

Underage Drinking Fact Sheet

MISSISSIPPI UNDERAGE DRINKING

- Mississippi youth report higher use of alcohol rather than the use of tobacco or illicit drugs.
- Mississippi youth report driving a car after drinking.
- Mississippi youth report drinking before the age of 13.

UNDERAGE DRINKING

- Children who begin drinking alcohol before the age of 15 are 5 times more likely than those who start after age 21 to develop alcohol problems.
- More children are killed by alcohol than all illegal drugs combined.

ALCOHOL AND JUDGEMENT

The teenage brain is still developing. Alcohol can impair the parts of the brain that control the following:

- Motor Coordination. Ability to walk, drive, and process information.
- Impulse Control. Drinking lowers inhibitions and increases the chances that a person will do something that they will regret when they are sober.
- Memory. Impaired recollection and even blackouts can occur when too much alcohol has been consumed.

RISKS

Alcohol use among youth is strongly correlated with violence, risky sexual behavior, poor academic performance and other harmful behaviors.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

- Alcohol use by teens is a strong predictor of both sexual activity and unprotected sex.
- A survey of high school students found that 18% of females and 39% of males say it is acceptable for a boy to force sex if the girl is high or drunk.

SCHOOL

- Teens who use alcohol have higher rates of academic problems and poor performance than non-drinkers.
- Among eighth-graders, higher truancy rates are associated with greater rates of alcohol use in the past month.

ILLCIT DRUG USE

- More than 67% of young people who start drinking before the age of 15 will try an illicit drug. Children who drink are 7.5 times more likely to use any illicit drug, more than 22 times more likely to use marijuana, 50 times more likely to use cocaine than children who never drink.

DRIVING

- When young people drink and get into a car, they tend to make poor decisions that impact their safety.
- Traffic crashes are the number one killer of teens and over one-third of teen traffic deaths are alcohol-related.



BEER AND WINE ARE NOT "SAFER" THAN HARD LIQUOR.

A 12-ounce can of beer, a 5-ounce glass of wine, and 1.5 ounces of hard liquor all have the same amount of alcohol and have the same effects on the body and mind.