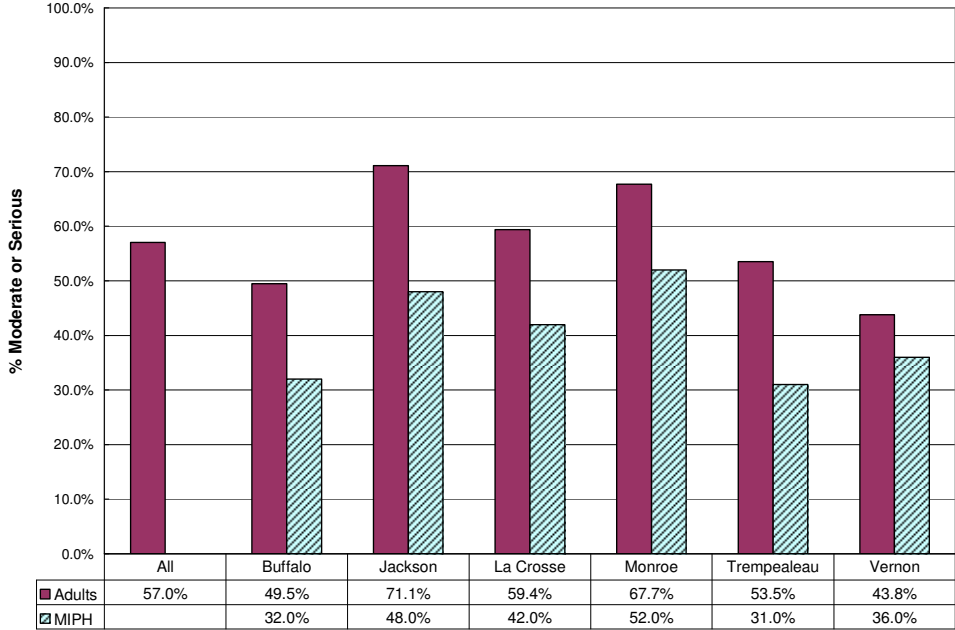
Table 8 Perception of Marijuana use by Young Adults Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Marijuana (Survey Question 3c):**

More than half of respondents considered marijuana use by adults a moderate or serious problem (57.0%). Teenage (58.5%) and adult (57.0%) marijuana use had similar rates of concern. Jackson County had the highest rate of respondents considering it a moderate or serious problem at 71.1%, while Vernon County had the lowest rate at 43.8%.

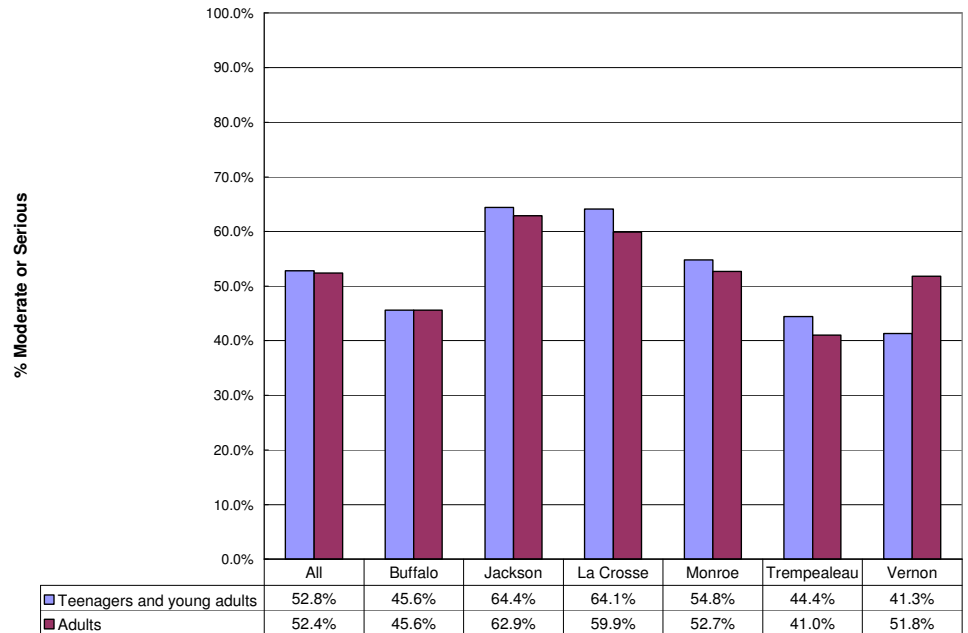
Table 9 Perception of Marijuana use by Adults Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Use (Survey Questions 3d-3e):**

Approximately, half of all respondents answered that prescription drug and/or over-the-counter (OTC) drug misuse was a moderate or serious problem in all age groups (teenagers, young adults, and adults). Jackson and La Crosse Counties had the highest rates of concern. Five counties (Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, and Trempealeau) had similar rates of concern for prescription and/or OTC misuse when comparing teenage and young adults to adults.

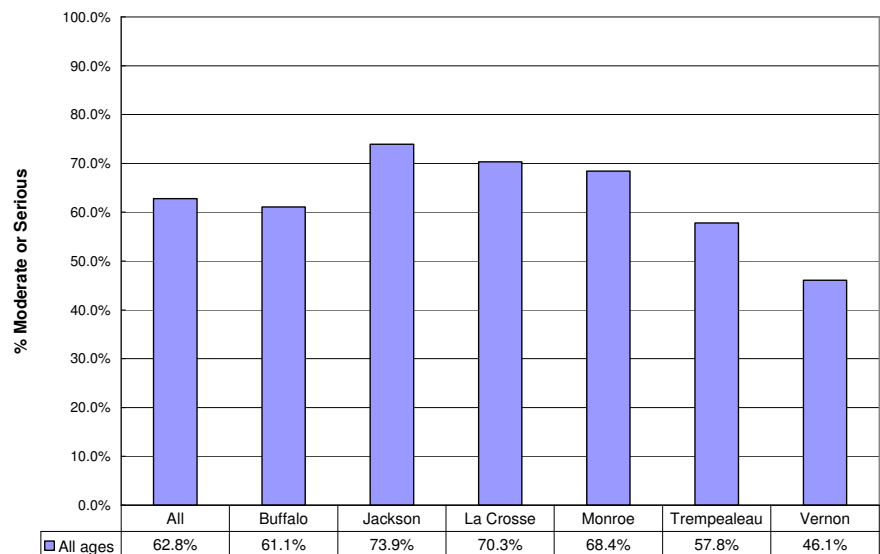
Table 10 Perception of Prescription and/or Over The Counter Drug Misuse by Teenagers, Young Adults, and Adults Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



Other Illegal Drug Use (Survey Question 3f):

Six out of ten residents considered illegal drug use to be a moderate or serious problem for all ages in their community. The highest rate of concern was in Jackson County (73.9%), and the lowest rate of concern was in Vernon County (46.1%).

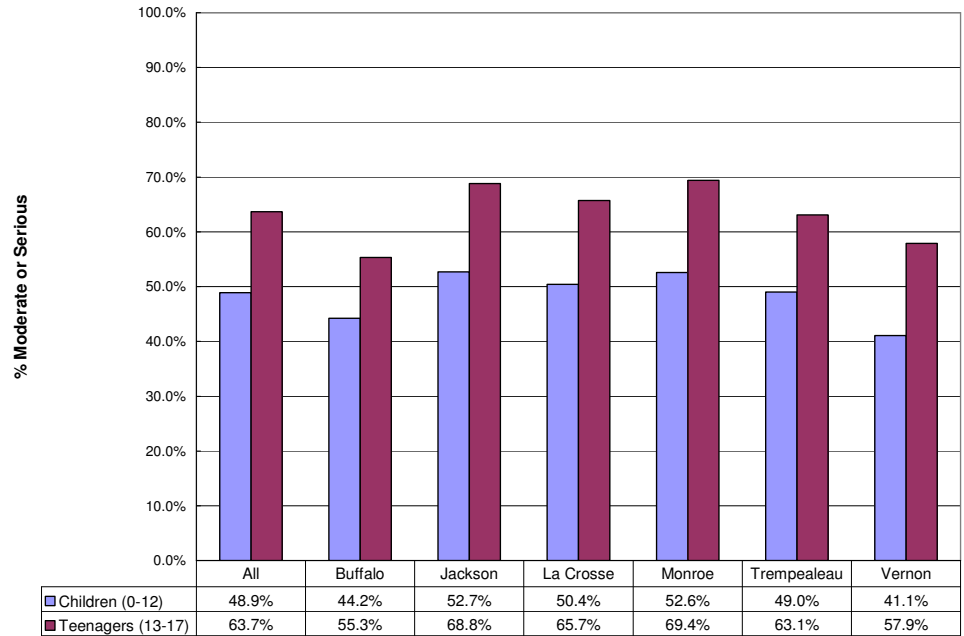
Table 11 Perception of Other Illegal Drug Use at All Ages Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Bullying (Survey Questions 4a-4b):**

Across all counties, people stated bullying among teenagers (63.7% overall) to be a larger problem than in children (48.9%). Overall, Buffalo and Vernon Counties reported the lowest rates of bullying as moderate or serious problem in both children and teenagers.

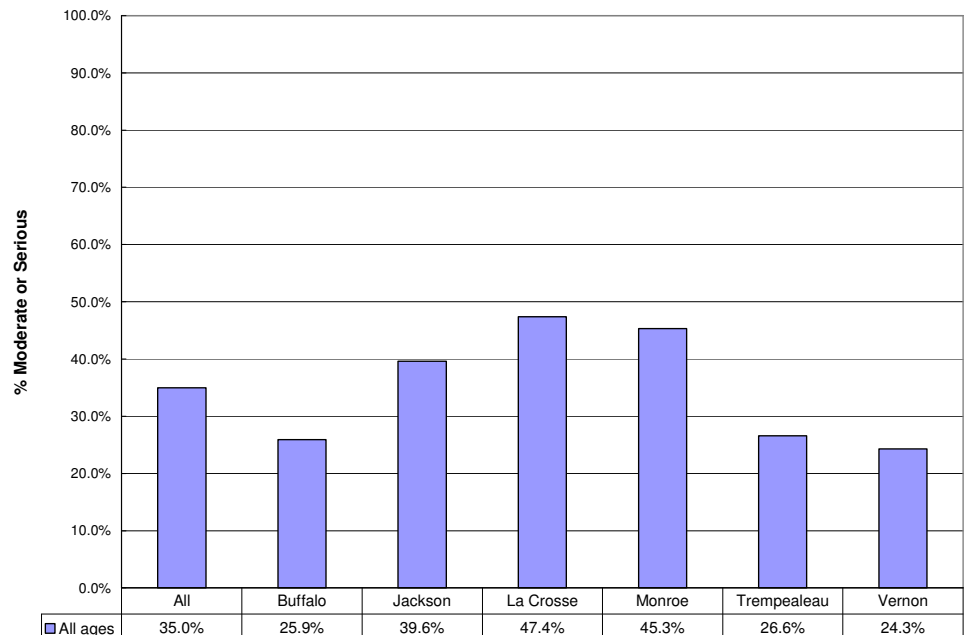
Table 12 Perception of Bullying among Children (ages 0-12) and Teenagers (ages 13-17) Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



Violence (Survey Question 4c):

Slightly more than one-third (35.0%) of respondents thought violence was a moderate or serious problem in their community. La Crosse and Monroe Counties reported the highest rates of concern (47.4% and 45.3%, respectively).

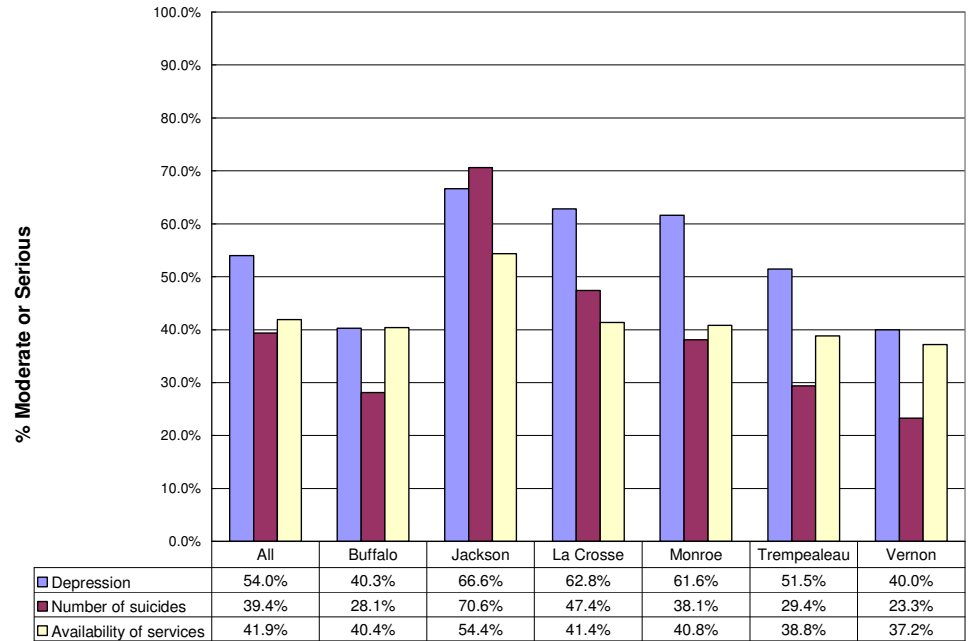
Table 13 Perception of Overall Violence in the Community (All Ages) Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**In your community, how much of a problem are the following?
Depression, Suicide, and Availability of Mental Health Services
(Survey Questions 4d-4f):**

Overall, depression in teenagers was considered a greater problem (54.0%) compared to the number of suicides (39.4%) and available mental health services (41.9%). Jackson County had the greatest percentage of people with moderate or serious concern regarding both depression (66.6%) and suicide (70.6%) in teenagers compared to the other counties. Jackson County respondents expressed the highest rate of concern regarding the availability of mental health services in the community (54.4%).

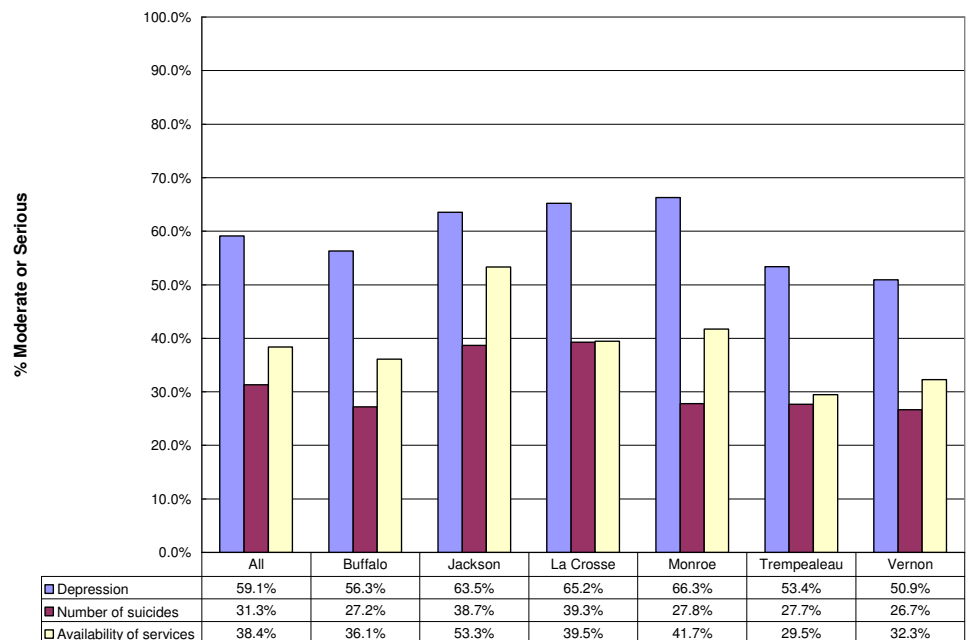
Table 14 Perception of Depression, the Number of Suicides, and Availability of Mental Health Services in **Teenagers** and **Young Adults** Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**Depression, Suicide, and Availability of Mental Health Services
(Survey Questions 4g-4i):**

As with teenagers and young adults, survey respondents considered depression to be the largest problem in adults (59.1%) compared to the availability of mental health services (38.4%) and number of suicides (31.3%). Jackson County respondents expressed the highest rate of concern regarding the availability of mental health services in the community (53.3%).

