

# The Case for a Prince Albert and Region Alcohol Strategy

A call to action for all community sectors to collectively develop and implement a comprehensive alcohol strategy

December 2013





This document was prepared by members of the Centre of Responsibility (COR) at Community Mobilization Prince Albert (CMPA). The opinions presented in this paper represent those of the sector professionals who co-authored this paper. They do not represent the agencies in which COR team members are employed by.

Prior to release, this document was reviewed by professionals independent of Community Mobilization Prince Albert who make up the *CMPA COR Advisory Committee*.

If citing this document, please use the following reference:

Community Mobilization Prince Albert. (2013). *The Case for a Prince Albert and Region Alcohol Strategy: A Call to Action for All Community Sectors to Collectively Develop and Implement a Comprehensive Alcohol Strategy*. Prince Albert, SK: Community Mobilization Prince Albert.

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following sectors who have supported Community Mobilization Prince Albert by providing the necessary data and information for the COR's research on this topic. Data and information provided by these partner agencies have assisted in identifying and supporting the need for a Prince Albert and Region comprehensive alcohol strategy.

Ministry of Social Services  
Parkland Ambulance  
Prince Albert Parkland Health Region  
Prince Albert Police Service  
Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)  
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority (SLGA)  
Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division  
University of Regina – Department of Justice: Jason G. Fenno

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## Executive Summary

The Centre of Responsibility (COR) is a group of sectoral specialists designated by their respective agencies to collaborate, identify and address systemic issues in our community. These issues have developed over time and are not solved overnight. Our goal is to provide you, the decision makers with insight into community data, identified gaps and opportunities for wellness and safety to be addressed.

In Prince Albert, the COR has compiled statistics on alcohol consumption that are compelling, compared to provincial and national data. The data indicate that we are in crisis. Much of the statistics regarding alcohol misuse show that it continues to impact every aspect of our community.

- Community Mobilization Prince Albert (CMPA) 2012/2013 statistics show that 62% of Hub discussions involve the risk of alcohol abuse.
- Over a three year period from May 2009 - May 2012, the Prince Albert Police Service arrested and lodged **5,595** people solely for public intoxication. This has consumed **\$2,548,994** of the Prince Albert Police Service's budget.
- In 2012 alone, there were 1,341 hours (or 55 days) of policing services spent on public intoxication arrests. This translates to a loss of 55 days of policing services which could have been directed on proactive enforcement and crime prevention.
- A 3 year study of the top 25 frequent users of services in Prince Albert has incurred **\$3,799,391** in costs across multiple sectors.
- In a recent youth survey, 49.4% of grade 10 students in the Canadian sample had reported binge drinking compared with 67.9% of Prince Albert students in the same grades.
- By age 16, 54% of Prince Albert youth surveyed, reported engaging in binge drinking.
- Over a 3 month study period from June to August 2012, Prince Albert Ministry of Social Services reported 33% of the child welfare intakes (reports) received, directly involved substantiated allegations of alcohol and/or drug abuse.
- From June to August 2012, out of 5,002 emergency room visits at the Victoria Hospital, 458 or **9.2%** were the result of alcohol or drug abuse.
- From 2010 to 2012 inclusively, Prince Albert Police Service showed an average of **37.5%** of violent crime was related to alcohol/drug abuse. The highest percentages of violence-related crime and alcohol/drug abuse and when these incidents were occurring were between **10p.m. and 4a.m.** for all three years.
- Prince Albert has 50 liquor licensed establishments. From 2010 to 2012 inclusively, there were **5,205** calls for police service at an approximate cost of **\$873,607** for police resources only. The highest calls for service to these establishments included Intoxicated Persons, Evictions, Disturbances, Impaired Drivers, Violence and Property Crime.

- From April 2009 to December 2012, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority has issued 9 administrative sanctions (fines or suspensions) against licensed establishments in Prince Albert. There have been no liquor license or business license revocations in the past 5 years.
- Prince Albert spent approximately **\$1,249/person** on beverage alcohol in 2011. Moose Jaw residents spent \$731/person, a City with a comparable population. The Saskatchewan Provincial average was \$703/person on beverage alcohol. The dollar value per person was calculated based on population age 15 years and over.
- 22,876 reports of impaired driving occurrences over 3 years in RCMP data within Saskatchewan, with 10,462 reports within North District and 1,123 calls for service within Prince Albert over 3 years.

The COR is advocating for the development and implementation of an alcohol strategy for Prince Albert and Region. Our research suggests that several areas must be addressed in such a strategy:

- Chronic alcoholics
- Binge drinking
- Youth and underage drinking; and youth access to alcohol
- Liquor compliance and licensed establishments
- Impaired driving

It is important for each of these issues to be examined through the lens of education and prevention, supports and treatment, harm reduction and enforcement.

**Education and Prevention:** Examples may include media messages; classroom or youth group initiatives; school policies, parent messages; legislated mandatory training of the provincial responsible alcohol service program *Serve It Right Saskatchewan* (SIRS). These need to be fact based messages or conversations focused on reducing the necessary harms.

