

The Extra Mile

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

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MAY 22, 2019

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**WANTED: Young Leaders Willing to Step Up for Their
Communities**

Youth Leadership Retreat set for June 26-27

YOUTH LEADERSHIP RETREAT

JUNE 26-27, 2019

Project Extra Mile is pleased to announce our upcoming Youth Leadership Retreat in Omaha on June 26-27. The organization is renewing its youth engagement and leadership development work, which is critical in helping to create a healthier and safer alcohol environment for young people in our state.

For the Youth Leadership Retreat next month, we welcome back **Nigel Wrangham**, an innovative substance abuse prevention strategist and educator based in Oregon. Nigel has extensive experience in developing and delivering unique, customized prevention trainings to staff, volunteers and youth from community-based organizations throughout the United States.

At this retreat, youth will discover their role in preventing underage drinking, identify relevant issues facing youth and develop leadership skills to act on them, and learn how to utilize media to influence positive change in the community.



Graduates of past PEM youth trainings have positively impacted their communities by opposing liquor license applications, testifying in support of proposed legislation, rallying against regulations that encourage underage drinking, and encouraging stronger regulation of alcohol advertising.

Additionally, this training will help young people build skills which will benefit them as they continue to grow in their personal, academic, and professional lives beyond their work on underage drinking.

Registration information is available [here](#). There are also a limited number of scholarships available; click [here](#) for the scholarship application. Please share this information with youth! We need more young leaders across our state!



Toward this goal, Project Extra Mile is also pleased to announce that **Amanda McNeil** is joining the PEM team as our Youth Coordinator in order to empower youth to help keep their communities safe from alcohol-related harms.

Prior to joining the team, she worked in the social services field for 8 years in the areas of child welfare and juvenile justice. Her past experience with Omaha Public Schools, Hill Counseling and Consulting, and Heartland Family Service will serve her well as she seeks to develop youth leaders in the Omaha metro area and across the state.

Don't hesitate to contact us by [email](#) or by phone at **402-963-9047** if you have any questions about this opportunity.

When is Enough Too Much?

Alcohol availability approaching the absurd in Nebraska

The "S" in the World Health Organization's [SAFER alcohol platform](#) stands for "Strengthen restrictions on alcohol availability." Increased alcohol availability tends to lead to higher rates of excessive alcohol consumption, which leads to more alcohol problems. It's basic economics, really: the easier you make a behavior, the more you can expect to see that behavior in the community.

Unfortunately, in their rush to embrace increased alcohol sales in the name of economic development and "convenience," our policymakers and other community leaders often ignore the public health implications of unfettered access to alcohol.

Case in point: *Hy-Vee* has announced its plans to offer same-day alcohol delivery in the Omaha and Lincoln areas. Following this development to its logical conclusion, we can expect this service to grow to its locations in Fremont, Columbus, Grand Island and Kearney and among competitors in those markets, greatly increasing the availability of alcohol and making it harder to prevent youth access to alcohol.

In addition, the Omaha City Council recently granted unanimous approval for a liquor license to a ["boutique landscape design/build firm" which specializes in "storm water management solutions."](#)

When is enough *too much*? The level of alcohol availability in our communities is approaching the absurd. It's bad enough that our state allows alcohol delivery. Then, to make matters worse, we add alcohol sales to nearly everything, whether it's [science workshops](#), [fundraisers for zoos](#), or even fundraisers for medical conditions where alcohol is a risk factor - like [cancer](#) or [lung disease](#).

Our state already has high rates of binge drinking and self-reported driving after drinking, but it apparently hasn't connected for some policymakers. We need evidence-based policies in place to limit convenient alcohol. ***Inconvenience, high prices and restrictions on advertising*** are the most effective ways to keep our communities healthy and safe.

No Place at the Public Health Table

When it comes to public health, the alcohol industry just can't be trusted to do the right thing

The World Health Organization has instructed its staff to refrain from engaging with the alcohol industry when developing alcohol policy or implementing public health measures, and to warn governments of the dangers of collaborating with the industry.

As [reported in the BMJ](#), "The message that partnering, collaborating, taking funding, and even talking with the alcohol industry on some subjects is not acceptable has been laid out in an internal note to WHO staff."



World Health Organization

Why would public health take a hard line on this issue?

As many [alcohol policy advocates, public health scholars, and others](#) have made clear, the alcohol industry has an inherent, impossible conflict of interest when it comes to alcohol and health.