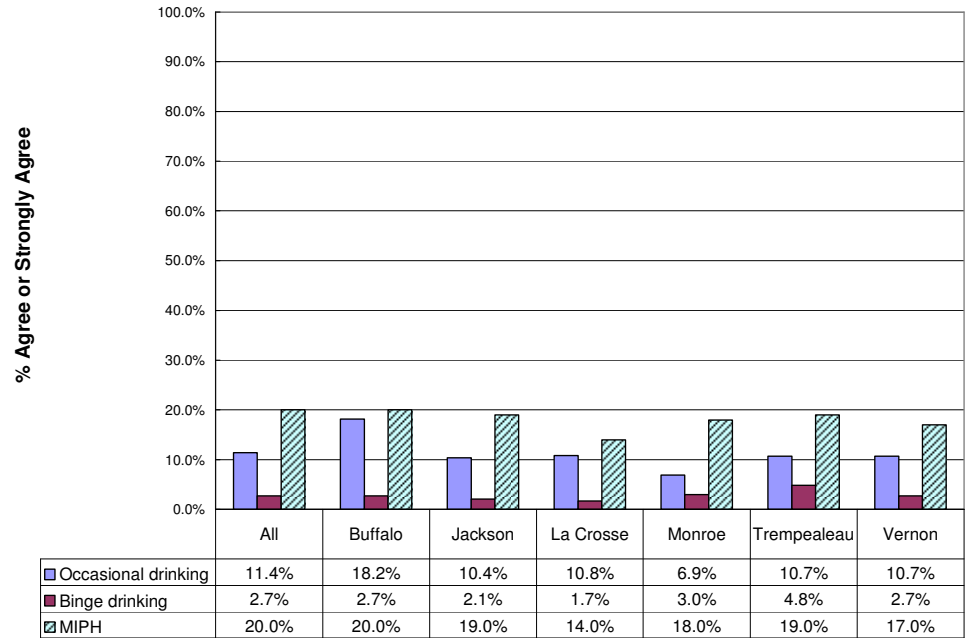
Table 15 Perception of Depression, the Number of Suicides, and Availability of Mental Health Services in **Adults** Considered a Moderate or Serious Problem



**Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement for the following:
Alcohol Availability and Accessibility (Survey Questions 5a-5b):**

On average, 11.4% of households agreed or strongly agreed occasional drinking by teenagers was acceptable. Binge drinking by teenagers was acceptable by 2.7% of respondents. Buffalo County respondents were the most permissive (18.2%) for occasional drinking, while Monroe County respondents were least permissive (6.9%).

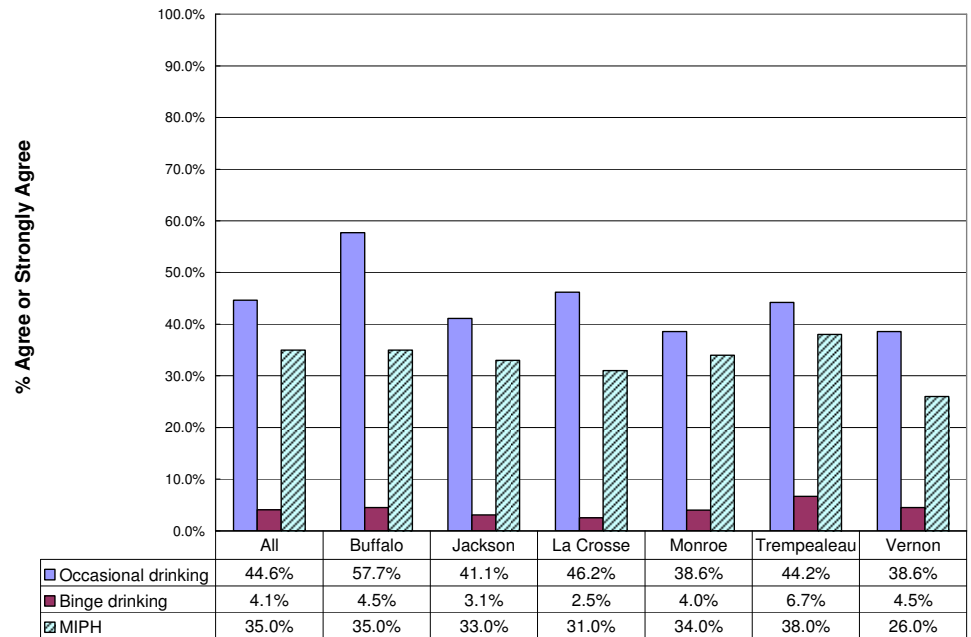
Table 16 Acceptability of Occasional and Binge Drinking by Teenagers Agree or Strongly Agree



**Alcohol Availability and Accessibility
(Survey Questions 5c-5d):**

Acceptance of occasional drinking increased nearly four-fold (44.6%) with young adults compared to teenagers (11.4%). Permissiveness of binge drinking remained under 5.0% in the region (4.1%). Buffalo County respondents had the most permissive attitudes towards occasional drinking by young adults (57.7%).

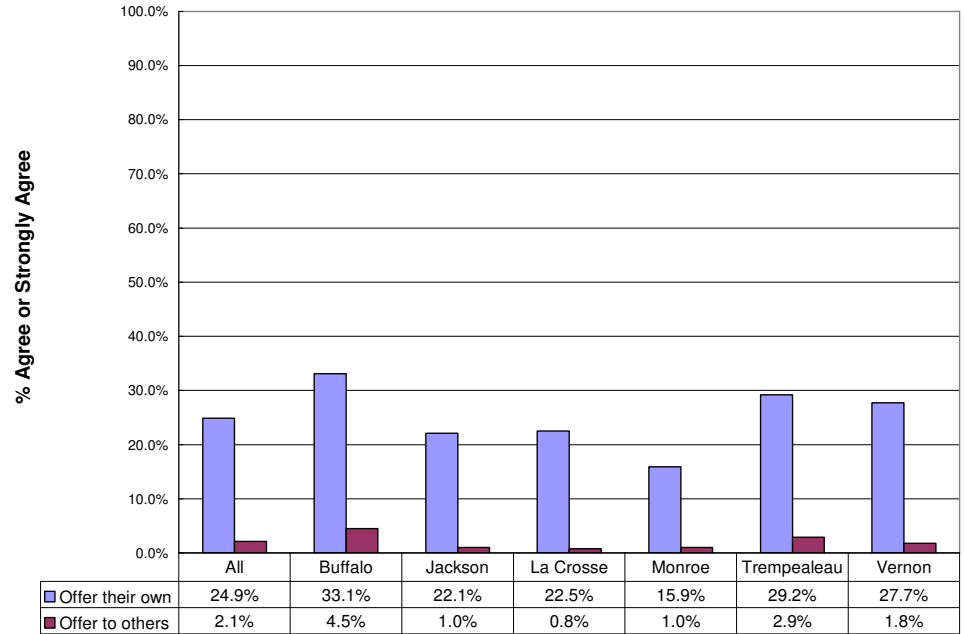
Table 17 Acceptability of Occasional and Binge Drinking by Young Adults Agree or Strongly Agree



**Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement for the following:
Alcohol Availability and Accessibility (Survey Questions 5e-5f):**

Approximately, one in four respondents (24.9%) agreed or strongly agreed it was acceptable to offer their own teenagers alcoholic drinks while almost one in three (33.1%) Buffalo County respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Respondents reported low acceptance for parents offering alcohol to teenagers other than their own.

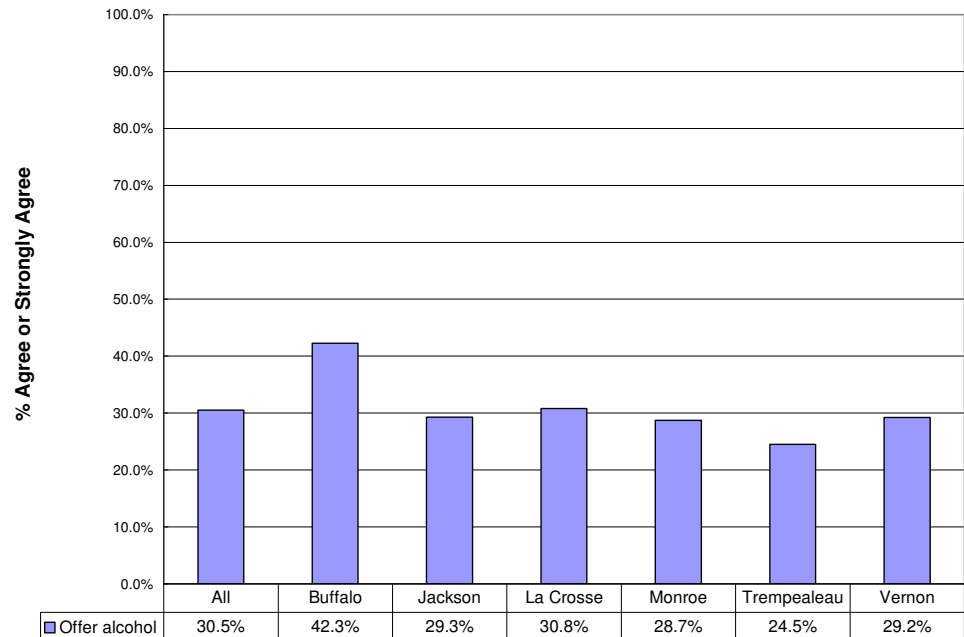
Table 18 Acceptability of Parents to Offer Alcohol to Teenagers
 Agree or Strongly Agree



**Alcohol Availability and Accessibility
 (Survey Question 5g):**

Respondents were more likely to agree or strongly agree (30.5%) it is permissible for parents to offer alcohol to young adults compared to their own teenagers (24.9%).

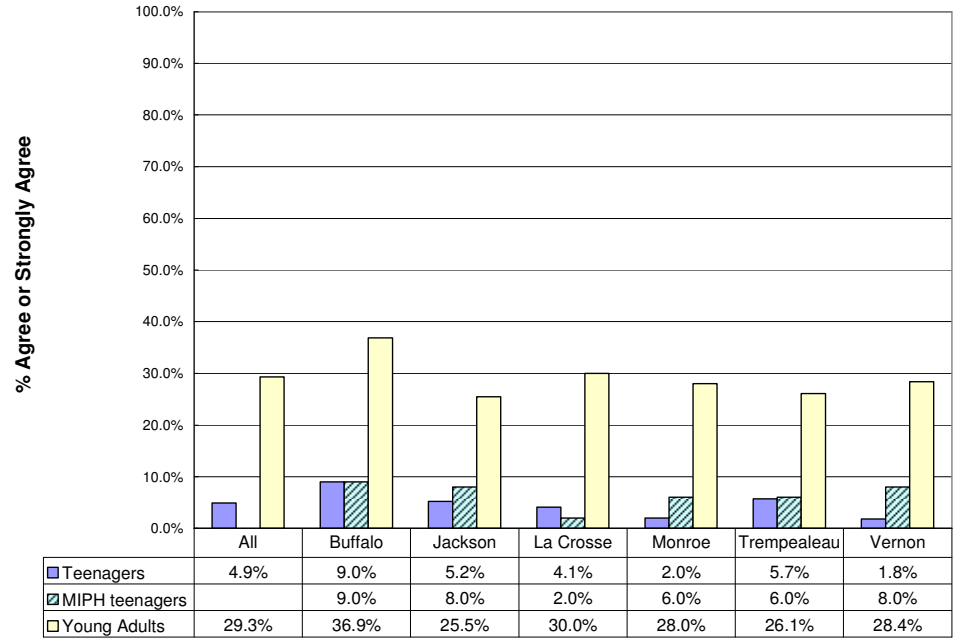
Table 19 Acceptability of Parents to Offer Alcohol to Young Adults
 Agree or Strongly Agree



**Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement for the following:
Alcohol Availability and Accessibility (Survey Questions 5h-5i):**

Overall, less than 5.0% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed teenagers could drink alcohol as long as they did not drive afterwards. Buffalo County respondents were more likely to agree or strongly agree than other counties (9.0%).

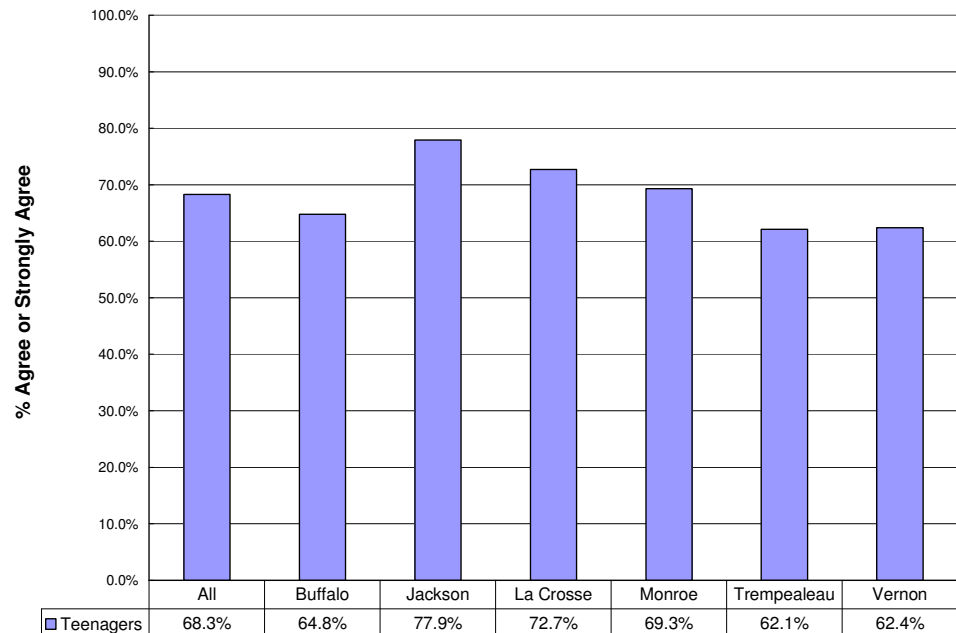
Table 20 Acceptability of Teenagers and Young Adults to Drink Alcohol as Long as They Do Not Drive Afterwards Agree or Strongly Agree



**Alcohol Availability and Accessibility
(Survey Question 5j):**

More than two-thirds (68.3%) agreed or strongly agreed alcohol was readily available to teenagers in the community. Jackson County residents had the highest agreement rate (77.9%).

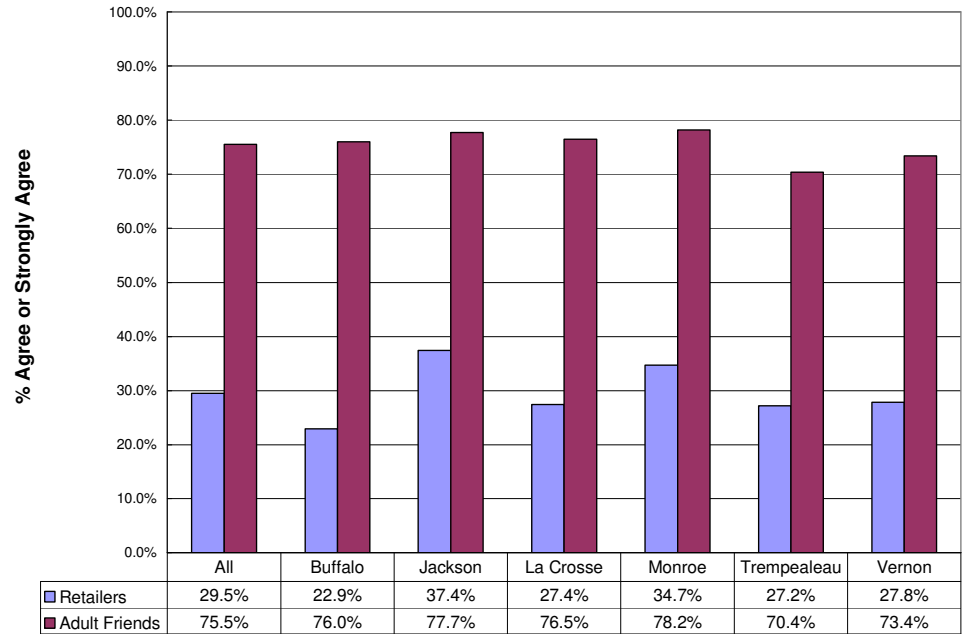
Table 21 Availability of Alcohol to Teenagers Agree or Strongly Agree



**Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement for the following:
Alcohol Availability and Accessibility (Survey Questions 5k-5l):**

Nearly three out of ten respondents (29.5%) agreed or strongly agreed retailers commonly sold alcohol to teenagers. Jackson County had the highest agreement rate (37.4%). Approximately 75% of respondents (75.5%) agreed or strongly agreed alcohol was available to teenagers through adult friends and/or adult siblings.