**Supports and Treatment:** Building on collaborations to strengthen existing supports and create new supports as alternatives for those at risk and to assist those trying to change. This can include but not limited to: arts, cultural, spiritual, religious or sporting groups reaching out to those who are unlikely to engage. This can also include an invitation to individuals within our community that have something to offer in the form of mentorship or engagement.

**Harm Reduction:** Messages and actions that encourage community to entertain less harmful options to socializing, partying or consumption. Ideas may include sober driver or shuttle options for driving; *Serve It Right Saskatchewan* training; classroom and youth group initiatives.

**Enforcement:** Working collaboratively with municipal and provincial agencies in establishing effective enforcement strategies, programs and projects. A shared responsibility, commitment to the process and consistency from all stakeholders will result in positive change for the community and those in an enforcement role.

This document is not an Alcohol Strategy. We are asking you, the decision makers, that there be supports for a process that facilitates the creation of an Alcohol Strategy for Prince Albert and Region.

Steps to be taken should include finding an independent individual or group to facilitate the development and implementation of the strategy, identifying the stakeholders, defining the goals, desired outcomes and other contents of the strategy, researching best practices nationally and internationally, and getting input and corroboration from all stakeholders. The contents of the strategy should be determined by the stakeholders together.

Working together, we will be able to significantly increase community safety and wellness by creating and implementing suitable and sustainable solutions to alcohol misuse and its' far reaching negative consequences on our community.

## 1.0 The Case for a Prince Albert and Region Alcohol Strategy

A vast majority of people who consume alcohol do so in moderation and in a responsible manner. We are aware of the many harms associated with alcohol. We know that reducing the harms that are associated with alcohol creates a safer and healthier community. A culture of moderate responsible consumption holds benefits for us all.

In Prince Albert, the COR has compiled statistics from multiple sectors on alcohol consumption that are compelling, compared to provincial and national data. These facts call for all individuals, youth and adults, institutions and agencies within our community, to ask, “What can I do to contribute towards a healthier culture of alcohol within my community?” Sustainable solutions will require all citizens, all sectors, all ages and interests to validate the fact that everyone deserves a safer and healthier home; that is free of the unnecessary harms associated with careless consumption or distribution of alcohol.

Statistics from Community Mobilization Prince Albert 2012/2013 show that alcohol was the largest risk factor category with **62%** of all Hub discussions <sup>1</sup> (Figure 1). Since May of 2012, the COR has collated data, analyzed statistics and researched the subject of substance abuse. While doing so, we have taken into consideration, Legislation and Governance, Police, Health Care, Social Services and Education perspectives, and the impact of substance abuse. How can we find sustainable solutions to alcohol misuse? We believe that a combined effort of all stakeholders to create a comprehensive Prince Albert and Region Alcohol Strategy could be the answer. The following facts provide insight into the extent of the alcohol misuse our community is facing.



Figure 1. A chart indicating the percentage of situations per risk category.

<sup>1</sup> Hub is a network of Human Service professionals that meets twice a week to mobilize services and supports around individuals and families experiencing acutely elevated risk.



## 2.0 Public Intoxication Assessment

The Prince Albert Police Service reported that calls for service for public intoxication have increased 10% since 2011. In 2012, there were 6,886 total arrests with 3,096 (or 45%) being arrests solely for public intoxication. Public Intoxication is a non-criminal offence. Under the Alcohol and Gaming Regulations Act, no person shall be in an intoxicated condition in a public place or in a permitted premises, whereby a violation ticket may be issued. It is also an arrestable offence should the person be intoxicated in a public place; and is likely to cause injury to himself or be a danger or a disturbance to others; and in the opinion of the police officer, there is no other person capable of and willing to care for the individual.

A three year study period of public intoxication and the police was conducted from May 23, 2009 to May 22, 2012. The following observations were made:

- There were 12,166 completed calls for service with a final case type of Intoxicated Person.
- There were 5,595 lodgings in police cells solely for public intoxication. This includes 1,415 females and 4,178 males. Of these, only 16.7% of females and 43.6% of males indicated they were residents of Prince Albert.
- The overall average age was 31 years old.
- The average male age is 33 years old and the average female age is 30 years old.
- There were 552 youth lodged in cells for public intoxication. Youth are between the ages of 12 and 17 years.
- Over the three years, an additional 2,757 of people who were charged with an offence, were noted to be impaired at the time of the occurrence.
- 72.8% of persons charged with an Assault to a Police Officer were noted to be impaired at the time of the assault.

There is significant cost associated with public intoxication for police services. By examining police wages, average time at a dispatch call to an intoxicated person, cost per dispatch call and Saskatchewan financial prison proxy per day, we have been able to calculate an estimated cost for police services. It has cost the Prince Albert Police Service **\$2,548,994** to police public intoxication over the three year period.

In 2012 alone, there were **1,341 hours (or 55 days)** of policing services spent on public intoxication arrests. This translates to a loss of **55 days** of policing services which could have been directed on proactive enforcement and crime prevention.

