

Underage Drinking

For your information...

- More than three out of every four students have had alcohol by the end of high school.¹
- More than half of 12th-graders and a fifth of 8th-graders have been drunk at least once.¹
- In recent surveys of high school students, 93 percent of 12th-graders and 64 percent of 8th-graders reported that alcohol is “fairly” or “very” easy to get.²
- Research has indicated that the typical way underage youth procure alcohol is at parties where parents and other adults have left them unsupervised.³
- Sixty-five percent of underage youth who drink reported obtaining alcohol from family and friends.⁴
- Alcohol is linked with an estimated 5,000 deaths in people under age 21 each year – more than all illegal drugs combined.⁴
- Adolescent drinkers perform worse in school, are more likely to fall behind, and show increased risk of social problems, depression, suicidal thoughts, and violence.⁶
- Any administrator, teacher, coach, or individual, as well as the school could be held accountable if an underage drinking incident occurs that is related to a school program or event.

Footnotes:

1. National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, Committee on Developing a Strategy to Reduce and Prevent Underage Drinking, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2003.
2. Johnston, L.S.; O’Malley, P.M.; Bachman J.G.; and Schulenberg, J.E., 2006, Monitoring the Future National Results on Adolescent Drug Use: Overview of Key Findings, 2005 (NIH Publication No. 06-5882), Bethesda, MD: National Institute of Drug Abuse.
3. Johnston, L.S., et al., 2006. 8. Jones-Webb, R., et al., 1997, “Relationships among alcohol availability, drinking location, alcohol consumption, and drinking problems in adolescents,” Substance Use and Misuse 32, 1261-1285.
4. Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU) for The Century Council, Omnibuzz, 2003.
5. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, “Underage Drinking: Why Do Adolescents Drink, What Are the Risks, and How Can Underage Drinking Be Prevented?” Alcohol Alert 67, January 2006.
6. Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU) for The Century Council, Omnibuzz, 2003.
7. American Medical Association, Harmful Consequences of Alcohol Use on the Brains of Children, Adolescents, and College Students, 2002.