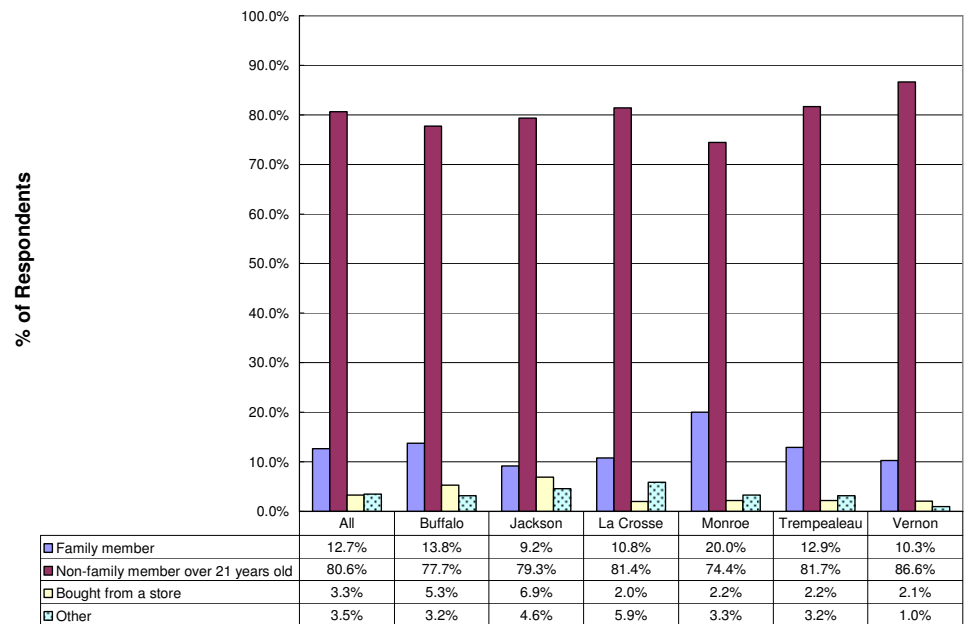
Table 22 Availability of Alcohol by Retailers or by Adult Friends and/or Siblings to Teenagers Agree or Strongly Agree



**How do you think most underage drinkers usually get their alcohol?
Alcohol Availability and Accessibility (Survey Question 8):**

Most respondents agreed alcohol is more readily available through a non-family member over 21 years old (80.6%) than through a family member (12.7%).

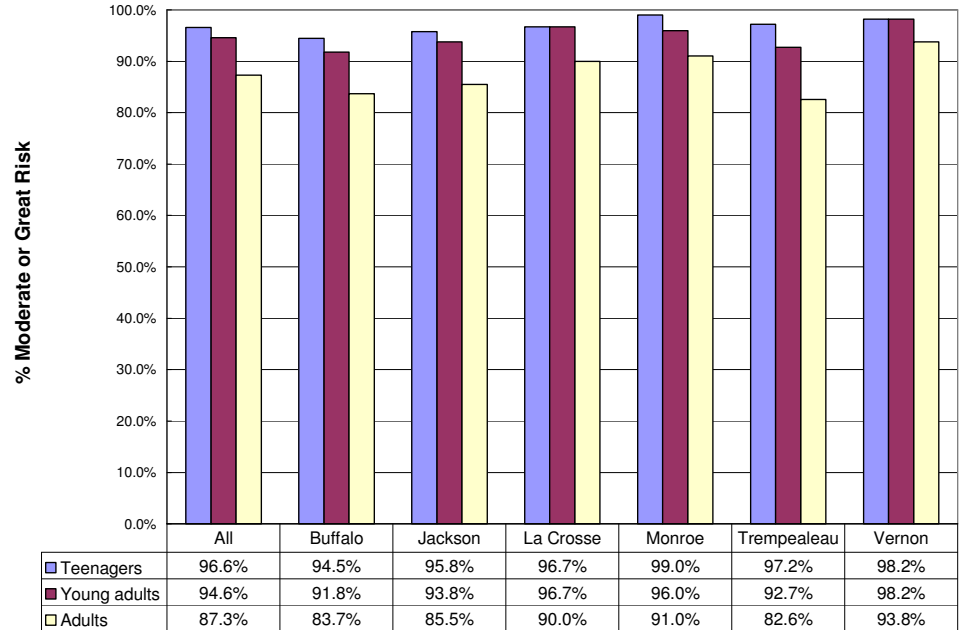
Table 23 Availability of Alcohol to Underage Drinkers



**Please rate what you believe is the level of risk for the following statements:
Perception of Harm (Survey Questions 6a-6c):**

The perception of harm associated with binge drinking was high for all age groups, with 96.6% perceiving moderate or great risk of harm for teenagers, 94.6% for young adults, and 87.3% for adults.

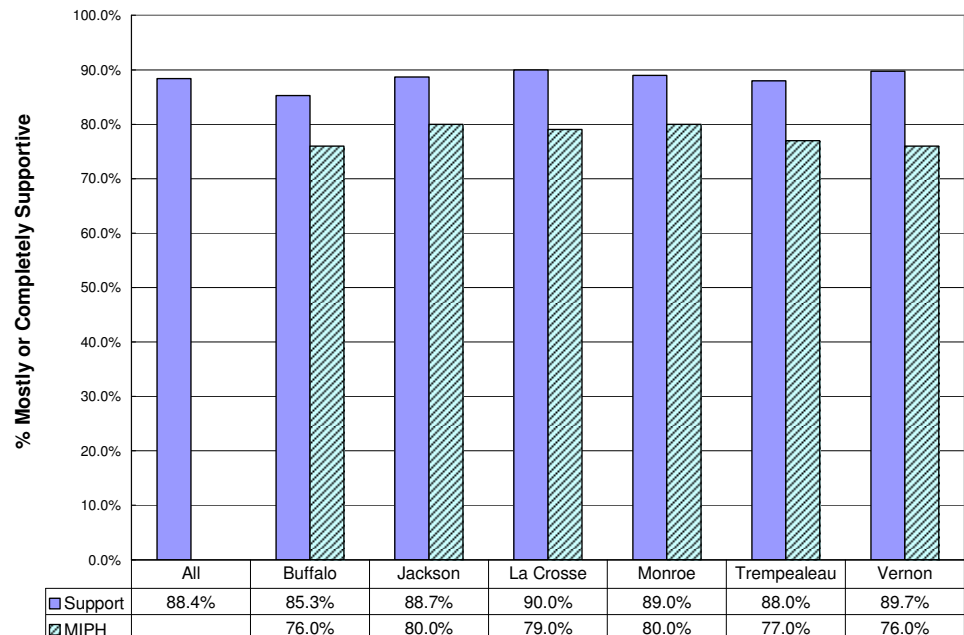
Table 24 Perception of Harm for Binge Drinking in Teenagers, Young Adults, and Adults Moderate or Great Risk



**How much do you support the following ideas?
Enforcement (Survey Question 7a):**

The majority of respondents were mostly or completely supportive of law enforcement enforcing the minimum drinking age (88.4%).

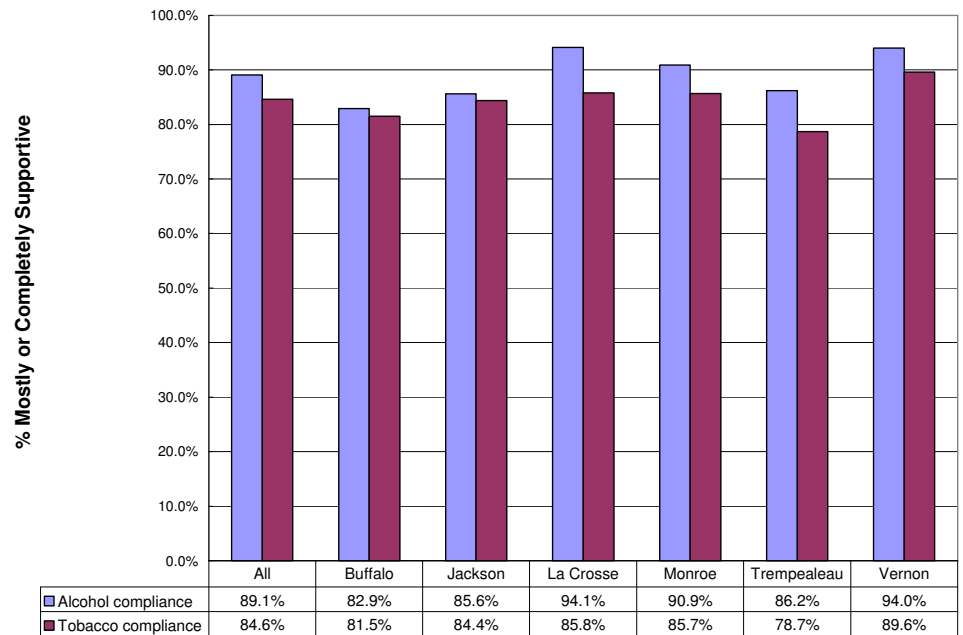
Table 25 Law Enforcement Enforcing the Minimum Drinking Age Mostly or Completely Supportive



How much do you support the following ideas? Enforcement (Survey Questions 7b & 7f):

Along with the support of enforcement of the minimum drinking age, a majority of respondents support retailer compliance checks for both alcohol (89.1%) and tobacco (84.6%).

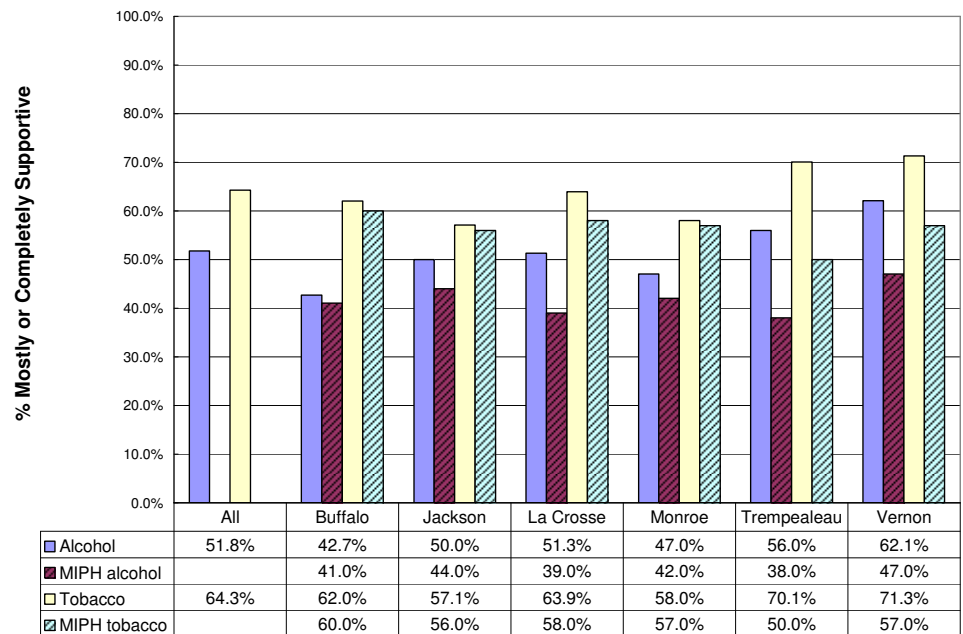
Table 26 Support for Retailer Compliance Checks to Prevent Sale of Alcohol to Teenagers and Young Adults and Tobacco to Teenagers Mostly or Completely Supportive



Policies (Survey Questions 7c & 7g):

Within the region, over half of respondents mostly or completely supported increasing taxes on alcohol (51.8%), with the greatest support in Vernon County (62.1%) and the least support in Buffalo County (42.7%). The majority of respondents supported increasing taxes on tobacco (64.3%), with the greatest support in Vernon County (71.3%) and the least support in Jackson County (57.1%).

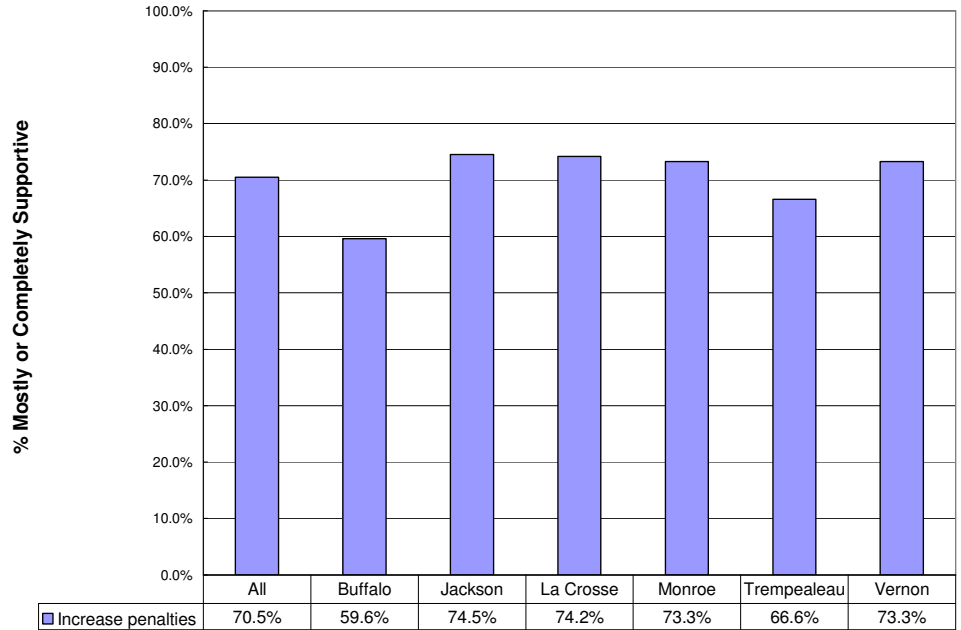
Table 27 Increasing Taxes on Alcohol and Tobacco Mostly or Completely Supportive



How much do you support the following ideas? Policies (Survey Question 7e):

Overall, 70.5% of respondents mostly or completely supported increasing the penalties on drinking and driving. Level of support ranged from 74.5% in Jackson County to 59.6% in Buffalo County.

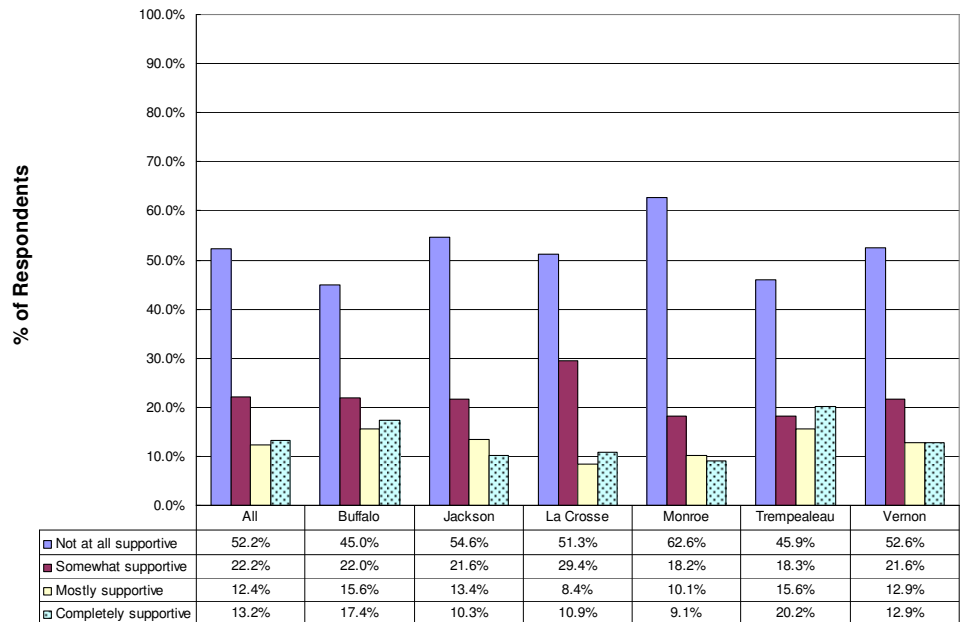
Table 28 Increasing Penalties on Drinking and Driving Mostly or Completely Supportive



Policies (Survey Question 7d):

Within the region, over half of respondents were not at all supportive of lowering the drinking age (52.2%). Monroe County had the greatest percentage of respondents who were not at all supportive of lowering the drinking age (62.6%), while Buffalo County had the lowest (45.0%).