The following graph details the number of times each age group has been lodged in police cells due to public intoxication over the 3 year study period. For both males and females lodged, the 20-29 years age group demonstrated the highest number of lodgings in police cells for public intoxication (Figure 2).

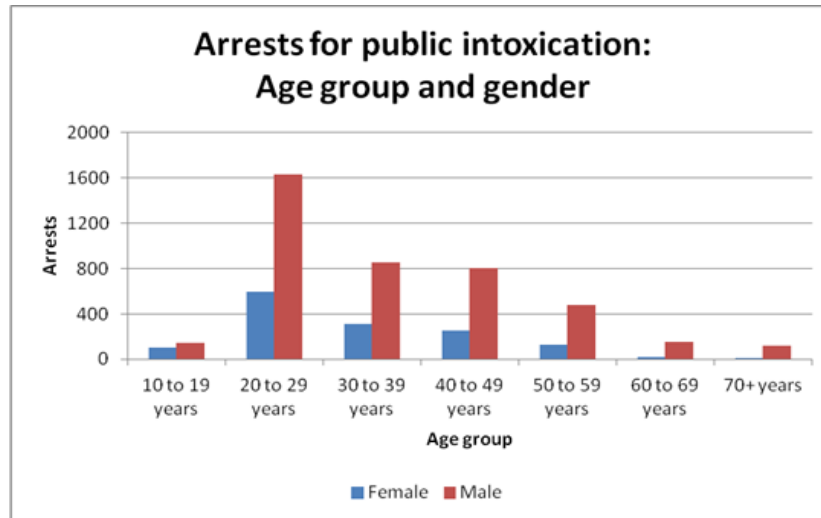


Figure 2.

The below graph is a comparison of Saskatchewan municipal police agencies between total arrests and arrests for public intoxication for the year 2012. Prince Albert Police Service recorded 45% of total arrests being for public intoxication; Regina Police Service recorded 22%; Saskatoon Police Service recorded 17%; and Moose Jaw Police Service recorded 7% (Figure 3).

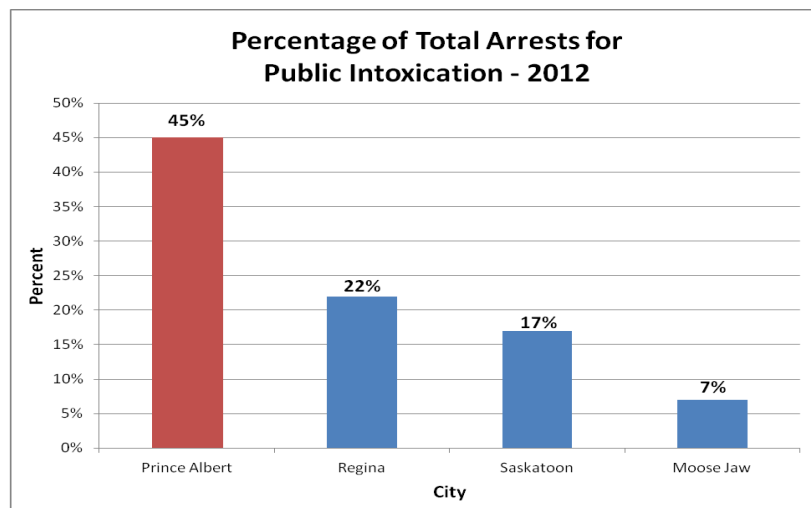


Figure 3.

## 3.0 Public Intoxication and Prince Albert's Top 25 Frequent Users of Services

During the three year study period described herein, 258 individuals were lodged 5 or more times in police cells solely for the purpose of public intoxication. Of this cohort, we selected 25 of the most-lodged individuals and examined their uses of some of the human service sectors in Prince Albert. The top 25 people lodged in police cells are often found on the street, they live a high-risk lifestyle and have a variety of health and social risks. The following assessment shows their use of services, and identifies systemic gaps in these services.

### 3.1 A Three Year Assessment

From May 23, 2009 to May 22, 2012, the top 25 individuals arrested and lodged for public intoxication were studied. These are the results:

- They were lodged 1,165 times collectively.
- The average female age is 45.6 years old.
- The average male age is 51.1 years old.
- There were no youth represented in the top 25.
- Females average time lodged, 35.33 times.
- Males average time lodged, 55.90 times.
- 100% have a criminal record.
- 96% have had dealings with the RCMP while intoxicated.

Over the 3 year study period, the top 25 individuals arrested and lodged for public intoxication consumed **\$342,789** of the Prince Albert Police Service's budget.

### 3.2 Top 25 Emergency Room Visits and Ambulance Costs

There were a total of 1,723 emergency room visits by the top 25 individuals in the 3 year study period.

- 1,464 times, the top 25 were transported to the emergency room by ambulance.
- 1,214 where the primary concern was alcohol ingestion.
- 287 where the secondary concern was alcohol ingestion.

