

Alcohol prevention targeting licensed premises: A study of effects on violence

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Abstract

OBJECTIVE: This research studied the effects of a community alcohol prevention program on violent crimes. Starting in 1996, a 10-year multicomponent program based on community mobilization, training in responsible beverage service for servers and stricter enforcement of existing alcohol laws has been conducted in Stockholm, Sweden. The project has been led by an action group consisting of members from the hospitality industry and the authorities.
METHOD: We used a time-series quasi-experimental design that included a control area. Data on police-reported violence during the period of January 1994 to September 2000 were analyzed through ARIMA modeling.
RESULTS: During the intervention period, violent crimes decreased significantly by 29% in the intervention area, controlled for the development in the control area.
CONCLUSIONS: The intervention seems to have been successful in reducing violent crimes. This effect is most likely due to a combination of various policy changes initiated by the project. The findings support the notion that community action projects working on a local basis can be effective in decreasing alcohol-related problems at licensed premises.

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