

# STOP Act Social Host Ordinance (SHO) Law Enforcement Training Survey Summary of Findings

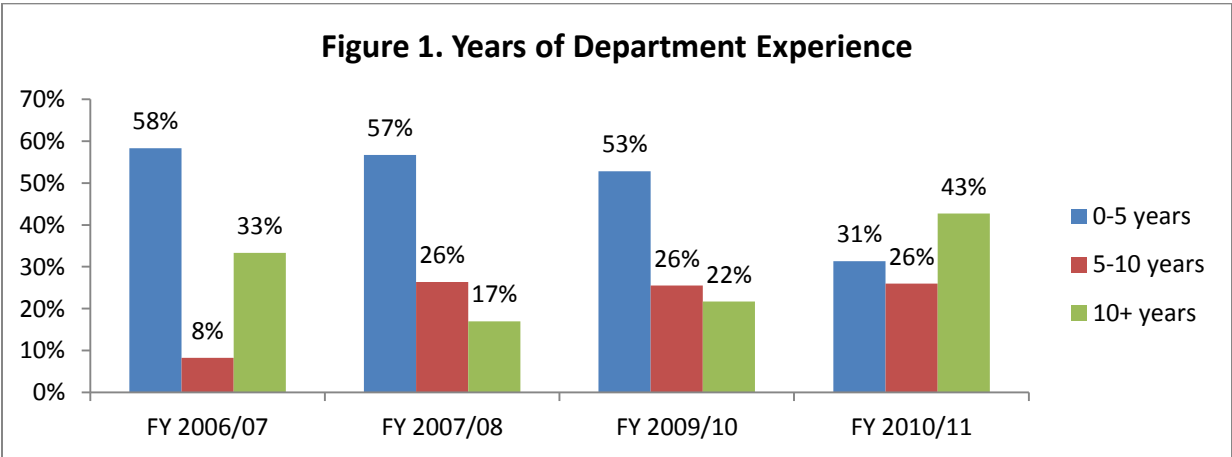
STOP Act staff administered the Social Host Ordinance (SHO) Law Enforcement Training Survey to law enforcement personnel annually from FY 2006/07 through FY 2011/12. The purpose of the survey was to collect information about law enforcement personnel’s perceptions of underage drinking and the SHO. Officers from the Oceanside Police Department were the first to complete the survey in FY 2006/07. Officers from the Vista Sherriff’s Office began to complete the survey in FY 2007/08, and officers from the Carlsbad Police Department began to complete it in FY 2009/10. Because not all police departments participated in the survey each year, only results from FY 2009/10 and FY 2011/12 surveys reflect attitudes and perceptions from all three cities. Table 1 below shows the number of surveys collected from law enforcement personnel in each city for the past five fiscal years.

**Table 1: Number of Surveys Collected by City, FY 2006/07-FY 2011/12**

Police Department	FY 2006/07	FY 2007/08	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12
Carlsbad	0	0	42	33	35
Oceanside	31	27	37	81	76
Vista	0	33	39	0	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>149</b>

