

Teenage drinking and its consequences

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Teenage Drinking and Its Consequences 2 March Introduction Alcohol is the teenager's "drug of choice," according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (2006). It is easy to buy, even when it is illegal, and it is commonly used for socialization. WebMD (2012) underscored that alcohol is "very powerful" and "addictive," and it can be "lethal" in large amounts (p. 1). Adolescents are particularly prone to drinking alcohol, because of perceptions of drinking alcohol as cool and essential to high school and college life. Underage drinking, however, is banned in many countries. The Surgeon General of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007) defined underage drinking as anyone who drinks alcohol below 21 years old (p. 1). Though many state laws aim to prevent underage drinking, numerous teenagers continue to drink alcohol (Department of Health, 2007). Teenage drinking is discouraged, because it has led to numerous consequences, such as drunk driving and deaths. Several sources stressed that teenage drinking is one of the critical issues modern society is facing right now (Department of Health, 2007; WebMD, 2012). Teen drinking is bad, because it leads to several fatalities, sex, rape, drunk driving, pregnancy, and jail time. Consequences of Teenage Drinking One of the main consequences of teen drinking is that it causes several fatalities. The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (2007) emphasized that alcohol is not for teenagers, because it affects their mental and physical development, as well as behaviors. This is especially true, because when teenagers drink, they have a great tendency to drink too much (Department of Health, 2007, p. 4). Drinking too much alcohol impairs visual and physical abilities. Early drinking also tends to lead to alcoholism,

which in itself, leads to fatalities, such as alcohol poisoning (Department of Health, 2007, p. 4). Alcoholism is bad, since it is related to depression and other psychological problems, which sometimes end up with the alcoholics committing suicide, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (2006). Hundreds of underage drinkers also have accidents, such as falls, burns, and drowning, after drinking alcohol (Department of Health, 2007, p. 5). Alcohol is also bad for teenagers, because it can impact the brain and make them prone to early, unprotected, and harmful sexual activities. Many parties and other social activities serve alcohol even to teenagers, thereby increasing the odds of risky and harmful sexual behaviors. Alcohol can enhance risky sexual activity, because it makes people feel less in control of their actions (Department of Health, 2007, p. 5). Some teenagers even forget to use condoms or other tools that can prevent them from having sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Hence, because of alcohol, they are susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS (Department of Health, 2007, p. 5). The Department of Health and Human Services (2007) also reported that alcohol also “ increases the risk of carrying out, or being a victim of, a physical or sexual assault” (p. 5). This includes rape and other sexual form of exploitation. Drunk driving is one of the primary concerns of teenage drinking. The Department of Health (2007) stressed that “ Each year, approximately 5, 000 people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking; this includes about 1, 900 deaths from motor vehicle crashes...” (Department of Health, 2007, p. 4). Alcohol distorts perceptions and judgment, and so it impairs driving skills (Department of Health, 2007, p.

4). News of drunken teenagers and related fatalities is not rare nowadays. Drunk driving has become so prevalent that organizations are made to educate people against it, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). MADD seeks to stop underage drinking, because of its impact on many people's lives and properties. Alcohol can also lead to teenage pregnancy. Alcohol, as mentioned, affects the brain, which in turn influences human behavior. Some of the behaviors affected are sexual activities. Drunken people can either pass out or become more vulnerable to sexual abuse, such as rape (Department of Health, 2007, p. 5). Increased and unprotected sexual activity then makes girls prone to being pregnant (Department of Health, 2007, p. 5). Some of the worst events that can happen to them are getting raped and pregnant. Alcohol is also bad for the youth, because it results to jail time. Drunk driving, underage driving, sexual assault, rape, and homicides are only some of the many crimes that lead to teenagers being imprisoned (Department of Health, 2007, p. 5). This problem has intensified, as more teenagers drink early and more often. For instance, statistics showed that: " Less than one in 10 teens under 14 years old has drunk alcohol in the past month. For teens 15 to 17 years old, less than three in 10 have drunk alcohol in the past month" (WebMD, 2012, p. 2). Drinking alcohol has become a " social activity," where many people drink with their friends (WebMD, 2012, p. 1). Alcohol makes people loosen their inhibitions, thereby making them prone to making mistakes (WebMD, 2012, p. 2). Conclusion Alcohol is an accessible and widely promoted drug in modern society. Many people also see drinking as part of growing up, perhaps even as an initiation rite to the young. Underage drinking, however, is dangerous and bad for

teenagers and the society. Drinking alcohol has led to thousands of deaths every year; risky sexual activities that result to early sex practices, rape, and pregnancy; drunk driving; and jail time. People who also drink early tend to develop alcoholism as adults too. Given these consequences of underage drinking, it has become one of the pressing issues of society, an issue that deserves attention and resolution from the government, community, parents, and teenagers. References National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). (2006). Why do adolescents drink, what are the risks, and how can underage drinking be prevented? Alcohol Alert 67. Retrieved from <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/AA67/AA67.htm> U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). The Surgeon General's call to action to prevent and reduce underage drinking: A guide to action for families. U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. Retrieved from <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/underagedrinking/FamilyGuide.pdf> WebMD. (2012). Teens and alcohol. Teen Health. Retrieved from <http://teens.webmd.com/teens-and-alcohol>