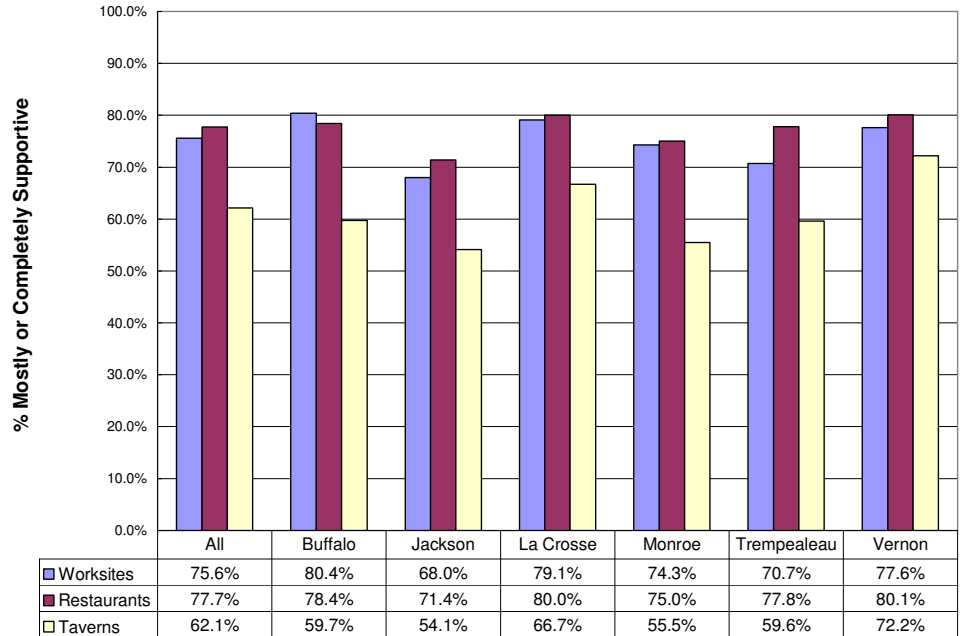
Table 29 Support for Lowering the Drinking Age



How much do you support the following ideas? Policies (Survey Questions 7h-7j):

Approximately, three out of four respondents supported smoke-free worksites (75.6%) and restaurants (77.7%). Support for smoke-free taverns (62.1%) was lower than support for smoke-free restaurants and worksites, but still supported by a majority of respondents.

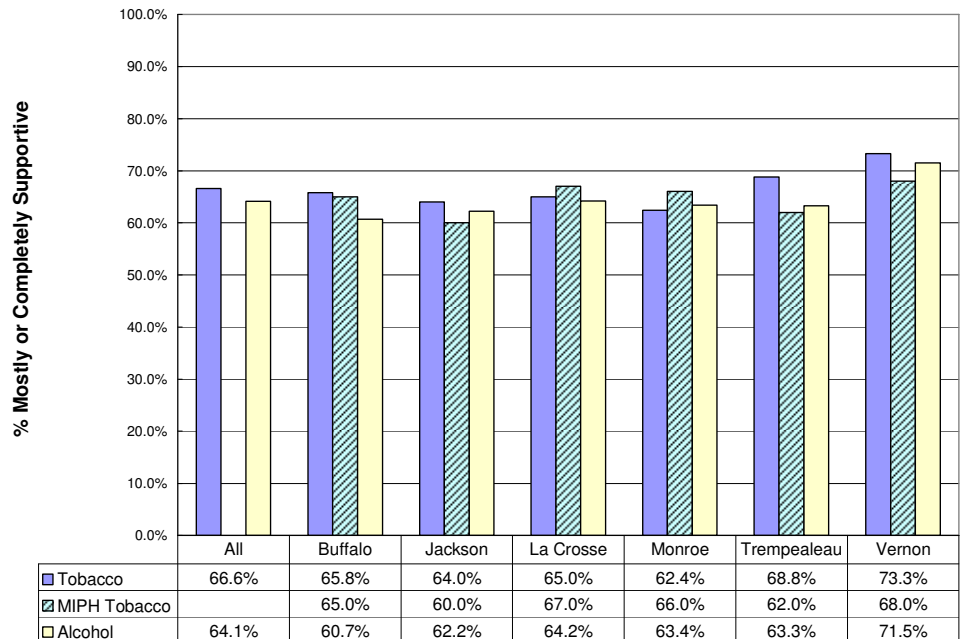
Table 30 Making all Worksites, Restaurants, and Taverns Smoke-Free Mostly or Completely Supportive



Policies (Survey Questions 7k-7l):

Nearly two-thirds of respondents were mostly or completely supportive of banning both alcohol (64.1%) and tobacco (66.6%) advertising. Vernon County reported the highest level of support for banning alcohol and tobacco advertising (71.5% and 73.3%, respectively).

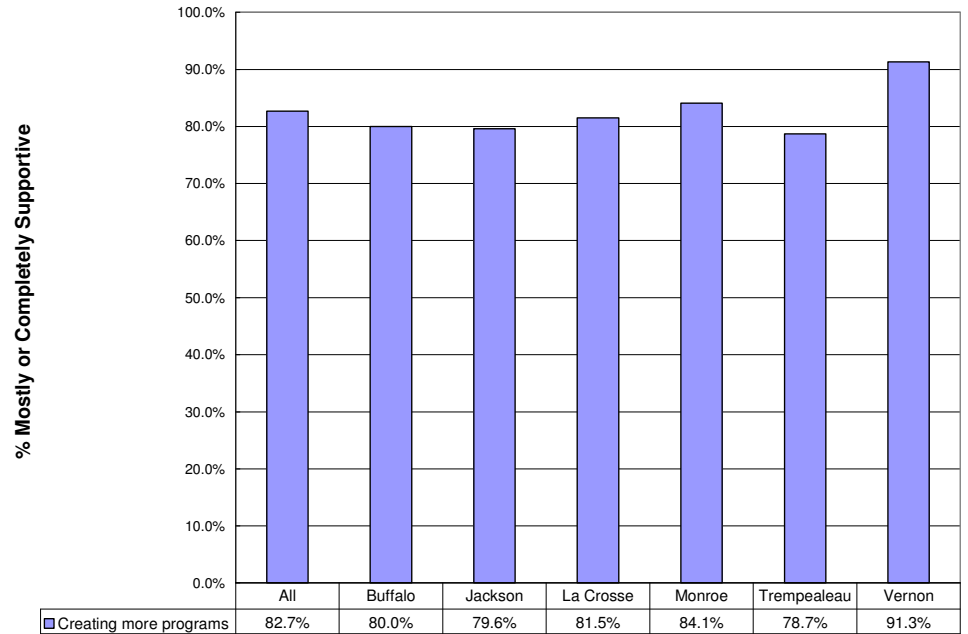
Table 31 Banning Tobacco and Alcohol Advertising Mostly or Completely Supportive



**How much do you support the following ideas?
Programs (Survey Question 7m):**

The majority of respondents were mostly or completely supportive (82.7%) of creating more accessible alcohol and other drug treatment programs. Support was the greatest in Vernon County at 91.3%.

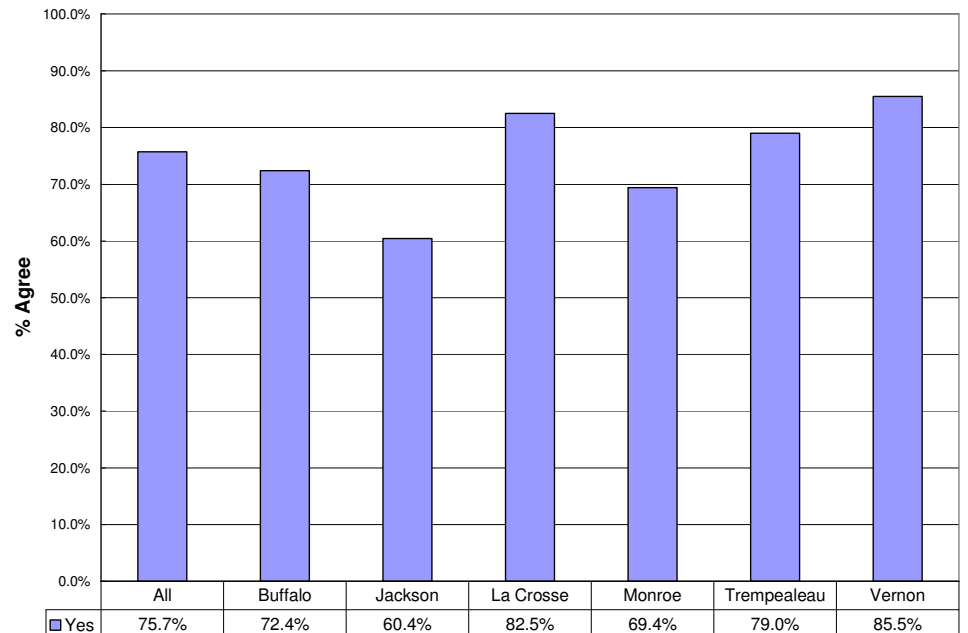
Table 32 Creating More Accessible Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Programs Mostly or Completely Supportive



Do you believe that your community can reduce alcohol, tobacco, or other drug problems through prevention? Support (Survey Question 9):

Three-quarters of respondents (75.7%) agreed their community can reduce substance abuse problems through prevention. Jackson County reported the lowest support (60.4%) and Vernon County reported the highest support (85.5%).

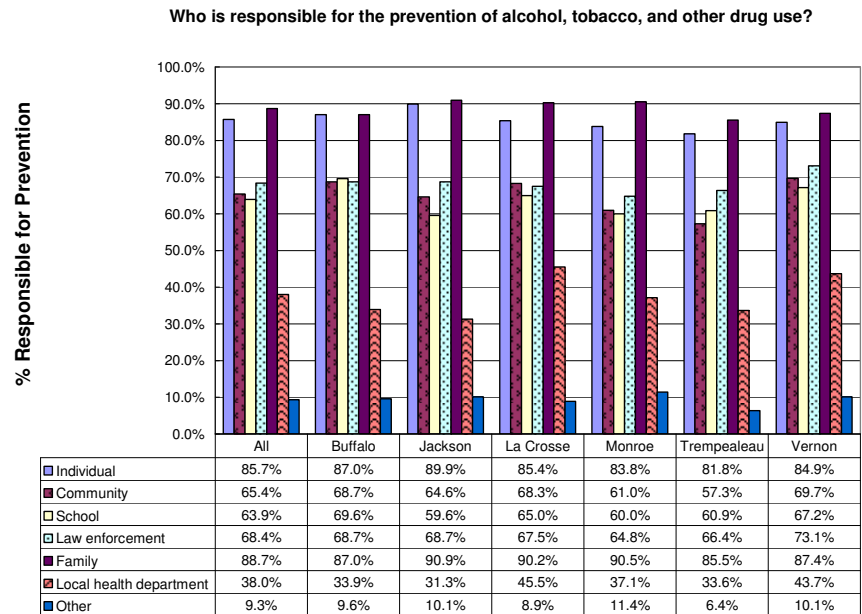
Table 33 Community Can Reduce Alcohol, Tobacco, or Other Drug Problems Through Prevention



Who is responsible for the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use? Support (Survey Question 10):

Throughout the region, all counties reported the Individual (85.7%) and the Family (88.7%) were the most responsible for the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Approximately, two-thirds of respondents reported Community (65.4%), School (63.9%), and Law Enforcement (68.4%) were responsible for prevention efforts. The Local Health Department received the lowest level of responsibility at 38.0%.

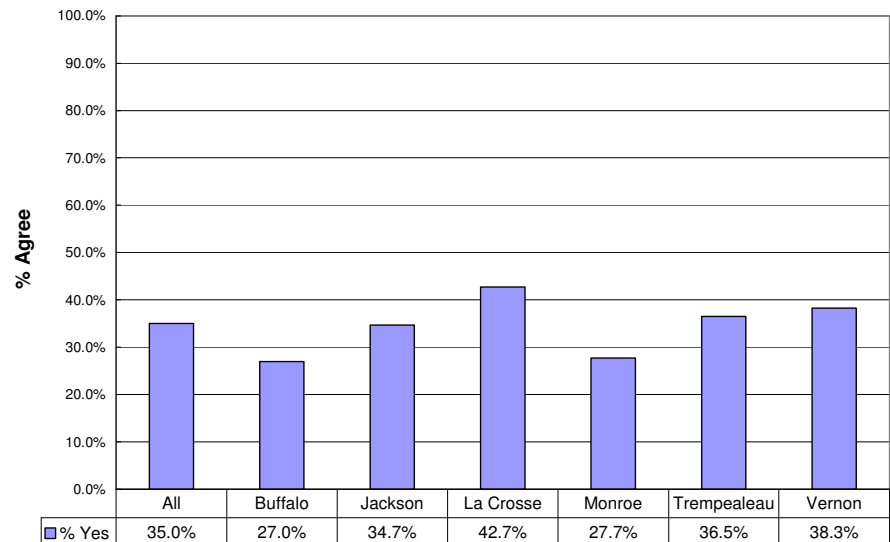
Table 34 Responsible For Prevention by County



Are there enough healthy alternative activities for teenagers and young adults in your community? Support (Survey Question 11):

Approximately, one-third (35.0%) of respondents agreed there were enough healthy alternative activities for teenagers and young adults in their community. La Crosse County had the highest level of agreement at 42.7%, while Buffalo County had the lowest level of agreement at 27.0%.

Table 35 Healthy Activities for Teenagers and Young Adults

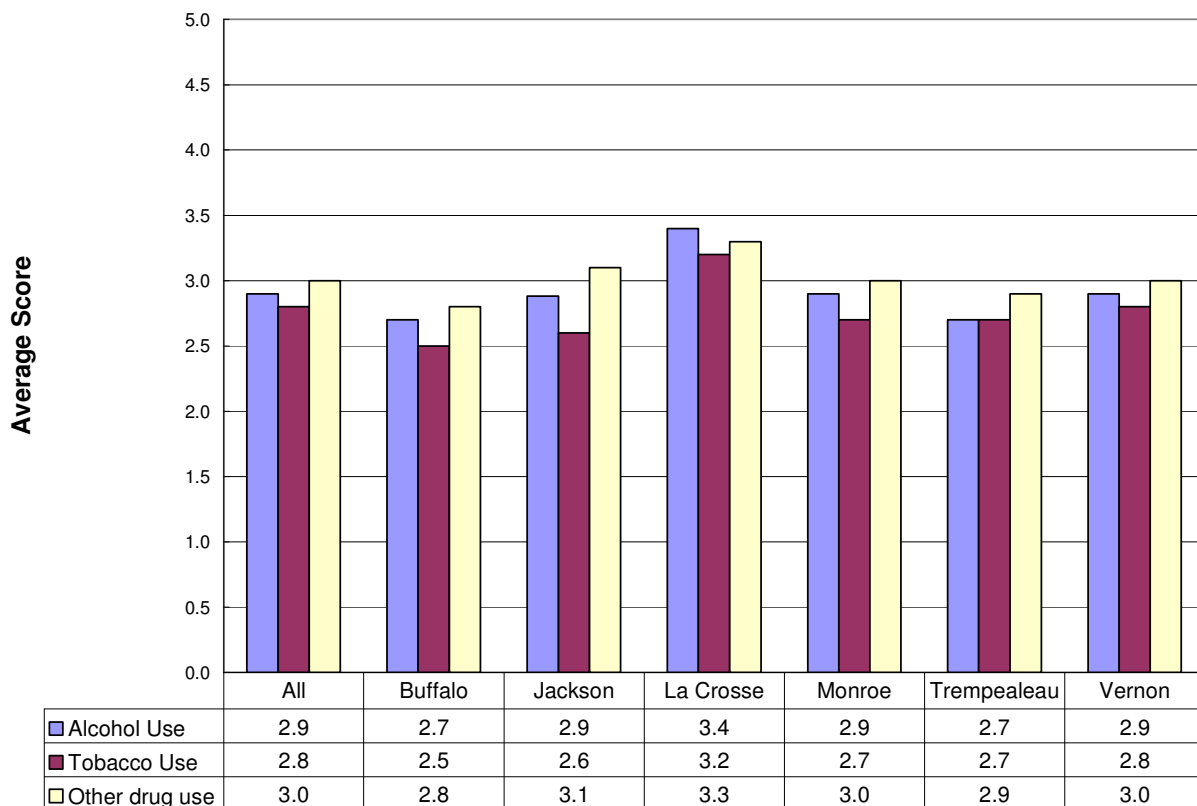


How ready is your community to address the following issues?