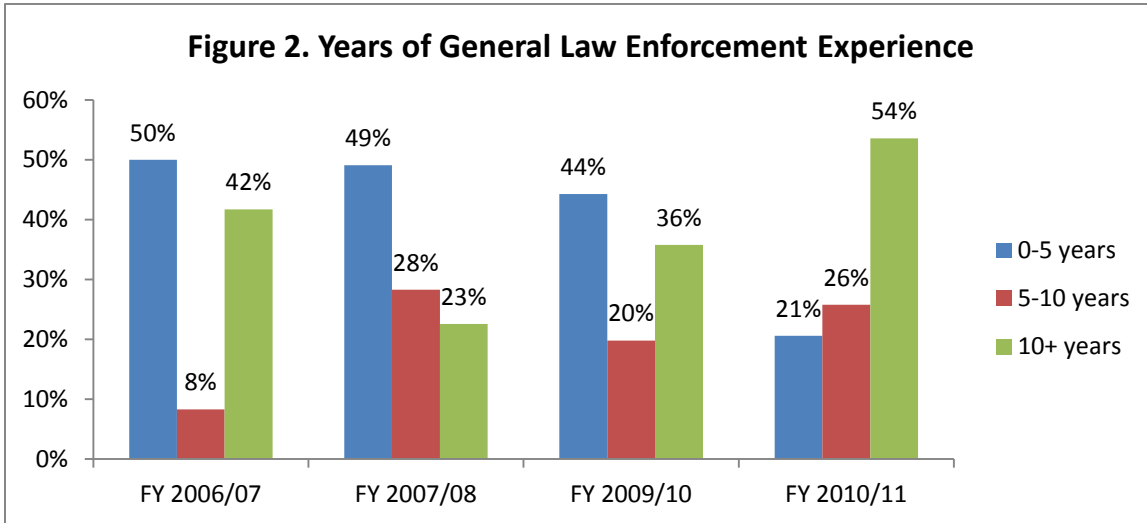
## Respondent Demographics

Officers who completed the survey in recent years have had more experience with their current department than respondents who completed the survey in earlier years. Respondents who completed the survey before FY 2010/11 typically had less than 5 years of experience in their current department. By contrast, in FY 2010/11, approximately 42% of officers reported having more than 10 years of experience in their current department. With the exception of FY 2006/07, approximately one in four respondents reported having 5-10 years of experience in their current department.



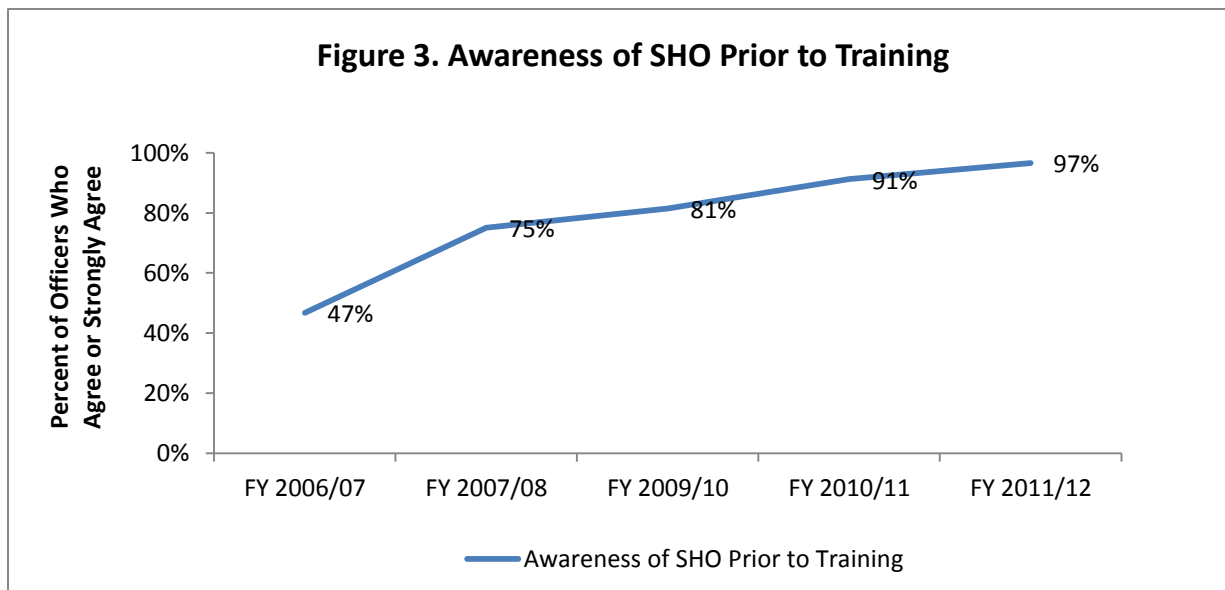
*Carlsbad Police Department: (FY 2009/10 – FY 2011/12)*  
*Oceanside Police Department: (FY 2006/07 – FY 2011/12)*  
*Vista Sheriff’s Office: (FY2007/08, FY2009/10, FY2011/12)* <sup>1</sup>

Although most respondents have had less than 5 years of experience in their current department, Figure 2 shows that the majority of respondents have had more than 5 years of law enforcement experience in general, particularly in more recent years. In FY 2010/11, over half of respondents reported having more than 10 years of general law enforcement experience.