The average cost of an emergency room visit is \$270 (Ministry of Health 2013-14). This would result in an estimated cost of **\$465,210** for the top 25 individuals in the 3 year period.

Ambulance rates increased from \$280 per transport in 2009 to \$325 in 2012. When averaged, we can estimate that there was a cost of approximately **\$441,030** in ambulance fees to transport the top 25 individuals over the 3 years. The total cost for both Emergency Room visits and ambulance costs is **\$882,030**.

### 3.3 Detoxification Admissions

The Prince Albert Parkland Health Region (PAPHR) offers a Brief Detox Unit and a Social Detox Unit. Collectively there are 14 beds, 8 at Brief Detox and 6 at Social Detox. Clients can self-refer to the Brief Detox Unit by walk-in or by phone. They must be medically stable (conscious), present no risk of harm to self or others and voluntarily accept services. The Social Detox Unit is a recovery-based program where clients begin or reconnect with their recovery process.

The 25 individuals accessed brief detox 2,406 days and social detox 103 days for a total of 2,509 patient days. The Canadian proxy average for a one night stay in treatment is \$273 (PAPHR data 2013-14), therefore, the cost to provide Brief and Social Detox over a three year period to the top 25 individuals was **\$684,957**.

### 3.4 Ministry of Social Services – Prince Albert

In addition to impacting police and health services, the top 25 individuals have also utilized other government agencies and service providers. The Prince Albert Ministry of Social Services provides the following information in regards to the top 25 frequent users of services:

- 44% have had, or currently have, children in the Social Services System.
- 8% have themselves been in the care of Social Services as a child.
- 68% are not currently on Income Assistance, but have been in the past.
- 8% are currently receiving Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disabilities.
- 16% are not listed as receiving Income Assistance.

The monthly cost in the Province of Saskatchewan for a single person, who is employable, is \$455 plus the actual costs of utilities. If the person is unemployable, the cost would increase to \$647 per month which includes shelter and basic allowance (2012 MSS and Saskatchewan Assistance rates). If there are children in the household then their basic allowance is drawn from Child Tax Benefit not from Social Assistance.

### 3.5 Total Costs of our Top 25 Frequent Users of Services

Inclusive of nights in police cells, police resource costs, brief and social detox stays, emergency room visits and ambulance costs, the top 25 individuals have incurred a total of **\$3,799,391** in approximate costs over the 3 year study period. This dollar figure accounts solely for the top 25 arrested and lodged for public intoxication and who are heavy users of services. This study is only a snapshot of the significant financial costs within our community. This does not account for costs that may have incurred for others (e.g. victims, families). Alcohol abuse has far reaching problems, not just for the individual but for the family, friends and community of the chronic substance abuser.

## 4.0 Violence-Related Crime and Substance Abuse

Over a three year period, from 2010-2012 inclusively, the relationship between violent crime related to substance abuse was researched. The time of the day that these incidents occurred was also reviewed. Violence-related incidents included: all Assaults, Sexual Assaults, Robberies, Violence Causing Death, Weapons Related Offences and Other Crimes against Persons.

Over the 3 year period, an average of **37.5%** of all violent crime was related to alcohol/drug abuse. The highest percentages for the time of day which these incidents were occurring were between **10p.m. and 4a.m.** for each of the three years (Figures 4 and 5).

In Prince Albert, there are a total of 27 licensed premises which have the option of remaining open until 2a.m. There are 4 off-sale liquor stores which remain open until 3a.m. for off-sale purchases; 2 of these have drive-thru off-sale purchases. The highest percentage of violence-related crime and alcohol/drug abuse has occurred between 10p.m. and 4a.m. over the last 3 years.

This 3 year compilation of data demonstrates a relationship between violence, alcohol/drug abuse, access to alcohol and time of day which these incidents are occurring within the City of Prince Albert.

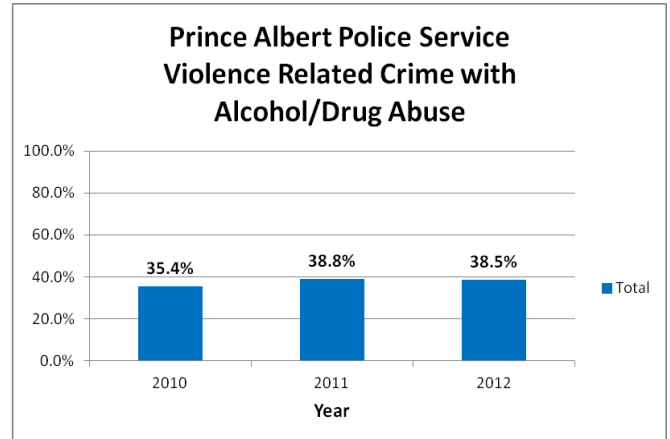


Figure 4. This figure show the percentage of violent crime related to alcohol/drug abuse over the past 3 years in Prince Albert.