Community Readiness to Address Alcohol, Tobacco, and Illicit Drug Use (Survey Question 12):

On average, the six county region reported a score of 2.9 out of 5.0 for community readiness to address alcohol, 2.8 out of 5.0 to address tobacco, and 3.0 out of 5.0 to address illicit drug use. La Crosse County reported the highest level of community readiness to address alcohol at 3.4, while Trempealeau County and Buffalo County reported the lowest levels (2.7 each). La Crosse County reported the highest level of community readiness to address tobacco at 3.2, while Buffalo County reported the lowest level of 2.5. La Crosse County reported the highest level of community readiness to address illicit drug use at 3.3, while Buffalo County reported the lowest level of 2.8.

Table 36 Community Readiness to Address Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use (Scale=1-5)



Scale of Readiness:

- 1: There is no problem
- 2: There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it
- 3: My community is starting to talk about it
- 4: My community has started to take action
- 5: My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well

CONCLUSIONS

- Future strategies should be directed at the consequences of non-family adults providing alcohol to teenagers.
- The greatest percentage of concern for alcohol use throughout the region in teenagers, young adults, and adults was for binge drinking. More people may respond to binge drinking reduction efforts.
- Monroe County had the greatest concern for tobacco use compared to other counties. The high level of concern indicates possible community support for tobacco reduction efforts.
- Compliance checks for both alcohol and tobacco are strongly supported and should be continued in the region.
- Communities, based on the strong level of support, should promote increased access to alcohol and drug abuse treatment programs.
- A majority of respondents were moderately or seriously concerned about bullying among teenagers. The level of concern indicates bullying should be a current and future focus in the region.
- Jackson County residents indicated a particular need for increased access to mental health programs compared to other counties.
- More than 60% of respondents in all counties favored banning alcohol and tobacco advertising. This is a strong area of support and should be explored.
- A majority of respondents favored increasing taxes on alcohol and tobacco. Local governments should consider these areas for potential revenue, and ways of funding local alcohol, tobacco, and other drug reduction programs.
- The need for alternative activities for teenagers was strongly indicated. Long-term formation of community groups dedicated to this purpose might generate strong support.
- Respondents strongly supported using individuals and families as the basis for a prevention message.
- Overall, most respondents thought their communities had started to talk about the problems of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse. Almost all recognized these issues as a problem in their communities. Individual county and regional results indicate the **Western Wisconsin Counties of Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe Trempealeau, and Vernon are ready to address alcohol, tobacco, illicit drug use, and mental health issues through different policies, programs, and procedures.**

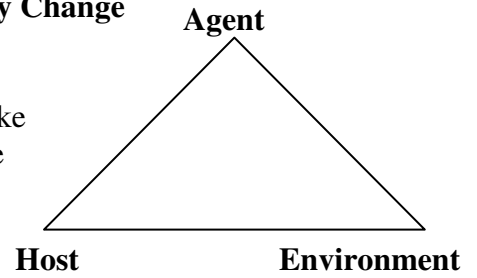
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collect and review other sources of local information. These may include:
 - Compliance check data (from law enforcement or county health for tobacco)
 - Arrests related to ATOD use (from Law Enforcement)
 - Hospital admissions related to ATOD use (from local hospitals or public health agencies)
 - Alcohol or drug related crashes, injuries, and deaths (Wisconsin Department of Transportation)
 - Local school/student surveys
- Give survey or conduct a focus group with young people in your community and involve them in the issue.
- Hold meetings and/or conduct interviews with community leaders to discuss the results of the Community Perceptions Survey.
- Share survey results with local law enforcement agencies. This can give them a sense of community support that residents do value enforcing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug laws.
- Use the survey results in your coalition community needs assessment and strategic planning process.
- Choose evidence based strategies based on community needs that have been rigorously evaluated and that have repeatedly demonstrated positive outcomes.

PUBLIC HEALTH MODEL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

The Public Health Model-Laying the Foundation for Community Change

The public health model demonstrates that problems arise through relationships and interactions among an agent (e.g., the substance, like alcohol or drugs), a host (the individual drinker or drug user) and the environment (the social and physical context of substance use).



Environmental Strategies

Grounded in the field of public health, which emphasizes the broader physical, social, cultural and institutional forces that contribute to the problems coalitions address, environmental strategies offer prevention approaches coalitions use to change the context (environment) in which substance use and abuse occur. Environmental strategies focus on changing norms, adopting and enforcing regulations, and reducing the availability and access to drugs and other situations that put people at risk that lead to long-term outcomes.

Environmental strategies can produce quick wins and instill commitment toward long-term impact on practices and policies within a community. They also require substantial commitment from various sectors of the community to contribute to sustainable community change. Such approaches potentially reach entire populations and reduce collective risk. Environmental strategies create lasting change in community norms and systems producing widespread behavior change and, in return, reducing problems for entire communities.

Coalitions planning to implement environmental strategies should investigate existing formal and informal policies that influence environmental factors. Coalitions must do their homework to learn about state and local laws related to the sale of alcohol and tobacco products, as well as the people, neighborhoods, and local context to tailor environmental strategies in their community.

Policy Indicators for Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs to Address Environment

Alcohol—Public Policies	Alcohol—Organizational Policies
Excise taxes	Restrictions on alcohol advertisements
Limits on hours or days of sales	Restrictions on alcohol use at work and work events
Restrictions of density, location or types of outlets	Restrictions on sponsorship of special events
Mandatory server training and licensing	Police walkthroughs at alcohol outlets
Dram shop and social host liability	Undercover outlet compliance checks
Restrictions on advertising and promotions	Responsible beverage service policies
Mandatory warning signs and labels	Mandatory checks of age identification
Restrictions on consumption in public places	Prohibition of alcohol on school grounds or at school events
Prevention of preemption of local control of alcohol regulations	Enforcement of school policies

Minimum bar entry age	Server training
Keg registration/tagging ordinances	Prohibition of beer kegs on campus
Compulsory compliance checks for minimum purchase age and administrative penalties for violations	Establishment of enforcement policies against adults who illegally provide alcohol to youth
	Sobriety checkpoints
	Media campaigns about enforcement efforts
	Identification of sources of alcohol consumed prior to driving-while-intoxicated arrests
	Incentives for checking age identification
Tobacco—Public Policies	Tobacco—Organizational Policies
Excise taxes	Establishment of smoke-free settings
Tobacco sales licensing system	Counter advertising
Prohibition of smoking in public places	Mandatory checks for age identification
Prevention of preemption of local control of tobacco sales	Prohibition of tobacco use on school grounds, in buses and at school events
Ban on vending machines	Enforcement of school policies
Compulsory compliance checks for minimum purchase age and administrative penalties for violations	Restrictions on sponsorship of special events
Minimum age sales of 18	Seller training
Warning labels	Incentives for checking age identification
Ban on self-service sales (all tobacco behind the counter)	Undercover shopper or monitoring program
Mandatory seller training	
Minimum age for sellers	
Penalty for underage use	
Other Drugs—Public Policies	Other Drugs—Organizational Policies
Control of production and distribution	Employer policies
Zoning and building codes that discourage drug activity and penalties for property owners who fail to address known drug activity	Appropriate design and maintenance of parks, streets, and other public places
Mandated school policies	Enforcement of zoning and building codes
	Surveillance of high-risk public areas
	Enforcement of school drug policies

Source: Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute, *The Coalition Impact: Environmental Prevention Strategies*, retrieved July 2009, www.coalitioninstitute.org/EnvironStrat/EnvironStratHome.asp

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN SURVEY COMMENTS

The 2009 Community Perceptions Survey administered within the Counties of Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon included additional space for survey respondents to add personal comments regarding survey topics. In addition to reading and considering the full text of all responses, survey comments were collected and analyzed using content analysis as described in Morse and Field (1995). Opinions were listed and tallied by county. It was possible for one response to contain several distinct opinions, each of which was counted as a comment. Over 367 comments were tallied from the survey and organized into conceptual themes based upon their subject matter. Comments on the design and format of the survey were not included in this analysis. Seven broad themes emerged from the analysis of survey comments:

1. Need For Healthy Alternatives to Drinking/Drug Taking
2. Law Enforcement Issues (enforcement of existing laws, effectiveness/capabilities of law enforcement agencies)
3. Prevention Interventions (e.g. support for speakers in schools, need for education, etc.)
4. Access to Treatment Services
5. Locus of Responsibility (parents, teachers, community, schools, personal responsibilities/rights)
6. Culture of Drinking (mixed messages from adults, police, media; acceptance of alcohol; alcohol sales at community/church fundraisers; alcohol centered festivals; etc.)
7. Legal and Community Suggestions (what should be done, support or lack of support for laws)

Below are summaries of survey comments by theme for all counties combined and for each county separately, followed by a brief set of recommendations.

All Counties

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drinking/Drug Taking: The need for healthy alternatives to alcohol and drugs for teens and young adults was expressed in every county and was the specific comment most frequently made overall (31 comments). Specific suggestions for healthy alternatives included a skate park, bowling alley, and summer programs for youths. Other comments included suggestions for providing community service and other positive activities for offenders, and an expression of dissatisfaction at the lack of smoke-free places.

Law Enforcement Issues: Comments included expressed the need for better enforcement of existing laws (16 comments), the need for better support and training for law enforcement officers (4 comments), and dissatisfaction with local law enforcement agencies (10 comments). Other comments expressed the belief that police often “look the other way” or inconsistently enforce laws.

Prevention Interventions: The need for education was expressed in 23 comments in this category, including calls for education of parents, youths, adults, offenders, tavern owners, and those seeking treatment for substance abuse problems. Other comments included support for

prevention efforts, nonsupport of prevention efforts, and suggestions to limit the availability of alcohol.

Access to Treatment Services: A need for access to affordable treatment services was expressed in 12 comments, and a need for better access to mental health services was expressed in 6 comments. Other comments called for increased funding for mental health and treatment services, and for access to affordable smoking cessation treatments.

Locus of Responsibility: The need for better parenting and/or stronger families was expressed in 22 comments. Other comments suggested that adults need to be better role models (9 comments), that there needs to be more personal responsibility (4 comments), and that various other community entities, including leaders, the church, and sports and civic organizations, need to be more active in alcohol, tobacco, and bullying prevention.

Culture of Drinking: Many comments consisted of assertions that the community has a serious problem with alcohol (26 comments) and that it will be necessary to change the culture of drinking or the permissiveness toward alcohol for change to happen (14 comments). Several comments suggested that alcohol is not a problem (9 comments) and that their community is in denial over its alcohol problem (2 comments).

Legal and Community Suggestions: The most frequent comments in this section were expressions of nonsupport of the 21 year old drinking age and/or support of reducing the minimum drinking age to 18 or 19 (27 comments). Five comments supported the 21 year old drinking age, and one comment supported a ban on alcohol for all ages. Many respondents commented that it is unfair to heavily tax and otherwise restrict smoking while not doing so for alcohol (17 comments). Sixteen comments expressed support for stronger consequences for alcohol or other drug offenders, while 4 comments suggested stronger penalties will not have any effect. The smoking ban was favored by 11 comments and opposed by five. Other comments included suggestions for public transportation to alleviate the need for driving home from bars, suggestions to legalize and tax marijuana, opposition to more laws and restrictions, and expressions of support for smokers' rights.

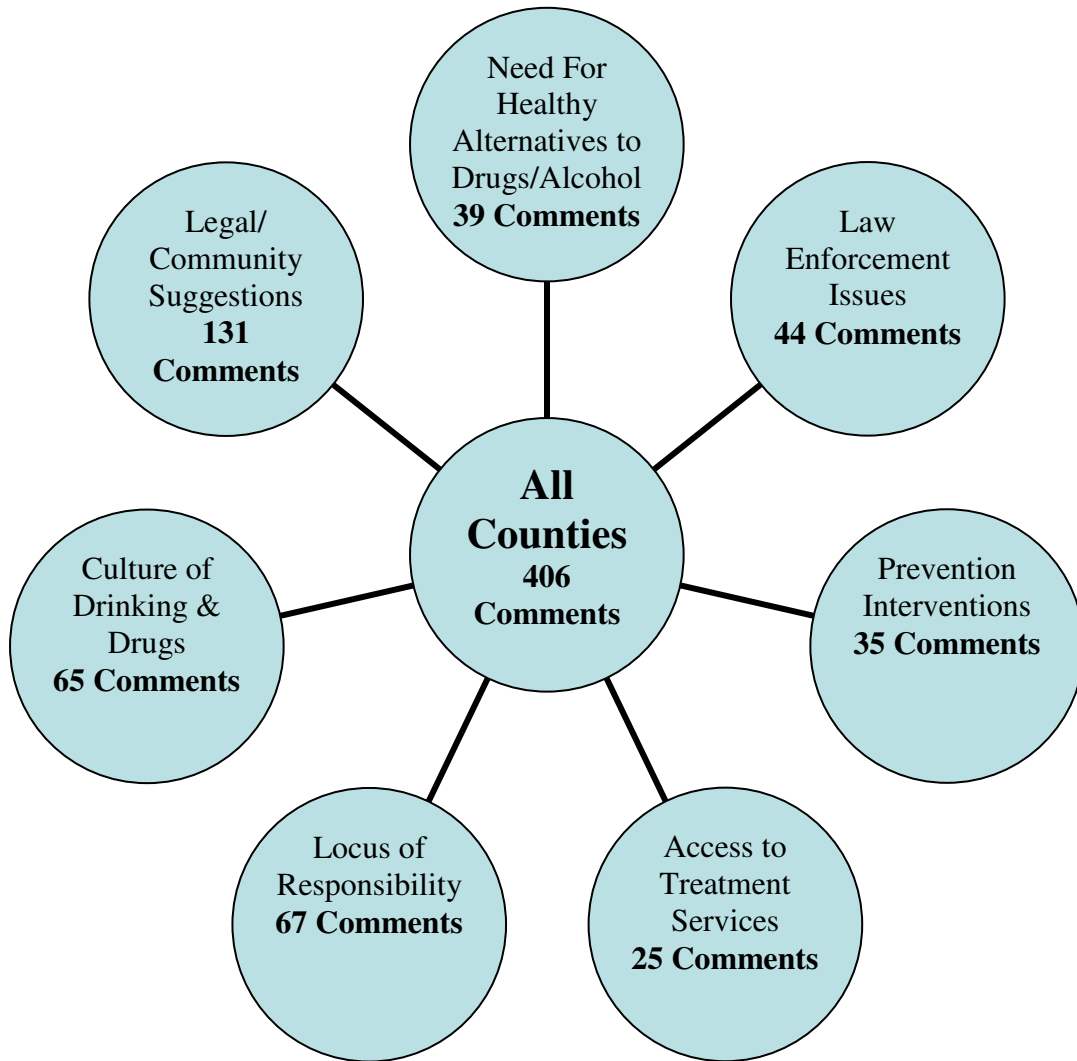


Figure 1. Number of Comments by Theme for All Counties in the Community Perceptions Survey, 2009.