**Summary of Responses**

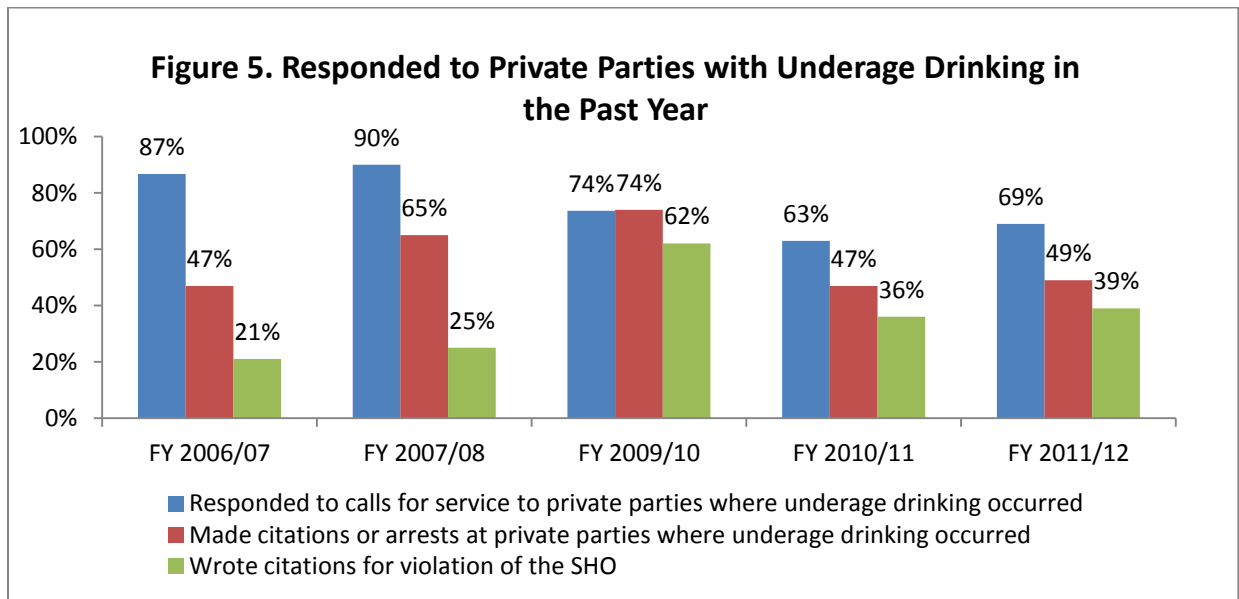
Respondents’ awareness of the SHO prior to the training has been increasing over time (see Figure 3). In FY 2006/07, less than half of officers reported that they were aware of the SHO before their training. By FY 2011/12, approximately 96% of officers reported awareness of the SHO. This suggests that efforts to increase law enforcement officers’ awareness of the SHO have been effective.



In FY 2011/12, law enforcement personnel were asked whether they had received training on Social Host enforcement. Approximately 55% responded that they had received some training, while 45% reported that they had not received any training. Even though many have not received training on Social Host enforcement in the past year, nearly all officers reported that they are aware of the SHO.



Below, Figure 5 shows that since FY 2006/07, there has been an 18% decline in the percent of officers who have responded to calls for service to private parties where underage drinking occurred. However, there has also been an increase in the percent of officers who have issued citations for SHO violations or other violations. This suggests that even though fewer officers are responding to calls concerning underage drinking at house parties, more are making arrests or citations when they respond to calls.