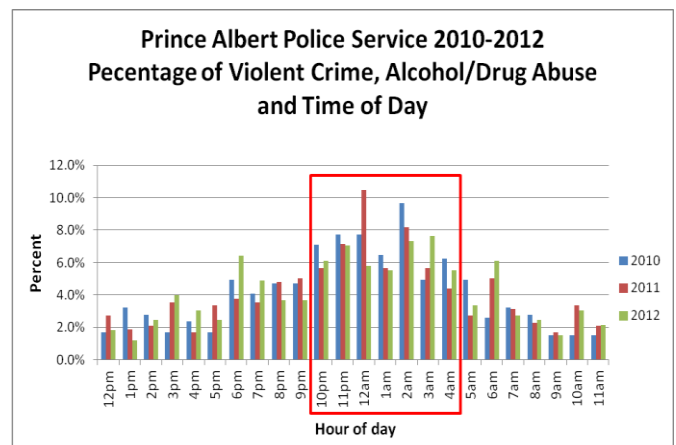


Figure 5. This figure shows the percentage of violence-related crime and substance abuse and the time of day in which the incidents are occurring.

## 5.0 Our Youth

Community Mobilization Prince Albert 2012/2013 Hub Report shows that **51%** of Hub discussions involve youth between the ages of 12-17 years.

The data and research presented here may be alarming to some. However, we see this as an opportunity to guide our community partners in an important and critical direction for the health, well being and future of our youth.

### 5.1 Prince Albert Youth Alcohol & Drug Use: A University of Regina Study

In June 2012, the University of Regina, Department of Justice Studies, conducted a research project of Prince Albert Youth Alcohol and Drug Use. One goal was to determine what the proportion, severity, age of onset and range of substances are used by Prince Albert high school students compared to the national and provincial sample. There were 921 students from Grades 9-12 who participated in the survey study. The results showed that Prince Albert youth had a higher self-reported alcohol and drug use compared to the national average. Here are the findings:

- Prince Albert students in grades 10 to 12 had self-reported alcohol use that was about 20% higher than the national average, with almost three quarters of students (73.8%) reporting that they had used alcohol in the previous 12 months.

- By age sixteen, 70.6% of Prince Albert youths had reported having more than a sip of alcohol, 54% had engaged in binge drinking, and 38.7% had used marijuana.
- About one-half (49.4%) of grade 10 to 12 students in the Canadian sample had reported binge drinking compared to over two-thirds (67.9%) of Prince Albert students in the same grades.

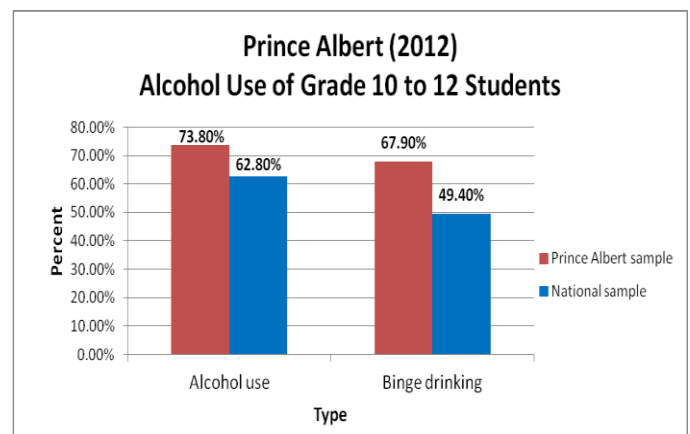


Figure 6.

**Source:** Ruddell, R. (2012) Prince Albert Youth Alcohol and Drug Use: A Survey of High School Students. Regina, SK: University of Regina.

## 5.2 Youth, Truancy and Substance Abuse

According to the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime (2004), “Truants have a significantly higher incident of illegal drug use, underage drinking and smoking than non-truant pupils and rates of substance misuse increase over time. Long-term truants exhibit a higher incidence of all forms of substance misuse in comparison with other categories of truant.”<sup>2</sup>

Based on the data below, the COR can show a relationship between truancy, victimization, criminality and substance abuse of high school students in Prince Albert. High school attendance records and police records for the 2011-2012 school year were provided by Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division (SRPSD), Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 6, Prince Albert Police Service and the RCMP.

Figure 7 illustrates a review of 47 high school students who missed 90-100% of classes in the 2011-2012 school year. It shows that 70% had a history as a perpetrator of violence, 62% had been criminally active in the past, 52% have been victimized, 37% showed alcohol related police involvement, and 33% had gone missing in the past.

Individuals discussed at the Hub discussion showing the risk category ‘Missing School’ often also showed the risk category Alcohol (51%), Criminal Involvement (47%), and Violence (36%) (Figure 8).

