

Underage Drinking

Not a minor problem

See it,
hear it,
talk about it.

Start talking
before they
start drinking.



Alcohol is the most commonly used and abused drug among youth in the United States. Although it is illegal, young people under age 21 drink 11 percent of all alcohol consumed in the U.S. More than 90 percent of this alcohol is consumed in the form of binge drinking. On average, underage drinkers consume more drinks per drinking occasion than adult drinkers.

A recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that among high school students, during the past 30 days:

- 45 percent drank some amount of alcohol
- 26 percent binge drank
- 11 percent drove after consuming alcohol
- 29 percent rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol

Warning Signs and Consequences of Underage Drinking

Youth who drink alcohol are more likely to experience:

- School problems, such as higher absence rates and poor grades
- Social problems, like fighting and lack of participation in activities
- Legal problems; arrests for driving or physically hurting someone while drunk
- Physical problems, such as hangovers or illnesses
- Unwanted, unplanned, and unprotected sexual activity

- Disruption of normal growth and sexual development
- Physical and sexual assault
- Higher risk for suicide and homicide
- Alcohol-related car crashes and other unintentional injuries
- Memory problems
- Abuse of other drugs
- Changes in brain development that may have life-long effects
- Death from alcohol poisoning



The risk of youth experiencing these problems is greater for those who binge drink than for those who do not.

Youth who start drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse later in life than those who begin drinking after age 21.

Tragic health, social, and economic problems result from the use of alcohol by youth. Underage drinking is a factor in a host of serious problems, including homicide, suicide, traumatic injury, drowning, burns, violent or property crime, high-risk sex, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and alcohol poisoning.

Save a life, call the Tipline at **1-800-851-1932** toll free to report underage drinking activities.

Prevent Underage Drinking

Research shows that youth are receptive to clear, consistent no-use messages from parents and other adults that touch their lives.

- Set a clear and consistent no-use policy for all activities
- Talk to youth about alcohol
- Know the warning signs of underage drinking
- Model positive behavior by not engaging in illegal or unhealthy alcohol use
- Support enforcement efforts related to underage drinking

When children have a strong bond with a parent or another adult, they are more likely to feel good about themselves and less likely to give in to peer pressure to use alcohol.

Build a strong relationship with your child by establishing open communication and by showing you care.



For more information or to schedule a presentation call **(585) 719-3489** or visit our Web site at **www.ncadd-ra.org**.

UNDERAGE DRINKING

Not a minor problem



**National Council
on Alcoholism and Drug
Dependence – Rochester Area**