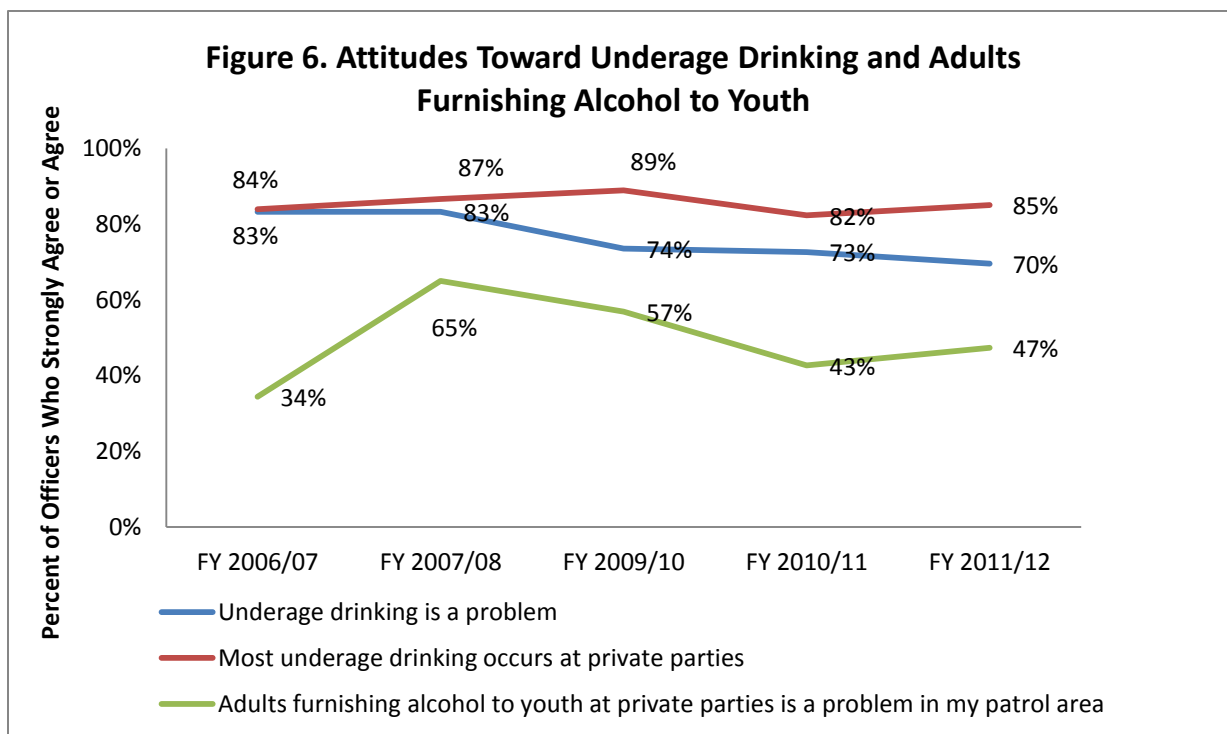


As shown in Figure 6, fewer officers have perceived underage drinking as a problem in recent years. Compared to FY 2006/07, approximately 13% fewer officers reported that underage drinking was a

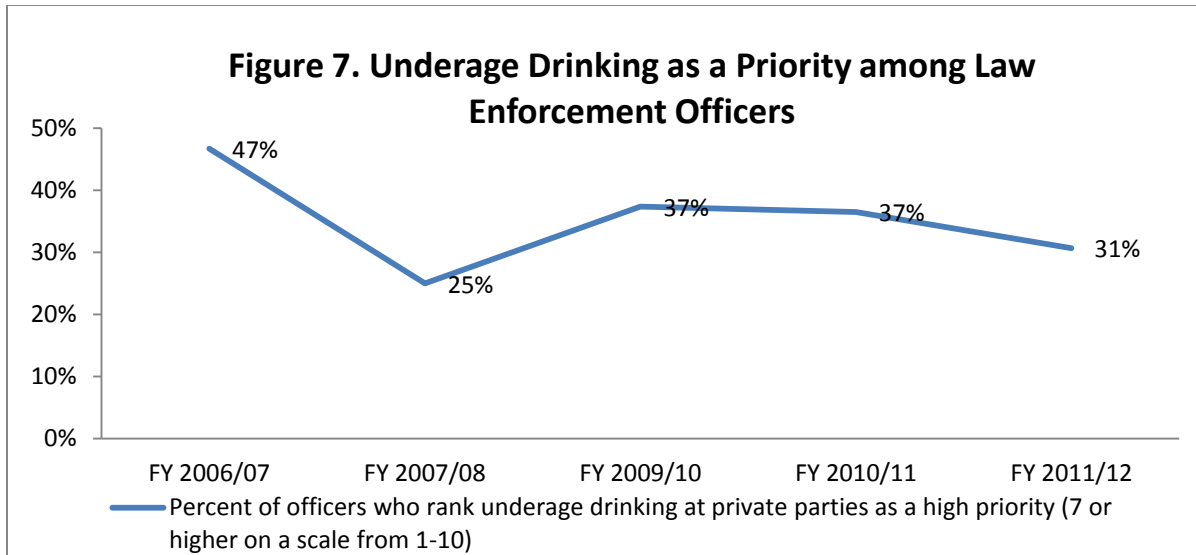
problem in FY 2011/12. Despite the decline, almost 70% of FY 2011/12 survey respondents reported that underage drinking was a problem. This suggests that while the SHO and other underage drinking prevention strategies may have succeeded in reducing underage drinking in recent years, many officers continue to believe that underage drinking is a problem in their patrol areas.

