

Quick Facts on Youth and Alcohol

In the United States alone, alcohol kills more kids than all illegal drugs combined. (Gruenebaum, J.A. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. 2002.)

Each day, more than 7000 kids in the United States under the age of 16 takes their first drink. (National Research Council. Institute of Medicine, 2004.)

1 in 5 eighth graders is a current drinker. (National Research Council. Institute of Medicine, 2004.)

By age 14, more than 1/2 of the children who reported using any alcohol in the past month also reported having had 5 or more drinks in a single occasion in that same month. (Flewelling, R.L., et al., The Epidemiology of Underage Drinking in the United States: An Overview. Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, Background Papers. 2004.)

78% of 8th graders, 71% of 10th graders, and 68% of 12th graders reported using “alcopops” (sweet, sugary alcoholic drinks) in the last month. (Underage Drinking in the United States: A Status Report. Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth. 2004.)

Almost 75% of 7th graders who drink alcohol obtain it from their parents with or without their knowledge. (Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, National Research Council. Institute of Medicine. National Academies of Science. 2003.)

Girls are now drinking at the same rate as boys. (Cost of Underage Drinking. US Department of Justice. Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. 2002.)

Teen girls who binge drink are up to 63% more likely to become teen mothers. (Dee, T.S. The Effects of Minimum Legal Drinking Ages on Teen Childbearing. The Journal of Human Resources. 2004.)

Most kids who drink do so to get drunk. More than 90% of the alcohol consumed by 12-20 year olds is drunk when they are binge drinking (consuming 5 or more drinks in a single drinking episode). (Flewelling, R.L., et al., The Epidemiology of Underage Drinking in the United States: An Overview. Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, Background Papers. 2004.)

95% of all violent crime on college campuses and 90% of acquaintance rapes involve the use of alcohol by the assailant, victim or both. (Rethinking Rites of Passage: Substance Abuse on America's Campuses. National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. 1994.)

Underage drinking costs the United States \$53 billion a year in medical care, lost productivity, and the pain and suffering of young drinkers. (Cost of Underage Drinking. US Department of Justice. Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. 2002.)

