

Essay on youth drinking

[Health & Medicine](#), [Alcoholism](#)



One of the serious challenges that many nations face in their attempts to boost the economy is alcoholism and drinking in general. It is widely agreed that a society with several alcoholics will rarely make any progress in the development sector. Despite alcohol being legal in almost all countries all over the world, there is a danger when the citizens indulge in habits that can be termed as overdrinking. In a way, alcoholic individuals do not work, hence relying on the working population for their upkeep. Most states have laws that regulate drinking. For instance, they regulate the hours within which the alcoholics should drink, the place they should drink and the activities that they should not do while drunk. Driving while under the influence of alcohol is an offence in many jurisdictions. This is because alcohol has the effect of rendering an individual dangerous by affecting their decision making process. Despite the fact that drinking is legal, overconsumption may lead to several disadvantages and harms that may well affect the progress of the society (Bonnie et al. 32).

Most nations have regulations that determine the right age for an individual to start drinking. In essence, the majority age determines whether one can start drinking or not. A person who has not attained that age is prohibited from consuming alcohol. Underage drinking is the term that is used to refer to when the youth, who have not attained the legal age start consuming alcohol. The laws differ from nation to nation, meaning that the age allowed by United States could be different from the age set in other nations. In the United States of America, for instance, one is not allowed to consume alcohol when they have not attained the age of 21 years old. Anybody found to be going against this regulation is always prosecuted. In most cases, underage

drinking connotes a big risk because most developing teens and adolescents get attracted to it. Whenever the youths try to use alcoholic substances, they do not realize or understand the side effects. However, what they do not understand is the fact that, by drinking, they get to damage their lives, the lives of the community they come from and the lives of their parents. There is a great need to change and advise them accordingly on the negative effects of drinking. Important to note is the fact that underage or youth drinking is illegal and plays a great role in posing many risks related to the public health problems.

One long-term effect of alcohol is that of addiction (Scherer et al. 17). When the youths start consuming alcohol, they start a great chance to be addicts to the level that they cannot do without it. Addiction is a negative effect since it leads an individual to rely on the alcohol in order to be well. Some of the reasons that may force a youth to become a drunkard include peer pressure and for stress and depression reduction. In the United States of America, research has shown that peer pressure is the leading cause of alcoholism. In most cases, people that are between the age of thirteen to fifteen are highly associated with being at a high risk to indulging themselves in alcohol and drinking. The result of the annual survey of American students in grades 8, 10 and 12 showed that most of the students had taken alcohol within the last month. In the eighth graders, 26 percent admitted to having consumed alcohol within the last 30 days, while 50 percent admitted to having taken alcohol at least once in their lifetime. Grade 10 was even worse, with 40 percent of the students admitting to having taken alcohol in the last 30 days, while those who admitted to having tested

alcohol at least once in their lifetime recorded a staggering 60 per cent figure. The 12th graders were even worse, with 61 percent consuming within the last 30 days while 72 percent acknowledged to have tasted it at least once in their lifetime (Efron et al. 43). The figures recorded from the survey are very worrying, since despite youth drinking being illegal, a majority was consuming it. Among the major concerns about youth drinking is the fact that it affects their academic performance. Alcoholics have been found to perform poorly in their studies when compared to the non-alcoholics, a further prove that drinking affects the development of the society negatively. Efficient strategies should, therefore, be put in place to ensure that the youths are prevented from indulging in alcoholism.

The trends on alcohol consumption among the youths in the United States of America have become a cause of alarm amongst the policy makers because of the danger it causes to the society. It is thought that, in a day, more than 4750 youths get to take alcohol for their first time. The huge figure of the debutants in the drinking category raises many fears since it directly implies that the number of alcoholics continues to rise on a daily basis. According to the statics, the average age that most people start drinking alcohol is 13 years, further explaining the worrying trends that call for policy making aimed at curbing underage drinking.

The United Kingdom has different statistics when compared to the United States of America. For instance, according to the United Kingdom Laws, it is legal for anybody who is above the age of 18 years to purchase and consume alcohol. The UK regulations are not too strict on the consumption of alcohol, since the youth, aged 16 and 17 are allowed to consume beer, wine

or cider, provided they are in premises that are licensed, and they order it with a meal. The rules differ from state to state. For instance, in Wales and England, those under the age of 18 years can only consume the beers when ordered by adults. In Scotland, the beers and wine do not have to be ordered by an adult, as the youth are allowed to make the orders themselves, provided they can pay for it, and they order it with a meal. Further comparisons show that the average age at which the youths in United Kingdom first consume alcohol is at the age of 15 years, as compared to 13 years in the United States of America. This shows that Americans have a tendency to indulge themselves in alcoholic drinks at an early age when compared to their UK counterparts.

In South Africa, parents and/or guardians have the responsibility to administer a religious sacrament to the children. However, occasionally, they are legally allowed to supply to the children some amount of liquor. The consumption, however, has to be under the supervision of the guardian or the parent. Despite the freedom given to the parents to administer the liquor, they are under an obligation to ensure that it is in small quantities. South Africa laws dictate that a person attains the legal age of drinking on their 18th birthday. This is the age of majority, and after attaining this age, one is considered to be an adult, and they can make their own decisions whether to drink or not. On average, most youths in South Africa start drinking at the age of 14 years, though it is illegal (Merino et al. 67).

In their attempts to reduce underage drinking, most countries, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom and South Africa have employed several strategies. The strategy that a nation adopts greatly

depends on the aim of the country. One such strategy that has been employed widely is that of using media advocacy, media campaigns and counter advertising. Media campaigns have in most cases proved to be effective since they reach a large number of the target audience. Through educating the youth on the negative effects of engaging in alcoholism, the media provides perfect information to the youth as to why they should quit drinking. In the United States of America, the alcoholic containers should contain warning signs, such that they may inform the buyer of the dangers of overconsumption of the drink. These signs also warn that underage consumption is illegal. This strategy has played some role in promoting public awareness, hence informing the youth on the negative effects of alcoholism. This strategy is widely employed, including in the United Kingdom and South Africa. Perhaps the best strategy that they should all adopt is proposing strict enactments to deal with the underage drinkers. Underage drinking has several negative effects since it directly affects the ability of the youth to make valid decisions. The age between five years and fifteen years is very crucial in that it is at that stage that the future of a person is shaped. This is the time that a person is molded to become an important member of the society in the future. In essence, this is the period when a person is in the 'formation' stage, capable of deciding how their future will look like and employing relevant mechanisms to ensure they achieve their goals. Getting addicted to alcohol at this stage will play a major role in destroying their future. It is, therefore, crucial that at this stage, the youth avoid consuming alcohol for their own use (Rabinovich et al. 43). Alcoholism among the youth should not be tolerated at all, because of the

negative impact it has to them. Addiction to alcohol at a young age has several consequences to a person. Personality is one area that is affected by addiction. In a way, whenever a person depends on alcohol for their survival, it becomes difficult for them to operate when they are sober. This completely changes their personality and in most cases, they end up being violent in the society. Alcoholism also promotes bad development of the brain in a person. It also dictates how a person may relate with other people, further breaking down the societal ties that exist. As such, youth alcoholism should be highly discouraged because of the several side effects it may bring to a person.

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