In recent years, fewer officers have also reported that adults furnishing alcohol to youth at private parties is a problem. Compared to FY 2007/08, approximately 18% fewer officers reported that adult furnishing alcohol to youth at private parties was a problem in FY 2011/12. Despite the general decrease in perceptions that adults furnishing alcohol to youth is a problem, more officers reported that it was a problem in FY 2011/12 than the previous year.

Finally, Figure 6 shows that there have not been significant changes in the percent of officers who report that most underage drinking occurs at private parties. In FY 2009/10, approximately 89% of officers reported that underage drinking occurs at private parties. While the percentage has decreased some in recent years, 85% continue to believe that underage drinking occurs at private parties. This suggests that more steps may be necessary to prevent underage drinking from occurring at private parties.



Just as fewer officers have reported that underage drinking is a problem in their patrol area, fewer officers have also reported that underage drinking is a top priority. Between FY 2007/08 and FY 2009/10, the percent of officers who listed underage drinking as a top priority increased by approximately 12%. However, the percent who listed it as a top priority has decreased since its peak in FY 2009/10. In FY 2011/12, approximately 31% of officers listed underage drinking as a top priority.



Officers reported making the same types of citations/arrests across all years. Public drunkenness and alcohol DUIs were the two most common citations/arrests, followed by open container violations and under the influence of controlled substance violations. Although the same types of citations/arrests have been common over time, Table 2 suggests that the percent of officers issuing any of these types of arrests/citations has declined. FY 2008/09 had the highest percentage of officers reporting citations/arrests across almost all categories, while FY 2010/11 had the lowest percentage of officers reporting across almost all categories. This suggests that in recent years, officers may be making other types of citations/arrests that are not listed. In addition, Table 2 also shows that fewer officers have been making citations/arrests for SHO violations or furnishing alcohol to a minor in recent years. In FY 2010/11, 82% of officers reported that most underage drinking occurs at private parties. However, only 14% reported that they had made citations/arrests for SHO violations. Similarly, while 43% reported that adults furnishing alcohol to minors is a problem in their patrol area, only 6% reported that they made citations/arrests for furnishing alcohol to a minor.

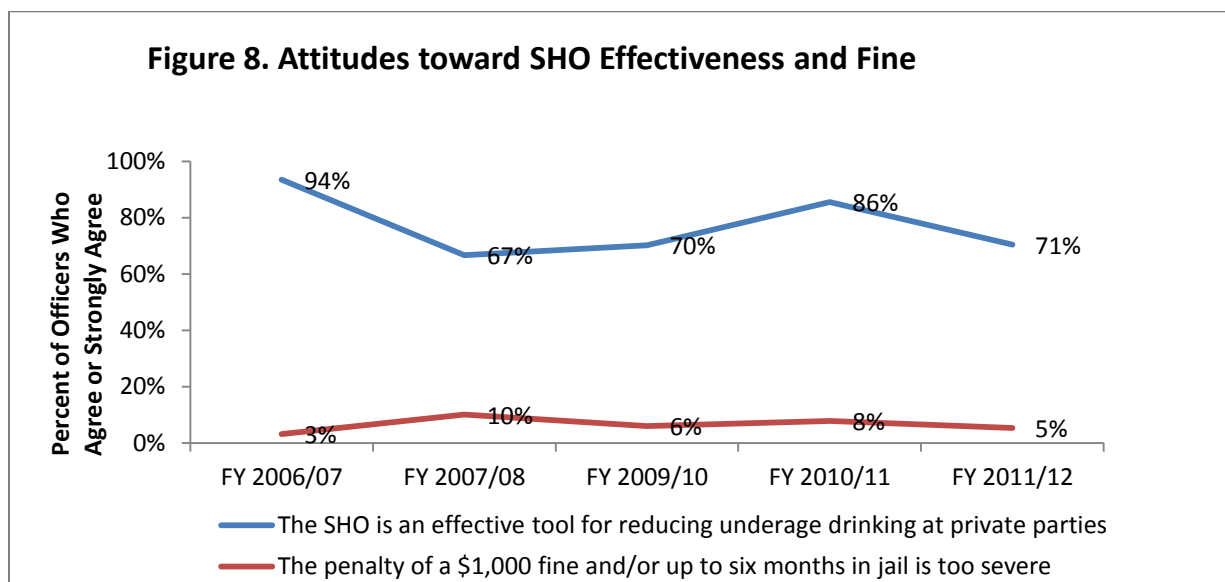
**Table 2. Types of Citations/Arrests in Last Year as Reported by Law Enforcement Officers FY 2007/08 – FY 2011/12**

