

BUYING FOR A MINOR IS A MAJOR OFFENCE



LCBO staff help promote community safety by making sure only the right people get served in our stores.

All LCBO employees who serve the public take Working SMAART (Strategies on Managing Age- and Alcohol-Related Troubles) training. This program prepares them for managing age- and alcohol-related problems, including customers suspected of making second-party purchases.

A "second-party purchase" takes place when an adult buys alcohol for someone who is not legally entitled to purchase it because they are either underage or intoxicated.

LCBO Retail staff may suspect an attempted second-party purchase if they:

- witness money and/or bottles changing hands;
- overhear a request to a customer to buy alcohol on a youthful or intoxicated-looking person's behalf; or
- see a customer approached outside the store by someone who may look younger than 19 or intoxicated.

When staff have reasonable grounds to believe a customer is buying for a minor, Ontario's *Liquor Licence Act* gives them the right and responsibility to refuse the sale. The employee also makes the customer aware of the law. It is often clear from the reaction of those challenged that they were not aware of the legal consequences.

Under the Act, any individual supplying alcohol to a minor faces a fine of up to \$200,000, and the possibility of up to one year in jail. Any corporation can be fined a maximum of \$500,000. The maximum fines were increased in 1997 to reinforce the seriousness of the offence.

Anyone who holds parties for minors where alcohol is served may also be subject to criminal charges and civil liability.

If you suspect someone is supplying alcohol to a minor, advise LCBO store staff or the police immediately.

The LCBO has produced posters to raise awareness of the dangers of second-party purchases. Copies are available from the LCBO's Social Responsibility Department at 416 864-6820.

Underage drinking is a serious problem. The **Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's** 2007 *Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey* of 6,323 Ontario students from grades 7-12 found that 61 per cent had consumed alcohol during the previous year; 26 per cent of underage youth reported that they binge-drink (consume five or more drinks on a single occasion.)

For more information, contact:
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