

MYTH V. FACT

You probably see and hear a lot about alcohol from TV, movies, music and your friends. But what are the real facts about underage alcohol use? Here are some common myths and sobering facts about alcohol use:

MYTH: Alcohol isn't as harmful as other drugs.

FACT: Alcohol increases your risk for cancer. Drinking too much alcohol too quickly can lead to alcohol poisoning, which can kill you.

MYTH: Drinking is a good way to loosen up at parties.

FACT: Drinking is a dumb way to loosen up. It can make you act silly, say things you shouldn't say and do things you wouldn't normally do (like get into fights or have sex).

MYTH: I can drink alcohol and not have any problems.

FACT: If you're under 21, drinking alcohol is a big problem: It's illegal. If caught you may have to pay a fine, perform community service, or take alcohol awareness classes. Kids who drink are more likely to get poor grades in school and are at higher risk for being a crime victim.

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TO GET HELP

LEARN MORE

Visit www.stopalcoholabuse.gov

For more information about ways you can help to prevent and reduce underage drinking in your community.

Visit ncadi.smhsa.gov or call (800)729-6686

General information about underage drinking, its effects on adolescents, families and communities, and what you can do to help stop underage drinking through the NCADI (National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information)

GET HELP

Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or visit findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Free, completely confidential and available 24/7/365. SAMHSA's National Helpline and online Treatment Locator can help you find substance abuse treatment facilities, support groups and community-based organizations in your area.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Partnership at Drugfree.org offers information and tools to help prevent use and provide help for Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) by young people.

Also, visit doj.state.wi.us or call (608) 266-1221

Pam Snyder, Prevention Specialist In-Training
Iron County Underage AODA (Alcohol and Other Drugs)
Prevention Community Coalition

IRON COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES

300 TACONITE STREET, SUITE 201

HURLEY, WI 54534

PHONE: 715-561-3636 ~ FAX: 715-561-2128

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"OUR BRAINS, OUR FUTURE"

THE BASICS:

UNDERAGE DRINKING



UNDERAGE DRINKING: THE BASICS

Underage drinking is dangerous and it can harm the mind and body of a growing teen in ways many people don't realize.

WHAT IS "A DRINK" ANYWAY?

A drink can come in many forms; it can be a shot of hard liquor or a mixed drink containing vodka, rum, tequila, gin, scotch, etc. It can also be wine, a wine cooler, beer or malt liquor.

A standard drink is any drink that contains about 14 grams of pure alcohol. This amount can be found in:

- One 12-ounce beer
- One 4 to 5 ounce glass of wine
- One 1.5 ounce shot of liquor

THE RESULTS

- Is a major cause of death from injuries among young people.
- Increases the risk of carrying out, or being a victim of, a physical or sexual assault.
- Can lead to other health problems.
- Affects how well a young person judges a risk and makes sound decisions.
- Plays a role in risky sexual activity.
- Can harm the growing brain, especially when teens drink a lot.

WHY IS UNDERAGE DRINKING A PROBLEM?

So many young people drink.

Many more young people use alcohol than tobacco or illegal drugs. By age 18, more than 70% of teens have had at least one drink.

When young people drink, they drink a lot at one time, called "binge drinking."

Teens drink less often than adults but when teens do drink, they drink more than adults. On average, young people have about 5 drinks on a single occasion. This is a very dangerous way of drinking and can lead to serious problems or death.

Early drinking can cause later alcohol problems.

Of adults who started drinking before age 15, around 40% say they have signs of alcohol dependence. That rate is four times higher than for adults who didn't drink until they were age 21.

WHY TEENS MAY CHOOSE TO DRINK

Many things affect a young person's decisions about drinking -

- The different "worlds" in which teens live, including family, friends, school and community.
- A greater desire to take risks.
- Less connection to parents and more independence.
- More time spent with friends and by themselves.
- Increased stress.
- Greater attention to what they see and hear about alcohol.



LOCAL FACTS

Measures of Alcohol Abuse

County and Population	Annual Economic Cost of Excessive Alcohol Use	Cost of Excessive Alcohol Use Per Resident
Ashland 15,992	\$22,100,000	\$1,365.06
Iron 5,934	\$9,800,000	\$1,651.10
Vilas 21,368	\$18,100,000	\$844.81
Wisconsin	\$6,800,000,000	\$1,200.00

WHAT YOU CAN DO IN YOUR AREA ABOUT UNDERAGE DRINKING:

It takes everyone in the community to make change happen. All of us can help change the attitudes about teen drinking and help replace environments that enable underage alcohol use with environments that discourage it. Together, communities can support teen decisions NOT to drink. **Get organized. Share knowledge. Change the teen scene. Take action.**

Today, nearly 10.8 million youth ages 12-20, are underage drinkers. More teens drink than smoke or use drugs. Remember, the legal drinking age is 21 and underage drinking can be a threat to health and development