	FY 2007/08 (N=31)	FY 2008/09 (N=60)	FY 2009/10 (N=118)	FY 2010/11 (N=114)
Public drunkenness	68%	78%	83%	72%
DUI (alcohol)	71%	77%	64%	57%
Open container	65%	53%	50%	54%
Under the influence of a controlled substance	68%	65%	61%	52%
Minor in possession of alcohol	45%	52%	36%	40%
DUI (drugs)	45%	53%	43%	29%
Disorderly conduct	23%	28%	28%	21%
Social Host violation	-	-	16%	14%
Noise abatement	10%	25%	17.8%	11%

Furnishing alcohol to a minor	7%	10%	15%	6%
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As shown in Figure 8, there has been considerable variation in the percent of officers who report that the SHO is an effective tool for reducing underage drinking at private parties. From FY 2007/08 - FY 2010/11, the percent of officers reporting that the SHO is an effective tool increased by almost 20%. However, compared to FY 2010/11, approximately 15% fewer officers believed that the SHO was an effective tool in FY 2011/12.

While fewer officers have reported that the SHO is an effective tool to prevent underage drinking at private parties, more have reported that a \$1,000 fine and/or up to 6 months in jail may be an appropriate penalty. In FY 2011/12, only 5% of officers believed that such a penalty might be too severe. This suggests that almost all officers consider furnishing alcohol to minors to be an offence that merits a serious penalty.