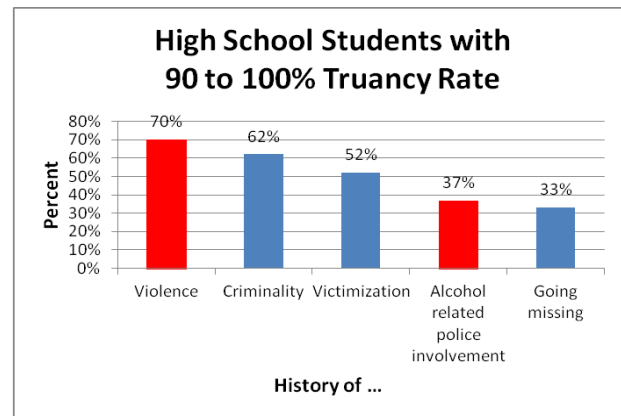


Figure 7.

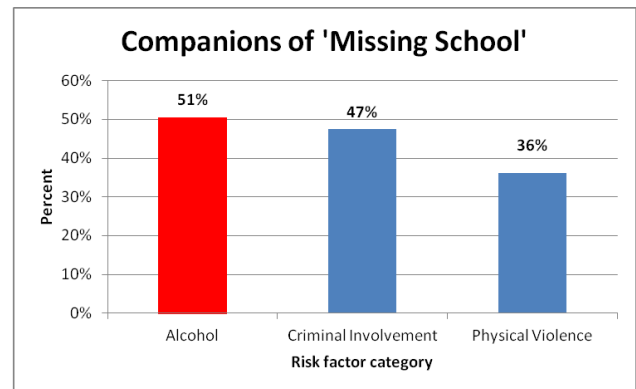


Figure 8.

We have found that truancy is interrelated with substance abuse, crime and victimization. Without substance abuse, there may be less truancy and crime. Without truancy, there may be less substance abuse.

## 5.3 Youth and Public Intoxication

The Prince Albert Police Service report they have seen an increase in arrests regarding youth and the involvement of alcohol and drug abuse. Figure 9 is a breakdown of youth and intoxication at time of arrest from 2010 to 2012 inclusively. Although the percentages of youth arrests are decreasing, those who are intoxicated at the time of arrest are increasing.

<sup>2</sup> McAra, L. (2004) Truancy, School Exclusion and Substance Misuse, Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime Research Digest No. 4

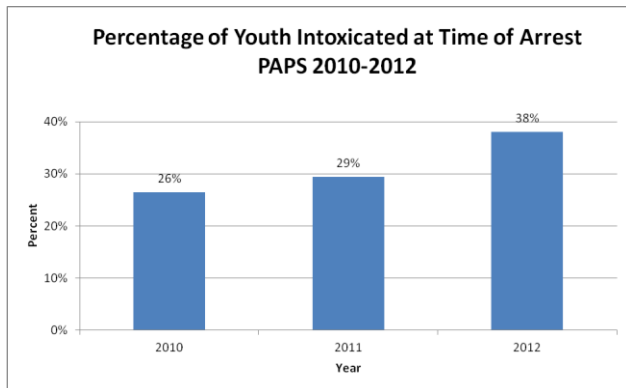


Figure 9.

Within the past 18 months, the Prince Albert Police Service investigated the deaths of two youth. In both incidents, the youths had been binge drinking and the cause of death was accidental acute alcohol ingestion.

## 6.0 Impaired Driving

Impaired driving has far reaching effects, sometimes life changing effects, for the victims, their families and the accused. Despite national, provincial and municipal prevention campaigns and enforcement programs designed to change this behavior, people still drink and drive.

From May 2009 to May 2012, the Prince Albert Police Service reported the following Impaired Driving Statistics:

- **1,123** calls for service of Impaired Driving.
- **65**, twenty-four hour Driving Suspensions issued.
- **319** Impaired Driving charges.
- **11** Impaired Driving Causing Bodily Harm.
- **2** Impaired Driving Causing Death.

The RCMP provided Impaired Driving statistics for Saskatchewan from January 2010 to December 2012. Here are the results:

- **22,876** reports of Impaired Driving for the Province of Saskatchewan.
- **10,462** reports of Impaired Driving within RCMP North District.
- **148** Impaired Driving Causing Bodily Harm Occurrences, Province of Saskatchewan.
- **94** Impaired Driving Causing Bodily Harm, RCMP North District.
- **19** Impaired Driving Causing Death Occurrences.

RCMP's North District is large area geographical area. It is bordered by the Northwest Territories to the north; Hudson Bay north along Manitoba; Rosthern to the south; Loon Lake and Pierceland north along Alberta; and includes Prince Albert and Region. RCMP's North District accounts for **46%** of all Impaired Driving Occurrences within parts of Saskatchewan that are policed by the RCMP.

A current partnership exists with Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI) and law enforcement agencies within Saskatchewan in relation to traffic/road safety and impaired driving programs and initiatives. Current programs include Operation Red Nose and Report Impaired Drivers. The Report Impaired Drivers program encourages citizens to report suspected impaired drivers to the police. In November 2011, the program expanded Province-wide and has assisted in removing impaired drivers off of our roads. Although such programs exist, these statistics demonstrate that there are still a large number of individuals who choose to drink and drive.