Buffalo County

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drugs/Alcohol: The most frequent specific comment from Buffalo County respondents noted the need for healthy activities for youth (13 comments). One comment lamented the lack of smoke-free places.

Law Enforcement Issues: Three respondents commented upon the need for more support and training for law enforcement. Other comments expressed the need for better enforcement of existing laws and litter laws. The opinion that drunk driving is taken too lightly despite being a big problem was also expressed.

Prevention Interventions: Two comments suggested that education for both kids and adults is necessary. Other comments suggested replacing alcohol and tobacco advertising with advertising for treatment/help, expressed the need for more information, and suggested having more speakers in schools. One comment suggested focusing on obesity rather than substance abuse problems, while another comment suggested money should not be wasted on programs that do not work.

Access to Treatment Services: Two comments expressed the need for access to affordable services, while one suggested more focus on and better access to mental health care. One respondent said that there is a lack of funds for treatment services.

Locus of Responsibility: Comments suggested a need for better parenting (2 comments), a need for support for strong families (2 comments), and a need for more personal responsibility (2 comments).

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: Seven comments expressed acceptance of alcohol in the community, while 5 comments expressed acceptance of tobacco. Four comments viewed alcohol, drugs, and tobacco as major concerns, and one respondent commented that alcohol is too available.

Legal/Community Suggestions: The largest number of comments in this category expressed support for lowering the drinking age to 18 or 19 (9 comments), while three comments supported the 21 year drinking age. One comment suggested a drinking ban for all ages. Respondents expressed the opinion that it is unfair to tax and restrict tobacco while not doing the same for alcohol (7 comments). Four comments supported the smoking ban. Other comments suggested a need for public transportation to reduce drinking and driving (3 comments), supported increasing taxes on alcohol (2 comments), suggested that higher penalties won't change behavior (2), called for control of the internet, and called for legalization of drugs.

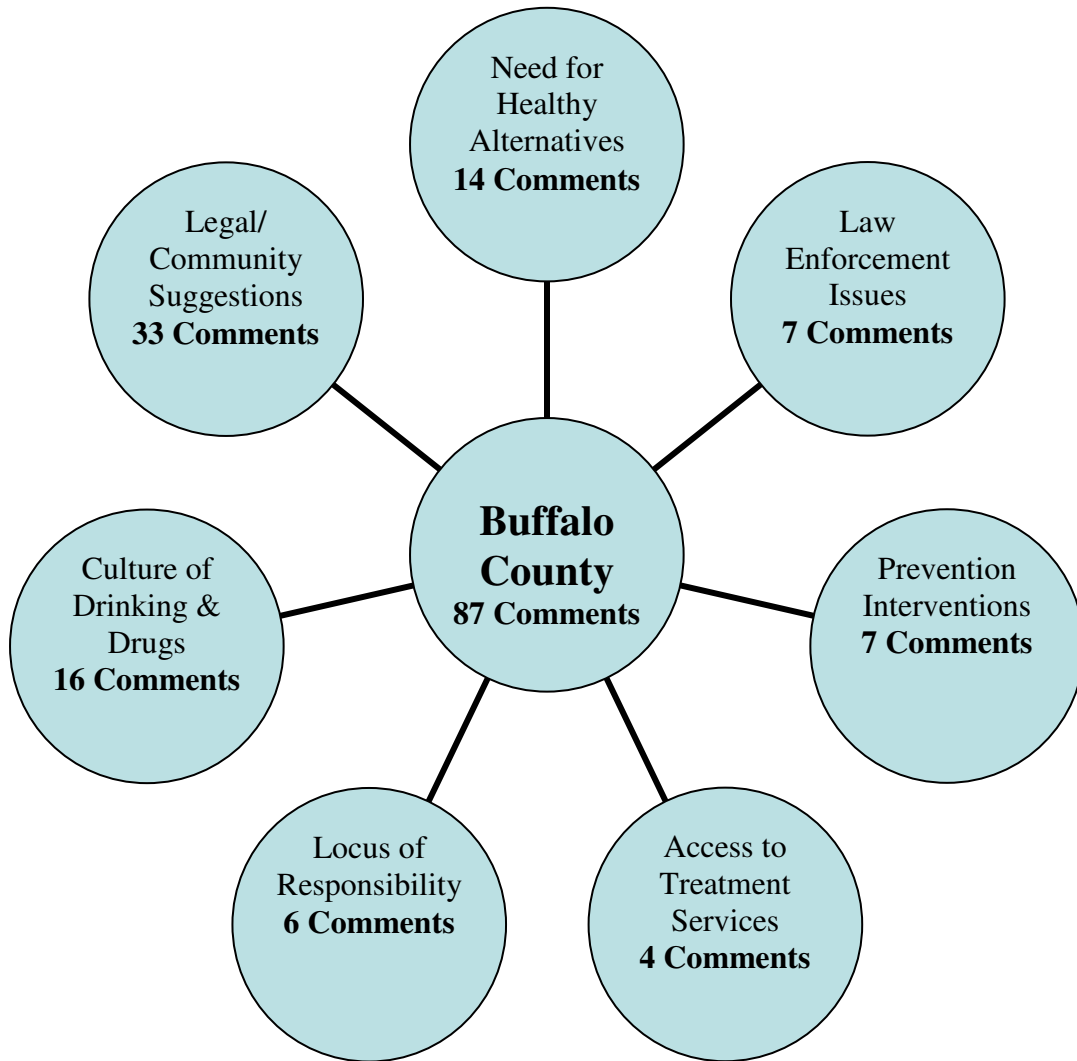


Figure 2. Number of Comments by Theme for Buffalo County

Jackson County

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drugs/Alcohol: Five respondents suggested that increased fines and penalties for drug and alcohol violations should fund alternative activities for kids, treatment, and other public expenses. Three comments expressed a need for healthy activities for kids.

Law Enforcement Issues: Two comments referred to drunk driving as a serious problem, while other comments noted a need for better law enforcement, a need for improved law enforcement training and support, and a lack of qualified personnel in local law enforcement.

Prevention Interventions: Two comments suggested educating people on responsible drinking, while other comments called for education to strengthen families, parent education, more support for wellness in Wisconsin, more drug work in rural areas, and more information on the dangers of substance abuse. One comment lamented “we have meeting upon meeting to discuss the issue, but come to no solid intervention.”

Access to Treatment Services: Five comments expressed a need for access to affordable services, while three comments noted the need for access to free or low-cost cessation treatment.

Locus of Responsibility: Most comments (5) expressed a need for better parenting and stronger families. Three comments suggested a need for education on life skills from schools, churches, sports and civic organizations. One comment suggested that parents are sending mixed messages regarding alcohol and drugs.

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: Six comments expressed the opinion that there is a severe drug and alcohol problem. Two comments suggested that the culture of drinking and drug use needs to be changed. Other comments expressed approval for parents providing their own children alcohol, expressed the need to “break the cycle” of destructive behavior, and suggested that natives here have a serious drinking problem.

Legal/Community Suggestions: The highest number of comments (9) in this category called for more severe penalties for offenders. However, most comments were of a more permissive nature: five comments expressed support for lowering the drinking age, four comments supported smokers’ rights, two comments suggested that alcohol, tobacco, and drug use is a personal choice, two comments said the tobacco tax is too high, two comments suggested that higher penalties will not change behavior, and one comment did not support the smoking ban. The need to reduce alcohol availability and the need for alternative transportation to reduce drinking and driving were also expressed.

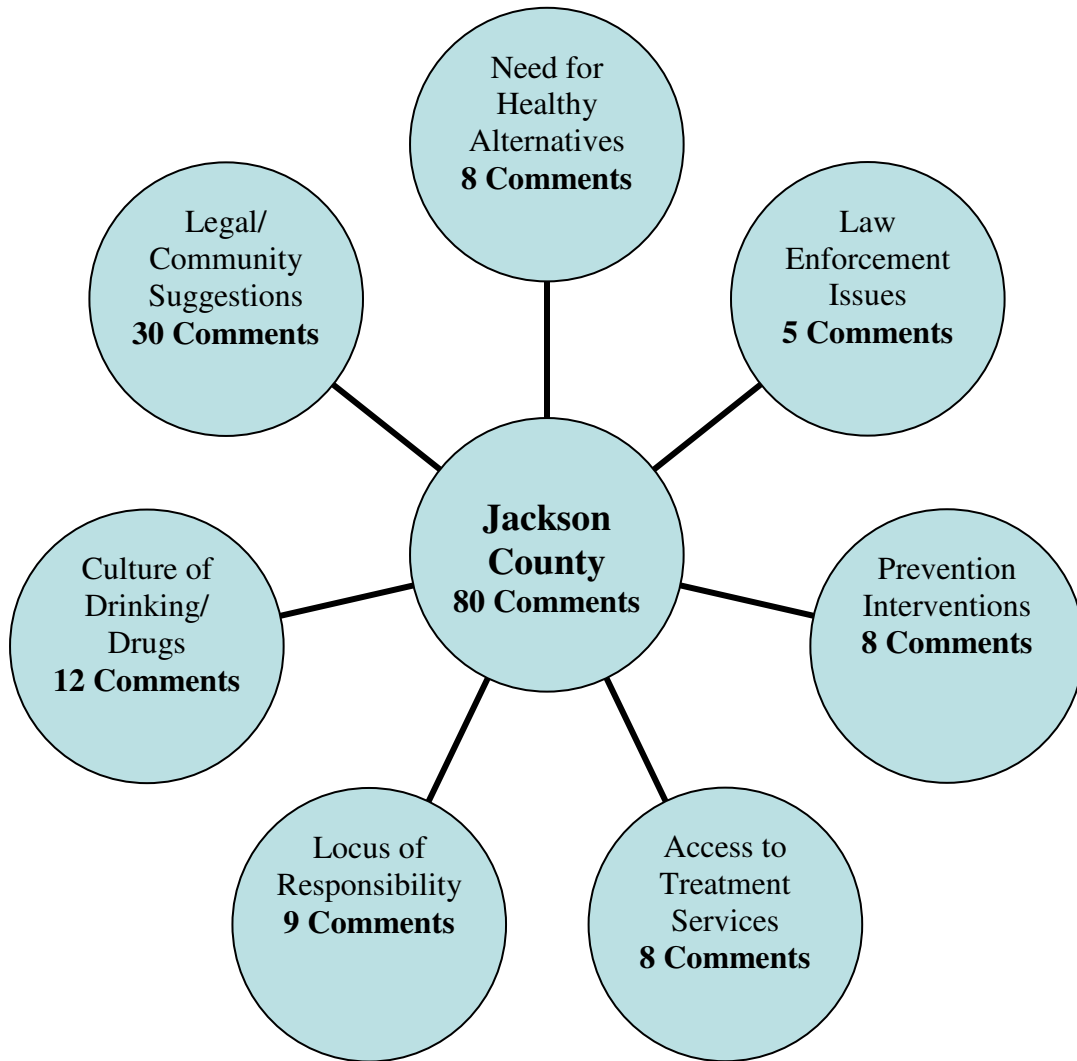


Figure 3. Number of Comments by Theme for Jackson County

La Crosse County

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drugs/Alcohol: Three comments expressed the need for healthy social alternatives to drinking and bars, and one comment suggested giving young people more responsibility.

Law Enforcement Issues: Six comments expressed a need for better enforcement of existing laws. Other comments suggested that a mandatory WIAA code for athletes is needed to make enforcement consistent, that DUI criteria should be changed, and to stop making it only an enforcement issue.

Prevention Interventions: Two comments expressed a need for early detection education. Other comments noted a need for education for tavern owners, and for responsible drinking courses for high school and college students. Support for the “Crossfire” program (1 comment) and alcohol and drug prevention (1 comment) were expressed.

Access to Treatment Services: One comment expressed a need for better mental health care access.

Locus of Responsibility: Two comments called on adults to mentor and model positive behaviors, while two comments expressed the need for personal accountability. Other comments suggested that parents need to be more involved and that “the battle will never be won, but the fight must go on.”

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: Five comments expressed the opinion that La Crosse County in particular has a huge alcohol problem. Three other comments expressed the need to change the drinking culture.

Legal/Community Suggestions: Four comments were in favor of the smoking ban, while one comment was opposed. Three comments were in favor of lowering the drinking age, while one comment supported the 21 year old drinking age. Other comments supported taxing alcohol (2 comments), more legal consequences for first time offenders, legalization of marijuana, and instituting work camps for offenders, expressed nonsupport of new taxes and of the tavern league, and cautioned not to waste tax money.

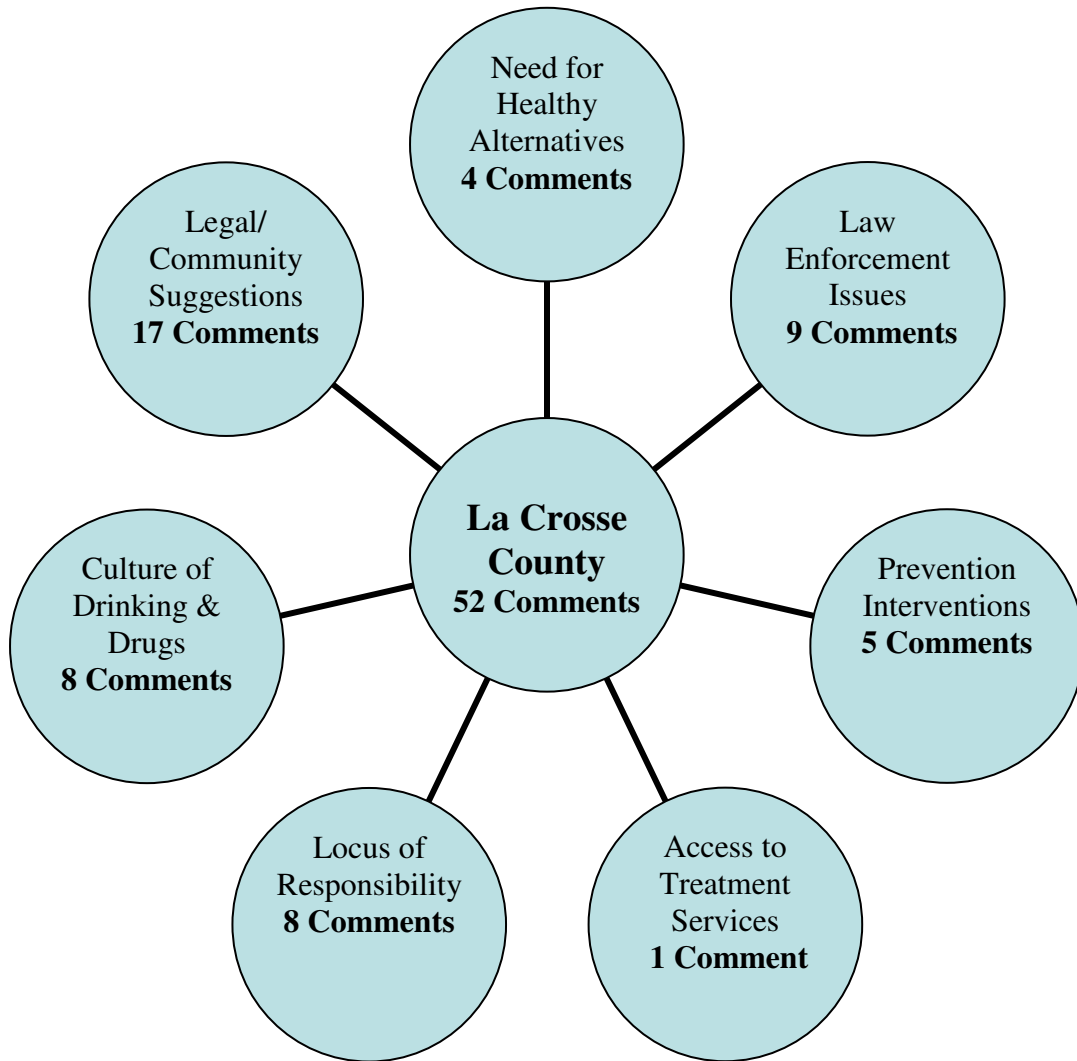


Figure 4. Number of Comments by Theme for La Crosse County

Monroe County

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drugs/Alcohol: Three comments suggested providing healthy activities and places for teens, while one comment suggested community service for offenders to give them positive things to do.