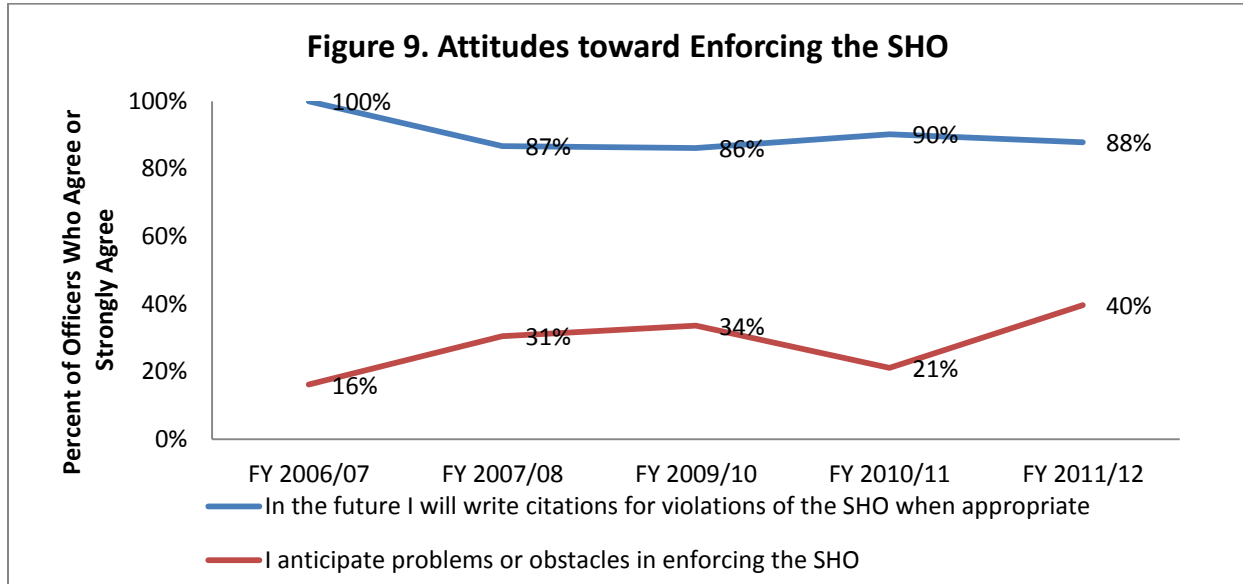


As Figure 9 illustrates, nearly all officers have reported that they will write citations for violations of the SHO when appropriate. Although the percent of officers reporting that they will issue citations in the future has decreased some from FY 2010/11 to FY 2011/12, approximately 88% still agree or strongly agree that they will issue citations for SHO violations in the future.

While the percent of officers who report that they will issue citations for SHO violations has remained fairly constant, there has been some variation in the percent who anticipate problems or obstacles in enforcing the SHO. The percent of officers who anticipated problems in enforcing the SHO decreased from FY 2009/10 to FY 2010/11. However, between FY 2010/11 and FY 2011/12, 9% more officers reported that they anticipated problems or obstacles in enforcing the SHO.

The graph below also suggests that there may be a relationship between the percent of officers who agree that they will issue citations for SHO violations and the percent who anticipate problems or obstacles in enforcing the SHO. When there is an increase in the percent who anticipate problems in enforcing the SHO, there is simultaneously a decline in the percent of officers who report that they will

issue citations for SHO violations. This may indicate that officers are more likely to write citations for SHO violations when they do not anticipate problems in enforcing the SHO.



### Problems Experienced by Law Enforcement Officers

Law Enforcement Officers listed the following common problems or obstacles in enforcing the SHO:

- Accessing residences where underage drinking may be occurring.
- Determining whether parents or adult residents are aware that underage drinking has been occurring.
- Lack of personnel, time and resources necessary to cite a large number of minors who may be drinking at house parties.
- Hassel involved with writing citations and filing them with courts.

In Carlsbad, common problems to enforcing the SHO include: 1) violators refusing to open the door and respond to law enforcement, 2) identifying the adults responsible for furnishing alcohol to minors, and 3) parental complaints against enforcement of the SHO. In Oceanside, common problems include: 1) addressing civil rights disputes against search and seizure, 2) getting access to the residence where underage drinking may be occurring, and 3) determining whether parents were aware of underage drinking occurring in their home. In Vista, common problems include: 1) citing all minors who may be drinking at large parties, 2) lacking personnel necessary to enforce the SHO, and 3) complications in filing the appropriate paperwork.

### Law Enforcement Officer Suggestions

When asked how to make it easier to enforce the SHO, the most common suggestions by officers across jurisdictions were to:

- Create more severe penalties so fewer persons will violate the law (e.g., greater fine or inclusion of cost recovery if not already in ordinance).

- Provide more training and information to law enforcement personnel so that they understand how to file citations against the SHO.
- Implement public awareness campaigns that offer information about the SHO to parents and young people.
- Simplify the paperwork required to process citations/arrests against SHO violations.

### Summary

Overall, it appears that awareness of the SHO has been increasing over the past several years. By FY2011/12, nearly all officers reported an awareness of the SHO prior to their training. Despite the increase in awareness among law enforcement personnel, officers indicated that many members of the public may not be aware of the SHO. Many officers recommended more public awareness messages and campaigns to educate the public about the SHO.

Most officers reported that the SHO is an effective tool for reducing underage drinking at private parties. However, the percent of officers who reported that the SHO is effective has declined in the most recent fiscal year. In FY 2011/12, fewer officers reported making citations/arrests for SHO violations and adults furnishing alcohol to minors, yet more reported that adults furnishing alcohol to youth is a problem. More officers have also reported that they anticipate problems or obstacles in enforcing the SHO. Several reported problems in acquiring sufficient resources to file the necessary paperwork to prosecute SHO violations. Nevertheless, most officers reported that they will issue citations/arrests against SHO violations in the future.

Officers provided other recommendations and suggestions about how to make enforcement of the SHO more effective. Several recommended that law enforcement personnel be given reference cards and step-by-step instructions for how to enforce the SHO. This suggests that there may still be a need for training so that law enforcement officers can confidently enforce the SHO.