## 7.0 Substance Abuse: Statistics Tracked Over a 9 Week Period

### 7.1 Victoria Hospital: Emergency Room

From June 26 to August 29, 2012, de-identified statistics were tracked at the Victoria Hospital Emergency Room (ER) regarding patients who attended for treatment with a primary or secondary diagnosis involving alcohol or drugs. Out of 5,002 ER visits, 458 (9.2%) were related to alcohol or drug abuse:

- 377 alcohol related, 38 drug related, and 40 alcohol and drug related.
- 45% where the primary concern was alcohol and/or drug ingestion (19 individuals being youth).
- 55% where the secondary concern was alcohol and/or drug ingestions (27 individuals being youth).
- 30.6% presented with a trauma (23 being youth).
- 35.4% presented with another medical concern.
- 32 youth had used alcohol only, 7 drugs only, and 7 both drugs and alcohol.
- Police were called 23 times to assist with patients.
- 77 patients taken to detox.
- 4 patients needed to be admitted to the hospital.
- 14 transferred to another medical facility.
- 78 left before being seen by a doctor.

### 7.2 Ministry of Social Services – Prince Albert

From June 6 to August 31, 2012, Prince Albert Ministry of Social Services (MSS) tracked all of their intakes and identified which ones involved substance abuse. There were a total of 353 intakes during the study period and here are the results:

- 61 incidents of substantiated alcohol intoxication by an adult member in the household.
- 37 incidents of substantiated drug use, illegal or misuse of prescription drugs, by an adult member in the household.
- 4 incidents of substantiated alcohol intoxication by a youth.
- 6 incidents of substantiated drug use by a youth.
- 33% of the child welfare intakes (reports) received by MSS directly involved substantiated allegations of alcohol and/or drug use.

### 7.3 Prince Albert Police Service

In 2012, over a nine week period from June 26th to August 29th, Prince Albert Police Service arrested and lodged 668 people for being intoxicated in public, 41 were youth. Comparatively, during the same time period, Moose Jaw City Police lodged 26 people, 2 were youth.

## 8.0 Liquor Compliance: Licensed Establishments

The City of Prince Albert currently has 50 active liquor permits, for consumption on the premises as per Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Association (SLGA 2012) records. This includes restaurants, bars, lounges, nightclubs and exhibition halls. They do not include any community events licensed for alcohol sales.

The Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Association provided the names of businesses of the 50 active liquor permits for the City of Prince Albert. The completed calls for police service were researched for each of the 50 licensed businesses for the years 2010 – 2012 inclusively. There were a total of **5,205** calls for police service to our City's liquor licensed premises and has consumed **\$873,607** of the Prince Albert Police Service's budget.

There is a high cost associated with response for calls from both emergency and public services. This is a huge drain on resources. This dollar figure is exclusive of any other resource costs such as fire, ambulance or emergency room costs.

In Prince Albert, there are a total of 27 licensed premises which have the option of remaining open until 2a.m. There are 4 off-sale liquor stores which remain open until 3a.m. for off-sale purchases; 2 of these have drive-thru off-sale purchases. The highest percentage of violence-related crime and alcohol/drug abuse has occurred between 10p.m. and 4a.m. over the last 3 years.

Figures 10 and 11 show that **20%** percent of the City's licensed premises account for **74%** of police response out of all 50 licensed premises over the past three years.

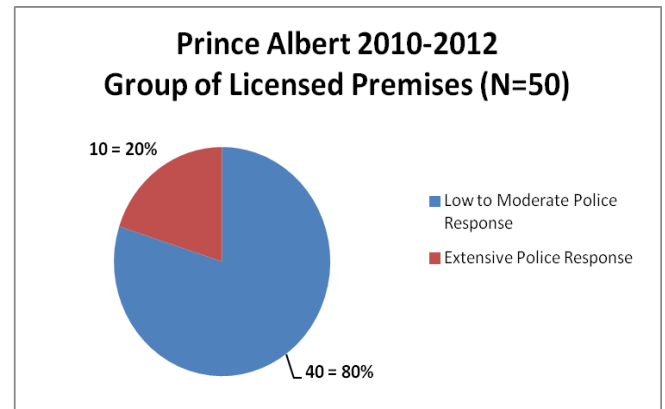


Figure 10.

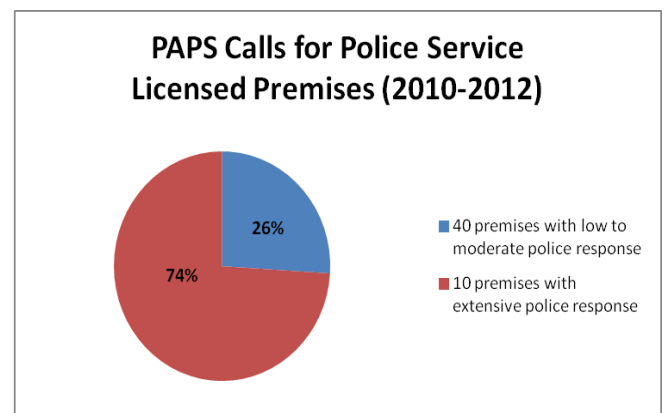


Figure 11.