Law Enforcement Issues: Three comments expressed a need for better enforcement of laws, while another three comments suggested that there is a negative relationship between the police and the community. Other comments said that police sometimes look the other way (2), suggested merit pay for police, suggested enforcement should target dealers instead of users, and said that law enforcement sometimes sends mixed messages on alcohol.

Prevention Interventions: Three comments expressed the need for prevention and restitution programs and suggested that prevention programs can be coupled with intervention services. One respondent suggested that parents of underage drinkers attend classes, while another respondent expressed the need for a comprehensive bullying prevention program.

Access to Treatment Services: Two comments addressed the need for greater access and availability of mental health services, while another comment noted the need for affordable treatment programs.

Locus of Responsibility: Three comments noted the importance of parents, while other comments suggested leaders need to do more, and that “all players” (including schools, parents, and the tavern league) need to support change. One comment suggested that adults are currently negative role models for bullying.

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: Three comments expressed the view that drug abuse is a serious issue among youth, while another said that kids binge drink too much. Three comments noted that there is too much acceptance of problem drinking, and two comments suggested that the problem is rooted in a lack of respect for God, religion, or morality.

Legal/Community Suggestions: Four comments called for stronger consequences for offenders, while two others called for removing alcohol from grocery and convenience stores. One respondent suggested mandatory addiction treatment for DUI offenders. Other comments were permissive in nature, including support for lowering the drinking age (2 comments), opposition to the smoking ban (1 comment), opposition to more laws and restrictions (1 comment), and one suggestion that making things illegal makes them more attractive to teens. One respondent viewed the community as good, and one comment suggested youth learn by making mistakes. One comment expressed the opinion that it is unfair to tax and restrict tobacco while not doing the same with alcohol.

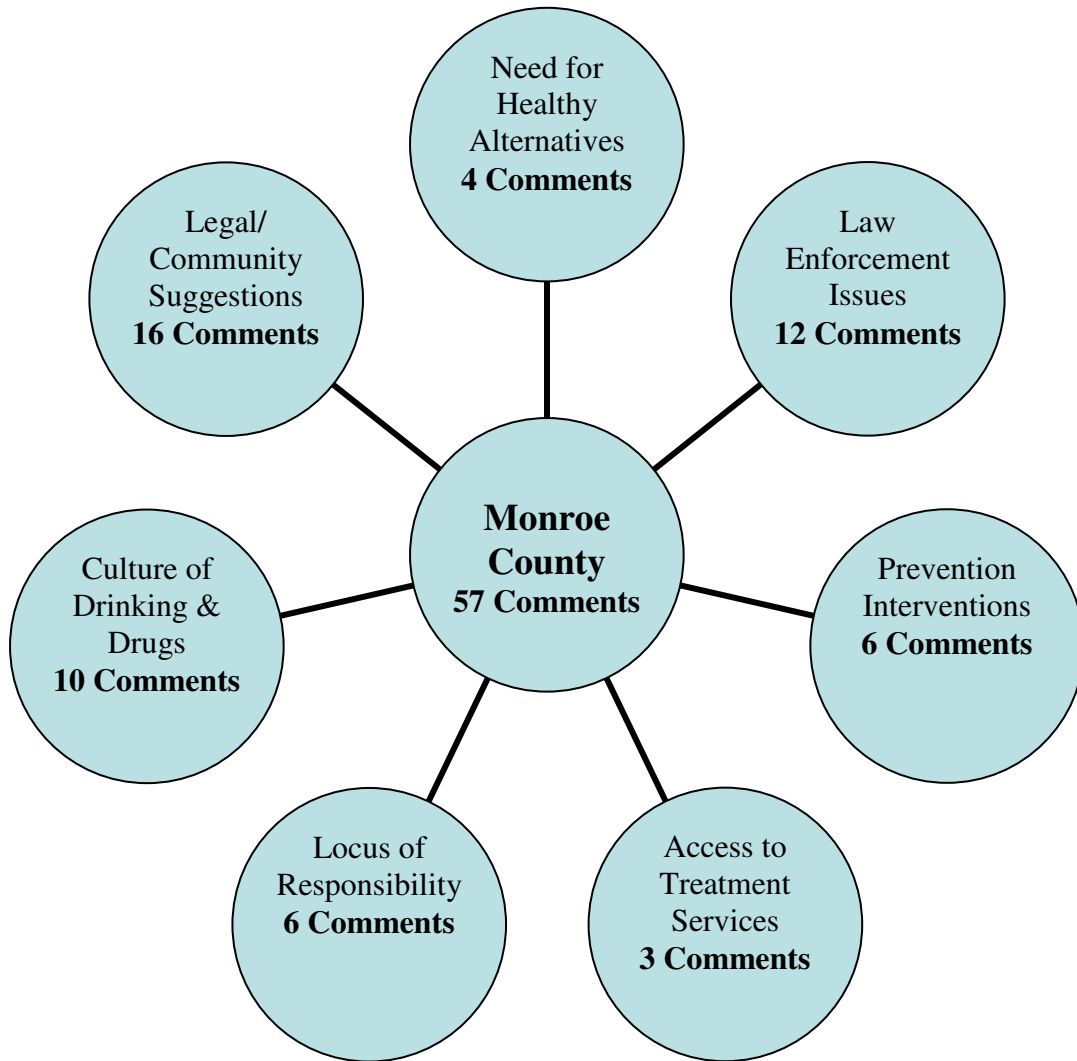


Figure 5. Number of Comments by Theme for Monroe County

Trempealeau County

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drugs/Alcohol: Four comments called for healthy alternatives to drugs and alcohol for youth, including a suggestion for summer youth programs.

Law Enforcement Issues: Two comments called for better enforcement of laws, including DUI. One comment expressed the view that police sometimes look the other way.

Prevention Interventions: Two comments expressed the need for parenting classes and support for strengthening families, while another comment expressed support for prevention in general. One comment suggested teaching kids what “no” means.

Access to Treatment Services: Two comments suggested that there is a need for a long-term approach to treatment for repeat offenders, while another comment noted a need for access to affordable services. Two comments noted a need for mental health services and another suggested that there is a need for mental health screening.

Locus of Responsibility: The majority of comments called for better parenting (6 comments), while other comments expressed a lack of personal awareness of the problem (4 comments). One comment called for a more religious view, while another comment called for more personal responsibility and less government.

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: Two comments mentioned that suicide among young men has become a problem, while another comment noted that alcohol abuse is a big problem. Another noted that alcohol sales at fundraisers send mixed messages on the acceptance of alcohol.

Legal/Community Suggestions: Five comments expressed support for lowering the drinking age. Two comments were in support of the smoking ban, while one comment opposed the smoking ban. One comment suggested that it is unfair to tax and restrict tobacco while not going after alcohol, while another comment supported an alcohol tax increase.

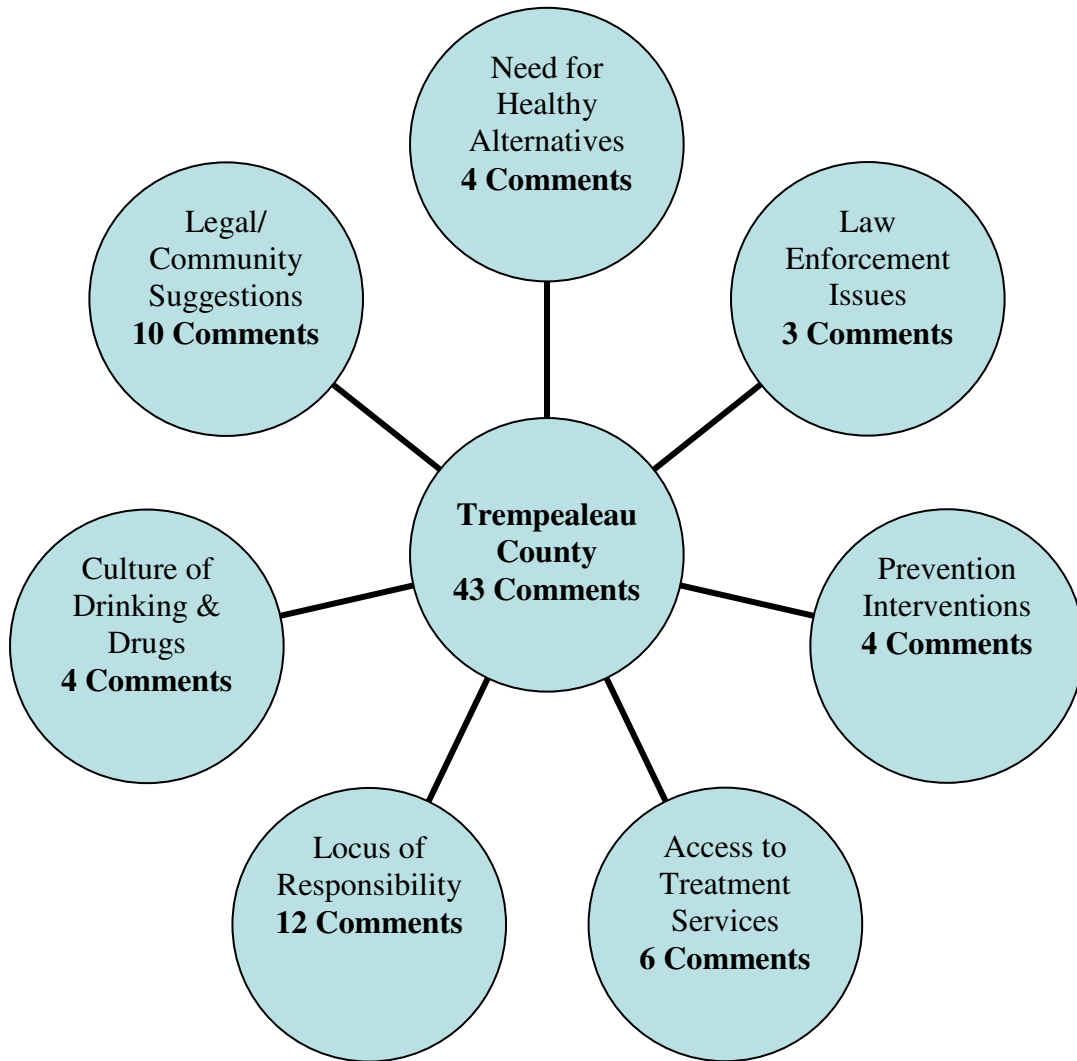


Figure 6. Number of Comments by Theme for Trempealeau County

Vernon County

Need for Healthy Alternatives to Drugs/Alcohol: Five comments expressed a need for healthy activities for teens and young adults.

Law Enforcement Issues: Two comments expressed a need for better law enforcement, while two comments stated police sometimes look the other way.

Prevention Interventions: Four comments noted the importance of education for both the young and adults, while another comment called for limiting access to alcohol.

Access to Treatment Services: Two comments noted a need for more and better treatment services, while another comment noted a need for mental health services.

Locus of Responsibility: Eight comments addressed a lack of personal awareness of issues involved in the survey, while one comment noted high personal awareness. Six comments called for better parenting and stronger family support, and another four comments said that adults need to be better role models. One comment suggested that the focus needs to be on prevention for youth, while another comment suggested a need for a more religious view.

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: Three respondents expressed the opinion that their community is too permissive. Other comments suggested that underage drinking and that drinking and driving are big problems, that the community is in denial, and that it is bad that alcohol sales and fundraisers are tied together. One respondent stated drinking did not harm him/her as a young adult, and another said that there is no problem here.

Legal/Community Suggestions: Three comments favored lowering the drinking age, while one comment supported the 21 year old drinking age. One comment said that schools are doing a good job on alcohol, drug, and tobacco awareness, while another comment suggested that parents should not drink on trips with youth sports teams. One comment was in favor of the smoking ban, while another comment opposed further taxes or restrictions on smokers. One comment called for community service for offenders, while another comment supported stronger penalties for repeat alcohol offenders. Other comments included one in support of alcohol tax, another saying that the war on drugs has been a failure, and one expressing fears over drug cartels and drug-related violence.

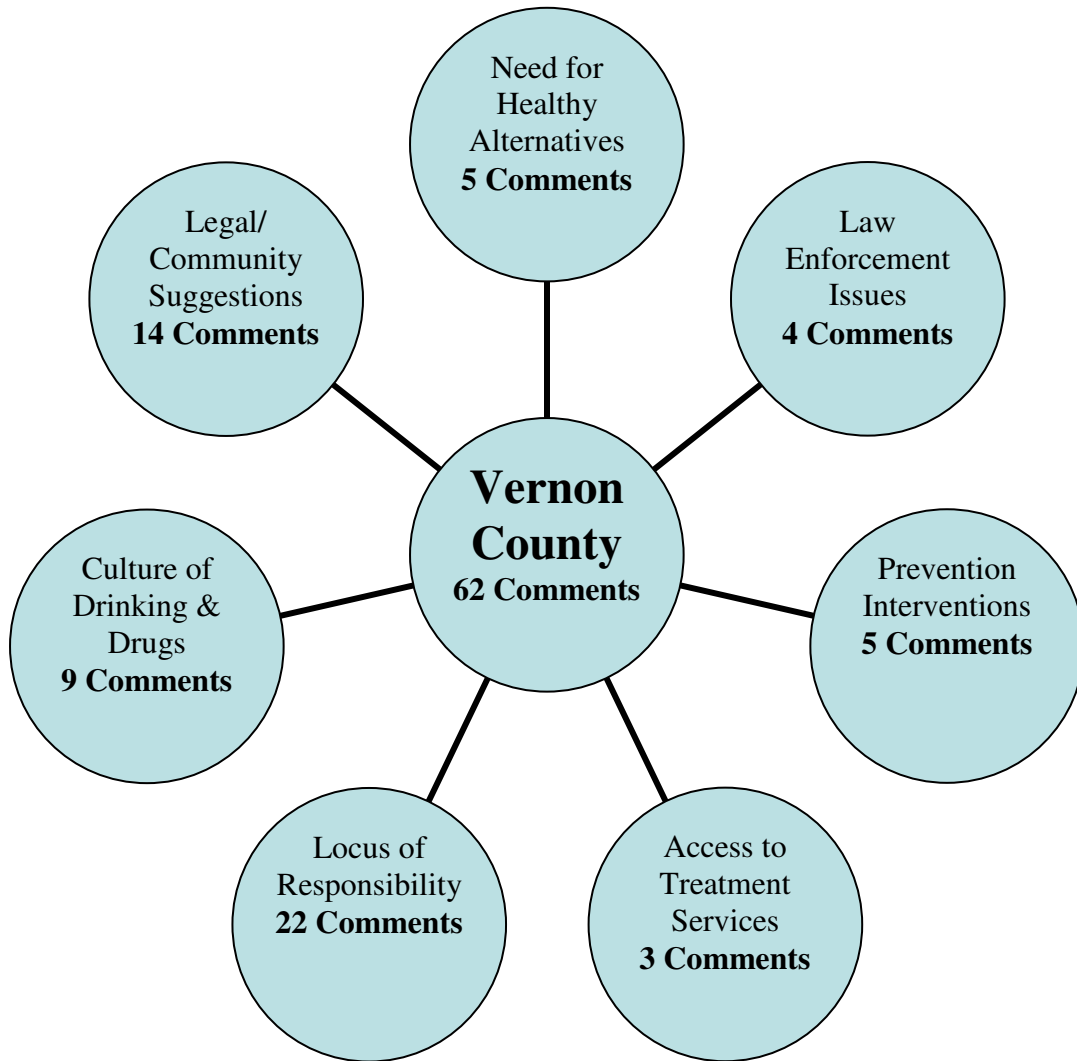


Figure 7. Number of Comments by Theme for Vernon County

County Not Listed

Law Enforcement Issues: One comment called for better DUI enforcement

Locus of Responsibility: Two comments called on parents and adults to be better role models. Comments also called for better parenting, more personal responsibility, and more personal awareness.

Culture of Drinking & Drugs: All six comments expressed that there is a problem with alcohol. Comments included that the drinking culture is ingrained (2 comments), the state of Wisconsin has a serious drinking problem (1 comment), alcohol is too available (1 comment), the community has an alcohol/drug problem (1 comment), and the community is in denial (1 comment).