**Appendix**

**Table A. Summary of Responses to Law Enforcement SHO Survey FY 2006/07 – FY 2011/12**

Item	Response	2006/07 (N=31)*	2007/08 (N=60)	2009/10 (N=118)	2010/11 (N=114)	2011/12 (N=149)
Before the training, were you aware of the SHO?	Yes	47%	75%	81%	91%	97%
	No	53%	15%	19%	9%	3%
Underage drinking is a problem	Agree/ Strongly agree	83%	83%	74%	73%	70%
	Disagree/ Strongly disagree	0%	7%	10%	12%	14%
	Undecided	17%	10%	16%	16%	17%
Most underage drinking occurs at private parties	Agree/ Strongly agree	84%	87%	89%	82%	85%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	7%	7%	5%	8%	9%
	Undecided	10%	7%	6%	11%	6%
Adult furnishing of alcohol to youth at private parties is a problem in my patrol area	Agree/Strongly agree	34%	65%	57%	43%	47%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	14%	10%	5%	8%	9%
	Undecided	52%	25%	6%	11%	6%
SHO is an effective tool for reducing underage drinking at private parties	Agree/Strongly agree	94%	67%	70%	86%	71%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	0%	5%	5%	4%	11%
	Undecided	6%	28%	25%	11%	18%
The penalty of a \$1,000 fine and/or up to six months in jail is too severe	Agree/Strongly agree	3%	10%	6%	8%	5%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	94%	82%	85%	83%	76%
	Undecided	3%	9%	9%	9%	12%
I anticipate problems or obstacles in enforcing the SHO	Agree/Strongly agree	16%	30%	34%	21%	40%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	42%	24%	41%	61%	38%
	Undecided	42%	46%	25%	18%	23%

Item	Response	2006/07 (N=31)*	2007/08 (N=60)	2009/10 (N=118)	2010/11 (N=114)	2011/12 (N=149)
In the future I will write citations for violations of the SHO when appropriate	Agree/Strongly agree	100%	87%	86%	90%	88%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%
	Undecided	0%	13%	12%	9%	9%
Today's training about the SHO was useful	Agree/Strongly agree	100%	95%	95%	97%	93%
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	1%	4%
	Undecided	0%	5%	4%	3%	3%
The quality of the presentation was good	Agree/Strongly agree	84%	98%	94%	97%	-
	Disagree/Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	1%	-
	Undecided	16%	2%	5%	2%	-

\* N reflects the total number of surveys collected in the given year and not the number of responses to each survey item.

**Table B. Priority Rankings of Underage Drinking at Private Parties by Law Enforcement Officers FY 2006/07 – FY 2011/12**

Priority	FY 2006/07 (n=30)*	FY 2007/08 (n=60)	FY 2009/10 (n=115)	FY 2010/11 (n=111)	FY 2011/12 (n=146)
1	0%	3%	2%	5%	4%
2	7%	3%	7%	5%	4%
3	0%	8%	13%	12%	16%
4	17%	13%	11%	6%	15%
5	20%	30%	13%	18%	14%
6	10%	17%	16%	17%	16%
7	20%	17%	11%	15%	12%
8	10%	5%	14%	10%	9%
9	10%	0%	3%	4%	3%
10	7%	3%	10%	7%	8%

\* n reflects the total number of responses to this survey item.



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**Table C. Responses to House Parties with Underage Drinking**

Item	Times	FY 2006/07 (n=30) *	FY 2007/08 (n=60)	FY 2009/10 (n=117)	FY 2010/11 (n=110)	FY 2011/12 (n=145)
Responded to calls for service to private parties where underage drinking occurred	Never	13%	10%	26%	37%	31%
	1-2	20%	18%	11%	23%	28%
	3-4	13%	8%	12%	17%	13%
	5+	53%	63%	50%	23%	28%
Made citations or arrests at private parties where underage drinking occurred	Never	53%	35%	26%	53%	51%
	1-2	33%	42%	11%	31%	35%
	3-4	13%	23%	12%	9%	6%
	5+	0%	0%	50%	7%	8%
Wrote citations for violation of the Social Host Ordinance	Never	79%	75%	38%	64%	61%
	1-2	17%	19%	34%	25%	33%
	3-5	0%	7%	27%	8%	3%
	5+	3%	0%	0%	2%	3%

*\*n reflects the average number of responses to the three survey items.*