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# POSITIVE INFLUENCE

*News From The Grand Forks Substance Abuse Coalition*



## Why A Minimum Legal Drinking Age of 21 Works

The minimum legal drinking age (MLDA) wasn't a federal law until 1984. Instead, states were allowed to set their own legal drinking age. For the states that raised their MLDA to 21 years, they saw a 16% drop in motor vehicle crashes. Also, the percentage of people who drank before turning 21 went down. Once the federal law was implemented, the nation saw dramatic changes in drinking patterns. From 1985 to 1991, the percentage of young people (aged 18 to 20) who reported drinking alcohol during the past month dropped almost 20% – from 59% to 40%. The impact didn't just affect the youth. In fact, young adults also drank less alcohol when states raised their MLDA. From 1985 to 1991, the percentage of young people (aged 21 to 25) who reported drinking during the past month dropped almost 15% – from 70% to 56%.

The MLDA of 21 years helps lower the risk of developing alcohol and other substance use disorders for those who drink alcohol. It also supports families and communities by leading to fewer harmful births, lower rates of suicide and homicide, and fewer deaths from alcohol poisoning.

Source: cdc.gov

## Positive Partners

Nicole Benson is the director of Organizational Well-being for Live Well Grand Cities, an organization that believes healthy spaces are built through strong relationships, connection and advocacy.



"By fostering community ties, teaching food skills and advocating for well-being, we help create environments where healthier choices are attainable." Nicole is grateful to work with partners like SAPC, who are committed to preventing substance misuse and uplifting our community. In Grand Forks, coalition efforts – such as youth campaigns, preventive programming and education – shift norms related to alcohol, vaping and drugs, supporting healthier choices for families and young people. "I'm inspired by how our community shows up for one other – neighbors helping neighbors, young people finding their voices and families choosing healthier paths with support. When people feel heard and supported, healthy choices become achievable."

## Tired Of Pretending Parenting Is Perfect?

So are we. Parents Lead launched a new podcast, *Parenting Unfiltered*, that talks about the real stuff – the messy, funny, frustrating, heart-filling moments that make parenting what it really is. You can find it on Spotify, Apple Podcasts or right on the Parents Lead website at [parentslead.org](http://parentslead.org).