The research showed that the highest number of calls for service included Intoxicated Persons, Evictions, Disturbances, Impaired Drivers, Violence and Property Crime.

**Administrative Sanctions/Penalties:** The SLGA's Liquor Sanction Summary from April 2009 to December 2012 shows 9 sanctions against licensed establishments in Prince Albert. There have been no liquor license revocations in the past 5 years. The City of Prince Albert Economic Development has not revoked any business licenses for licensed establishments within the past 5 years.

There is a need to improve the overall safety of patrons and staff within the City of Prince Albert's liquor licensed businesses and major community events where liquor is served. There is a need to increase and sustain compliance with regulatory and licensing expectations related to liquor licensed establishments and events. Along with reducing the negative impact that non-compliance may have on the quality of life for the surrounding community.

Coordinating the efforts of municipal and provincial agencies involved in the licensing, regulation and enforcement of liquor licensed business premises and events has become national and international best practice. A safety compliance team model that is education, prevention and enforcement based that would best serve the needs of Prince Albert. Stakeholder agencies may include Prince Albert Police Service, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming, City of Prince Albert Business Licensing Branch/City By-law and Prince Albert Fire Department.

## 8.1 Saskatchewan Liquor Sales per Capita

Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority (SLGA) reported 2011-2012 Liquor Sales for seven Saskatchewan Municipalities. The dollar value of liquor sales sold in the community of

Prince Albert was **\$34,743,440**. A true measure of consumption is Litre of Pure Alcohol consumed by the resident population, however, this data are not available. SLGA cautions that because these statistics are in dollar sales as opposed to volume of alcohol sold, we have no way to show if a community buys more expensive alcohol than others.

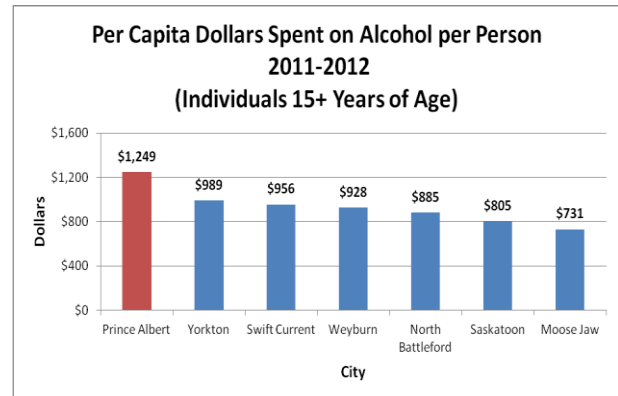


Figure 11.

The Yukon is of comparable population to the City of Prince Albert in overall population and in population ages 15 years and over. The Yukon had a reported \$39.5 Million in alcoholic beverage sales within a comparable time frame for 2011/2012. Yukon's sales of alcoholic beverages per capita 15 years and over was \$1,319 per person. Prince Albert's sales of alcoholic beverages per capita 15 years and over was \$1,249 as demonstrated in Figure 11. The Province of Saskatchewan reported \$703 of sales of alcoholic beverages per capita 15 years and over. The National average was \$742 per person.

## The Need for an Alcohol Strategy

The information we have presented may be overwhelming. However, this is a complicated issue and there is much to consider. There are no easy quick fixes to the impact of alcohol on our community; for this problem has taken years to develop and expand. However, the COR has demonstrated that Prince Albert and Region is at a critical point where harms associated to alcohol use need to be addressed.

The majority of citizens in our community consume alcohol in a responsible and safe manner. However, we can no longer ignore what the numbers are telling us about those who are not responsible in their alcohol consumption, or about those who need professional services to address their substance abuse issues. The data shared by all of the COR sectors demonstrate the large amount of resources and millions of dollars spent in response to the effect of alcohol misuse in our community.

The COR is advocating for the development and implementation of an alcohol strategy for Prince Albert and Region. Our research supports that several areas must be addressed in such a strategy: chronic alcoholics; binge drinking; youth and underage drinking and youth access to alcohol; liquor compliance and licensed establishments; and impaired driving. It is important that each of these issues are examined through the lens of education and prevention, supports and treatment, harm reduction and enforcement.

We are calling all levels of government – municipal, provincial, federal and Aboriginal – as well as our community members and citizens into action, to engage in reducing the harms associated with alcohol use, and to support the development, planning and implementation of an alcohol strategy for Prince Albert and area.

Steps to be taken should include finding an independent individual or group to facilitate the development and implementation of the strategy, identifying the stakeholders, defining the goals and other contents of the strategy, researching best practices nationally and internationally, and getting input and corroboration from all stakeholders. The contents of the strategy will be determined by the stakeholders together.

Working together we will be able to significantly increase community safety and wellness by creating and implementing suitable and sustainable solutions to alcohol misuse and its' far reaching negative consequences on our community.

We are asking you the decision makers, to be part of and endorse an Alcohol Strategy for Prince Albert and Region.