While alcohol companies like to portray themselves as responsible citizens, the sad truth is that the industry relies on excessive drinking for the lion's share of its profits. In fact, [the top 20% of drinkers purchase about 88% of the alcohol](#) in the U.S. That means that a big drop in excessive drinking would result in a massive loss of alcohol industry profitability.

Because of this, they (like Big Tobacco and other producers of harmful products) use a lot of tactics to make certain that effective public health policies never get implemented. They attack legitimate science, [promote ineffective interventions](#), and spend mountains of money on lobbying, [among other tactics](#).

Accordingly, they simply cannot be trusted to be "partners" in any real public health work.

If they were truly interested in reducing alcohol harm, they would simply get out of the way and let policymakers implement the strategies which have been [established to be effective in reducing alcohol harm](#).

Instead, they do whatever they can to scuttle evidence-based solutions. A recent illustration of this was [the interference of multi-national alcohol corporations like Anheuser-Busch and Diageo](#) in a local effort in Anchorage, Alaska to implement a modest alcohol tax to help offset that city's massive burden of costs related to homelessness services, substance abuse treatment, and public safety. The measure was defeated.



NEWS BRIEFS



Trauma Center Sought in Whiteclay

Public health practitioners and community advocates have outlined [their vision for a vanguard fetal alcohol syndrome treatment center](#) to be located in Whiteclay. The facility would be directed by FASD clinician and policy advocate Nora Boesem and would have the goal of breaking the cycle of trauma that has extended for five generations in the Whiteclay-Pine Ridge area.

Fetal alcohol exposure is the [leading preventable cause of intellectual and developmental disabilities](#) in the U.S., and can have profound effects on neurocognitive functioning, behavioral outcomes, and organ development. What's

more, [recent research](#) has found that the condition may be far more prevalent than previously believed - as high as 5% of first graders in the general population.

The rate on the Pine Ridge reservation, however, may be as high as 25%, with devastating impacts on children and families.

These conditions cry out for the type of services which the new center will offer.



Discussion of the proposed center at the Children of Whiteclay event at Nebraska Wesleyan University on April 24th

Case for .05 only gets stronger

Recent [alcohol-related traffic fatalities](#) help illustrate a needed policy change. According to data from the Nebraska Dept. of Transportation-Highway Safety Office, there were 10 fatalities and 118 non-fatal injuries resulting from car crashes where the driver had a BAC which was positive but still under .08 last year alone, pointing to the value of the state changing to a .05 *per se* BAC limit.

The evidence in favor of this policy measure is rock solid, as noted by the [National Traffic Safety Bureau](#) and [expert researchers](#).

Impairment by BAC and drinks (CDC and NHTSA/USDOT)

.02 BAC*	<i>About 2 alcoholic drinks**</i>	Decline in visual functions (rapid tracking of moving target) Decline in ability to perform two tasks at same time
.05 BAC*	<i>About 3 alcoholic drinks**</i>	Reduced coordination Reduced ability to track moving objects Difficulty steering Reduced response to emergency driving situations
.08 BAC*	<i>About 4 alcoholic drinks**</i>	Reduced ability to concentrate Short-term memory loss Difficulty controlling speed Reduced information processing capability Impaired perception

*Blood Alcohol Concentration measurement. **The number of drinks represents the approximate amount of alcohol that a 160-pound man would need to drink in one hour to reach the listed BAC in each category.

Utah established the .05 DUI standard in January, and the first month of enforcement yielded 38 arrests of individuals driving with a blood alcohol level between 0.05 and 0.079. Of those 38 individuals, 24 were restricted alcohol drivers, meaning they previously have been arrested for driving under the influence.

Nebraska would benefit by following their lead and reducing the standard to .05.



**Omaha Metro
Coalition
Meeting**

Wednesday
May 8, 2019
9:00 a.m.

For more information:
(402) 963-9047
www.projectextramile.org
info@projectextramile.org



**Please join us for
Coffee and Conversation
as we welcome**



**Alex Brown,
of the MAPSI project**

to discuss their goal of
Measuring Outlet Density in Omaha

Thank you for your involvement!

Jennifer Pollock
Jennifer Pollock, Coalition Chair

MEETING LOCATION:
National Safety Council
Lower Level
11620 M Circle, Omaha NE
Use Lower Level, West Entrance