Legal/Community Suggestions: Comments included a call for more consequences for DUI offenders, a suggestion to use more speakers on alcohol and tobacco use, support for alcohol tax, and an observation that the tavern league is very effective in promoting drinking.

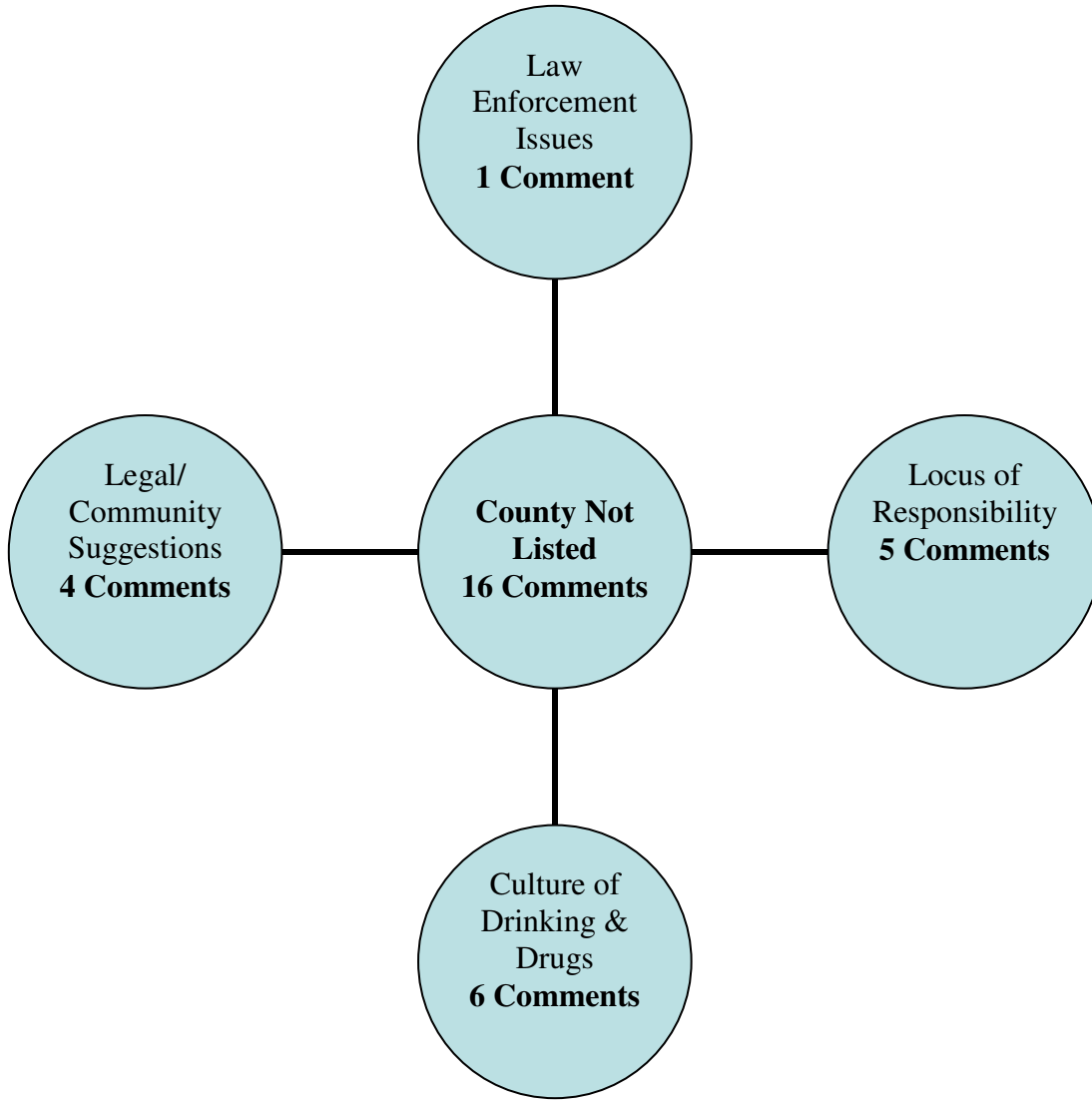


Figure 8. Number of Comments by Theme for Comments Lacking County Identification

Recommendations

Create/Improve Healthy Alternatives for Youths and Young Adults

In each county several respondents noted a lack of healthy activities for youth and young adults, which may lead to the increased use of alcohol and other drugs. In certain communities, specific proposals for healthy alternatives, such as skate parks, have been discussed. Summer programs for youth were also suggested.

Pursue Assessment of Law Enforcement Effectiveness

Comments reflected a perception that laws are not adequately enforced, and in some cases that law enforcement agencies do not have the will, support, or training to enforce existing laws. A negative relationship between the police and certain communities may exist.

Continue Education Programs, Include Adults

Comments indicate support for prevention education and note the need for adult education, including parenting classes, to include substance abuse prevention.

Seek Funding to Provide Better Access to Services, Increase Awareness of Existing Services

Areas of need appear to be affordable treatment services, mental health services, and cessation treatment.

Awareness Campaign

While it seems that there is some awareness that the six county area has rates of alcohol use/abuse higher than the norm, there appear to still be a proportion of people which do not recognize this as a problem.

Consider/Advocate Alcohol Tax

There appears to be support for higher taxes on alcohol, and even some resentment that lawmakers are taxing elsewhere but not taxing alcohol. This source of funding could be logically tied directly to prevention efforts, treatment services, and creation/support of healthy alternatives for youths.

Consider Public Transportation Modifications

Several respondents noted the need for alternatives to driving while intoxicated.

Works Cited

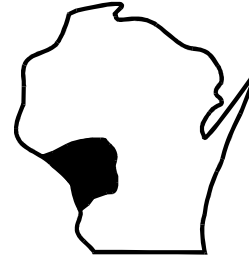
Morse, J.M. & Field, P.A. (1995). *Qualitative research methods for health professionals* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

ATTACHMENT A (SURVEY):



Partnering Organizations:

Buffalo County Partnership Council
Coulee Council on Addictions
Gundersen Lutheran Health System
La Crosse County Health Department
Monroe County Safe Communities
Coalition
Together for Jackson County Kids
Trempealeau County Health Department
Vernon County Partnership Council



Western Wisconsin Community Perceptions Survey On Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use

Principle Investigators: Tracy Herlitzke, Cooperative Educational Service Agency #4
Derek Moore, La Crosse County Health Department

Thank you for taking this survey. We have randomly selected 3,600 households in the Coulee region to determine how communities in our area feel about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Whether or not you use alcohol or tobacco yourself, or even if you do not have much contact with young people, we still want to hear from you. Participation is strictly voluntary. If you are uncomfortable answering a question or do not want to answer it for any reason, you do not have to.

This survey is completely anonymous. You will not be asked for your name at any time.

1. We are interested in your **opinion** for each question. There are no right or wrong answers.
2. Feel free to use any type of pen or pencil to fill out the following survey.
3. A follow-up card will also be sent to your household in a few days to remind you about this survey.
4. The survey should take less than ten (10) minutes.
5. On the last page, there is a comments section. We value your input and want to share a summary of results and comments with the community.
6. When finished, please put the survey in the enclosed postage paid return envelope and put it in the mail. You may also tear this page off if you would like to keep and contact any of the researchers below.
7. By sending in the questionnaire, you are giving us consent to use your answers along with everyone else to help us guide the community in prevention of adult and youth substance abuse.

The results may be published in local papers, scientific journals, and/or presented at medical meetings. We want to give back to the community the combined results of the surveys to help us and you understand how each community feels about substance abuse.

For more information regarding this study, please contact the Principal Investigators of this survey: Derek Moore, La Crosse County Health Department, at (608) 785-9872, and/or Tracy Herlitzke, Cooperative Education Service Agency #4 (CESA #4), at (608) 786-4800 or (800) 514-3075 during normal working hours.

For more information about your rights as a research participant, contact Bernard J. Hammes, PhD, Chair of the Gundersen Lutheran Institutional Review Board at (608) 782-7300 or 1-800-362-9567.

Tracy Herlitzke

Tracy Herlitzke, Director
CESA #4

Christine Berth

Christine Berth, Director/Health Officer
Trempealeau County Health Dept.

Lisa Hodge

Lisa Hodge, Project Director
Together for Jackson County Kids

Linda Ludeking

Linda Ludeking
Monroe County Safe Communities Coalition

Derek Moore

Derek Moore, Epidemiologist
La Crosse County Health Dept.

Betty Nigh RN BSN

Betty Nigh, Chairperson,
Vernon County Partnership Council
Vernon County Health Dept.

Jen Rombalski

Jen Rombalski
Health Officer/Public Health Supervisor
Buffalo County Health Dept.

Patricia Ruda

Patricia Ruda, Director
Coulee Council on Addictions

Western Wisconsin Community Perceptions Survey On Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use

Please follow these directions:

1. Answer all questions. Circle one answer, unless otherwise instructed.
2. Please answer honestly. Do not put your name on this form. No one will match your name to your answers. Your answers will be combined with those of other respondents.
3. When you are done with the survey, place it in the enclosed postage-paid envelope, seal it, and mail it.

For this survey,

Teenagers are ages 17 and younger,

Young Adults are ages 18-20, and

Adults are ages 21 and older.

Occasional drinking is defined as drinking one or fewer alcoholic beverages per week, on average.

Moderate drinking is defined as having no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men.

Binge drinking is drinking five or more drinks for men and four or more drinks for women within a few hours.

In your community, how much of a problem are the following?

1. Alcohol	No problem	Minor Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem
a. Occasional drinking by teenagers	1	2	3	4
b. Moderate drinking by teenagers	1	2	3	4
c. Binge drinking by teenagers	1	2	3	4
d. Occasional drinking by young adults	1	2	3	4
e. Moderate drinking by young adults	1	2	3	4
f. Binge drinking by young adults	1	2	3	4
g. Occasional drinking by adults	1	2	3	4
h. Moderate drinking by adults	1	2	3	4
i. Binge drinking by adults	1	2	3	4

2. Tobacco	No problem	Minor Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem
a. Tobacco use by teenagers	1	2	3	4
b. Tobacco use by young adults	1	2	3	4
c. Tobacco use by adults	1	2	3	4

In your community, how much of a problem are the following?

3. Other Drugs	No problem	Minor Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem
a. Marijuana use by teenagers (ages 17 and younger)	1	2	3	4
b. Marijuana use by young adults (ages 18-20)	1	2	3	4
c. Marijuana use by adults (ages 21 and over)	1	2	3	4
d. Prescription and/or over the counter drug misuse by teenagers and young adults	1	2	3	4
e. Prescription and/or over the counter drug misuse by adults 21 and older	1	2	3	4
f. Other illegal drug use <u>at any age</u> (for example heroin, methamphetamines, cocaine, club drugs)	1	2	3	4

4. Mental Health	No problem	Minor Problem	Moderate Problem	Serious Problem
a. Bullying among children (ages 0-12)	1	2	3	4
b. Bullying among teenagers (ages 13-17)	1	2	3	4
c. Overall violence in the community	1	2	3	4
d. Depression in teenagers and young adults	1	2	3	4
e. The number of suicides in teenagers and young adults	1	2	3	4
f. Availability of mental health services for teenagers and young adults	1	2	3	4
g. Depression in adults	1	2	3	4
h. The number of suicides in adults	1	2	3	4
i. Availability of mental health services for adults	1	2	3	4

Remember: Occasional drinking is defined as drinking one or fewer alcoholic beverages per week, on average.

Moderate drinking is defined as having no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men.

Binge drinking is drinking five or more drinks for men and four or more drinks for women within a few hours.

Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement for the following statements:

5. Alcohol Availability and Acceptability	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. Occasional drinking among teenagers (17 and younger) is acceptable	1	2	3	4
b. Binge drinking among teenagers (17 and younger) is acceptable	1	2	3	4
c. Occasional drinking among 18 to 20 year olds is acceptable	1	2	3	4
d. Binge drinking among 18 to 20 year olds is acceptable	1	2	3	4
e. It is OK for parents to offer their own teenagers alcohol	1	2	3	4
f. It is OK for parents to offer alcohol to teenagers (age 17 and younger) other than their own	1	2	3	4
g. It is OK for parents to offer alcohol to young adults (18 to 20 years old)	1	2	3	4
h. It is OK for teenagers (age 17 and younger) to drink as long as they don't drive afterwards	1	2	3	4
i. It is OK for young adults (18 to 20 years) to drink as long as they don't drive afterwards	1	2	3	4
j. Alcohol is readily available to teenagers (age 17 and younger)	1	2	3	4
k. Retailers commonly sell alcohol to teenagers (age 17 and under)	1	2	3	4
l. Adult friends and/or siblings (21 years and older) often provide alcohol to teenagers	1	2	3	4

Please rate what you believe is the level of risk for the following statements:

6. Perception of Harm	No Risk	Slight Risk	Moderate Risk	Great Risk
a. Teenagers risk of harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they drink five or more drinks within a few hours	1	2	3	4
b. Young adults risk of harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they drink five or more drinks within a few hours	1	2	3	4
c. Adults risk of harming themselves (physically or in other ways) if they drink five or more drinks within a few hours	1	2	3	4

How much do you support the following ideas?

7. Support	Not at all Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Mostly Supportive	Completely Supportive
a. Law enforcement enforcing the minimum drinking age	1	2	3	4
b. Law enforcement conducting retailer compliance checks to prevent sale of alcohol to teenagers and young adults	1	2	3	4
c. Increasing taxes on alcohol	1	2	3	4
d. Lowering the drinking age	1	2	3	4
e. Increasing the penalties on drinking and driving	1	2	3	4
f. Agencies conducting retailer compliance checks to prevent sale of tobacco to teenagers	1	2	3	4
g. Increasing taxes on tobacco	1	2	3	4
h. Making all worksites smoke-free	1	2	3	4
i. Making all restaurants smoke-free	1	2	3	4
j. Making all taverns smoke-free	1	2	3	4
k. Banning tobacco advertising (stores, billboards, radio, magazines, internet, movies, etc.)	1	2	3	4
l. Banning alcohol advertising (television, billboard, radio, magazines, internet, movies, etc.)	1	2	3	4
m. Creating more accessible alcohol and other drug treatment programs	1	2	3	4

8. How do you think most underage drinkers usually get their alcohol?
- From a family member
 - From a non-family member over 21 years old
 - Bought from a store
 - Another way (please explain): _____
9. Do you believe that your community can reduce alcohol, tobacco, or other drug problems through prevention?
- Yes
 - No
10. Who is responsible for the prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use? (**Circle all that apply**)
- Individual
 - Community
 - School
 - Law Enforcement
 - Family
 - Local Health Department
 - Other. Please specify _____
11. Are there enough healthy alternative activities for teenagers and young adults in your community?
- Yes
 - No
12. How ready is your community to address the following issues? **Choose the response you feel is most accurate for each drug.**

	There is no problem	There is a problem, but no one is doing anything about it	My community is starting to talk about it	My community has started to take action	My community has been working on the issue, and it is going well
Alcohol	1	2	3	4	5
Tobacco	1	2	3	4	5
Illicit drug use	1	2	3	4	5

13. What year were you born? _____
14. Are you female or male?
- Female
 - Male

15. Are you:
 - a. Married
 - b. Divorced
 - c. Widowed
 - d. Separated
 - e. Never married

16. Are there minor or dependant children living in your household?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

17. If yes, what are their ages? _____

18. Which one or more of the following would you say is your race? **Circle all that apply.**
 - a. White
 - b. Black or African American
 - c. Asian
 - d. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 - e. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - f. Other. Please specify _____

19. Are you Hispanic or Latino?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

20. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a. Did not graduate high school
 - b. High school diploma
 - c. Vocational school
 - d. Some college
 - e. College graduate
 - f. Post graduate/professional

21. Counting income from all sources (including earnings from jobs, unemployment insurance, pensions, welfare, etc.) and counting income from everyone living in your home, which of the following ranges did your household income fall into last year?
 - a. Less than \$10,000
 - b. \$10,000-\$25,000
 - c. \$25,001-\$50,000
 - d. \$50,001-\$75,000
 - e. \$75,001-\$100,000
 - f. Over \$100,000

Are there any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make?



Thank you for your time. Please return this survey to the enclosed prepaid envelope and mail it.