

CHEMICAL HEALTH TREND CORNER:

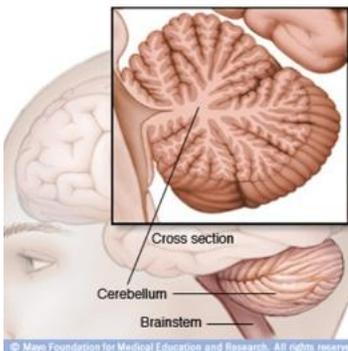
Students & Alcohol: A Guide For Parents

Binge drinking among college students is a serious national problem. Each year, many college and university students die or are seriously injured as the result of alcohol use.

The University of Minnesota is deeply concerned about excessive drinking as well as the use of controlled substances by our students. Consequently, your student will receive information about alcohol and other drugs throughout the academic year.

Alcohol and drug abuse prevention is a job the University cannot perform alone. We need the involvement and the support of parents. Please talk with your student about your expectations regarding drug and alcohol use. [Read More](#)

Bingeing Stunts Growth of Teen Brain Regions



Extreme adolescent binge drinking is likely to stunt the growth of regions of the brain responsible for balance and coordination, emotion regulation, and decision making, reports a new study.

The study found smaller cerebellar volumes in adolescents who engaged in binge drinking in the past 3 months. Authors Krista M. Lisdahl et al. examined the effects of recent binge drinking on the cerebellar volumes of 106 adolescents without comorbid psychiatric disorders. [Read More](#)

Budweiser, Smirnoff, Coors Lead Underage Drinker's Favorites

Nearly half of underage drinkers drank just 25 brands of alcoholic beverages, out of nearly 900 brands included in a new Internet survey.

In order of preference, the top five brands that the



1,032 survey participants between the ages of 13 and 20 reported consuming were Bud Light, Smirnoff Malt Beverages, Budweiser, Smirnoff Vodkas, and Coors Light. Other studies have found links

between youth exposure to alcohol advertising and marketing and underage drinking.

According to Michael Siegel, M.D., M.P.H., professor of Community Health Sciences at the Boston University School of Public Health, "The companies implicated by this study as the leading culprits in the problem of underage drinking need to take immediate action to reduce the appeal of their products to youth." [Read Studies](#)

Daily Drinking Among 12th Graders Falls, But Binge Drinking Increases

Daily drinking among 12th graders, after reaching a recent peak of 3.9% in 1997 and 1998, declined by about a third, to 2.7% by 2010. In 2011 daily drinking decreased significantly to 2.1%, but in 2012 there was a non-significant increase to 2.5%, according to the newly published Monitoring The Future surveys of American secondary school students conducted on behalf of the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

However, the report also notes that among 12th graders, 30-day prevalence of self-reported drunkenness, or binge drinking, increased to 28% in 2012 from 25% in 2011. This rate had showed



declines between 1991 and 1993 (from 32% to 29%), followed by gradual increases through 1997 before reaching 25% in 2011, the lowest rate since the question was added. [Full Report](#)

Most Teen Pregnancies are Unplanned

By Linda Lowen



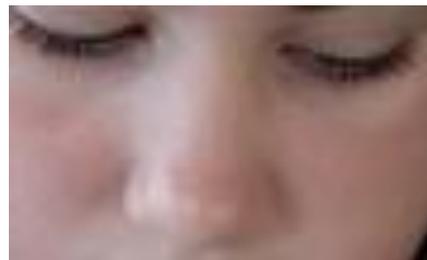
1. Three-quarters of a million teens between 15 and 19 become pregnant each year.
2. Very few teens who become mothers plan on doing so. Out of all teen pregnancies, 82% are unintended. Teen pregnancy accounts for 20% of all unplanned pregnancies annually.

3. Two-thirds of teen pregnancies occur among teens 18-19 years old.
4. Teen mothers account for 11% of all births in the US.
5. Out of all teen pregnancies, 57% end in birth. Another 14% end in miscarriage.
6. [Nearly a third of pregnant teenagers choose abortion.](#) Out of all teenage pregnancies, 29% are terminated by abortion.
7. Black teens have the highest teen pregnancy rate. For young women age 15-19, black teens are most likely to become pregnant (134 per 1,000 women). Slightly lower rates occur among Hispanics (131 per 1,000) followed by non-Hispanic whites (48 per 1,000).

8. Teens who become pregnant are less likely to attend college. Although teenage mothers today are more likely to finish high school or earn their GEDs than in the past, pregnant teens are less likely to attend college than teens who do not become pregnant.

9. US teen pregnancy rates are higher than those of other developed countries. US rates are twice as high as in England and Wales or Canada, and eight times as high as in the Netherlands or Japan. [Read More](#)

Anxiety and Underage Drinking Among Youth



A new study reports that socially anxious adolescent females were more likely to consume alcohol or smoke

cigarettes when they believed that peer support of alcohol/cigarette use was high.

Additionally, socially anxious adolescent females were protected from alcohol use when they perceived that peer support of alcohol/cigarette use was low.

In contrast, the study further reports that anxiety did not correlate with early alcohol and cigarette use among adolescent males.

The study examined the role of social and generalized anxiety symptoms in relation to the development of early adolescent alcohol/cigarette use and how perceived peer approval of substance use and gender differences may moderate the connection. [Read More -](#)

Sexting Risky Actions and Overreactions

By Art Bowker, M.A. & Michael Sullivan, J.D.



Juvenile sexting is increasing in frequency. A recent study found that 20% of teenagers (22% of girls and 18% of boys) sent naked or seminude images of themselves or posted them online. Another survey indicated that nearly one in six teens between the ages of 12 and 17 who own cell phones have received naked or nearly nude pictures via text message from someone they know.

Many disturbing examples of such behavior exist. Law enforcement officers and prosecutors face increased pressure to handle these cases as effectively as possible.

Sexting can result in tragic circumstances, such as the previously noted suicide. Additionally troubling, adults may participate in the activity. However, aggressive prosecution of all juvenile sexting cases also can present problems.

Misconduct

To determine the appropriate response, law enforcement officers must carefully consider the alleged misconduct and determine if it falls into one of two categories. First, is the image or communication illegal? Does the picture meet this definition or one in a particular state statute?

Second, did any illegal use of a computer occur in the communication? These categories can overlap. However, this can shed light on alternative charges that may not be as apparent if someone views the misconduct solely as a sex offense. . [Read More](#)

Advice for Young People



Think about the consequences of taking, sending, or forwarding a sexual picture of yourself or someone else underage. You could get kicked off of

sports teams, face humiliation, lose educational opportunities, and even get in trouble with the law.

Never take images of yourself that you wouldn't want everyone—your classmates, your teachers, your family, or your employers—to see.

Before hitting send, remember that you cannot control where this image may travel. What you send to a boyfriend or girlfriend easily could end up with their friends, and their friends, and their friends.

If you forward a sexual picture of someone underage, you are as responsible for this image as the original sender. You could face child pornography charges, go to jail, and have to register as a sex offender.

Report any nude pictures you receive on your cell phone to an adult you trust. Do not delete the message. Instead, get your parents or guardians, teachers, and school counselors involved immediately.