

Lowering the drinking age



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Over half of adults agree that lowering the drinking age would increase binge drinking among teens, and 72% believe that it would make alcohol more accessible to kids as well. Over 50 scientific studies have found that the 21 - law saves lives.

(Dean-Mooney 1) There is just not enough time to grow and become fully mature at a teenage level, especially when most are involved in the college life. One may argue that at age eighteen anyone can become a smoker, move out of their home, get married, enroll in the Army and drop out of school, among other things; so why not be able to legally consume alcohol?

Alcohol is detrimental to the growing brain, which is not fully developed until mid; ass. Alcohol can affect coordination and memory as well as decision-making abilities, which can come with many dangerous life term consequences including illness, disease, dependability and even death to the adolescent drinker or others. (Dean-Mooney 2) Because decision-making abilities are clouded and an adolescent has not reached full maturity, drunk driving accidents are more common. As drinking teenager who may not want to be reprimanded by their parents or guardians, they may find homeless driving home drunk due to fear of calling for a ride.

It can be argued that if alcohol consumption was legalized at a younger age there would be less drunk driving due to less fear of becoming caught, but the reality of the matter is the opposite.

In 2006, 2, 121 people aged 10-20 died in drunk driving accidents on U. S. Roads versus 4, 612 in 1984 when it was more widely legal at a lower age.

(TIME 1) Those statistics show that Driving under the Influence fatalities have been cut in half since the age limit has been legalized.

The number one cause of death in teenagers is car accidents and over half of them were under the influence of alcohol. That stands to be said that the maturity level of a teenage driver is not at a level where they can make their own decisions regarding drinking.

Lowering the age could have a chance to create less issues for college students, but it will most likely kill more of them in car accidents. Another argument that could be made in regards to lowering the drinking age has to do with binge drinking among adolescents.

It is argued that due to the illegality of alcohol and the difficulty of purchasing it, that binge drinking has become more of a problem. Teenagers are consuming more than five beverages on a night out because they do not have alcohol readily available to them and feel they need to consume what they can when they can. That could create a risk for the number of binge drinking episodes that take place, in fact, in some studies it has been proven that those who were born in states where the drinking age was lower than 21 are more likely to drink heavily even now.

This study had proven that those who grew up with a lower drinking age were 19-31% more likely to binge drink more than once per month than those who grew up with a legal drinking age of 21. (Dryden 2) I feel that binge drinking is a problem that will impact college students especially no matter what the age, and that lowering it could potentially make that problem worse. One of the reasons that lowering the drinking age could

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make binge drinking worse is that the age where alcohol is less difficult to receive from friends becomes less.

For example: with the drinking age at 21 years old, those at 18-20 may have friends who can purchase alcohol for them. With the drinking age lowered to 18 years old, those at 15-17 (or even younger) may have friends who can purchase alcohol for them.

That can create an even younger generation of drinkers who are most definitely not classified as old enough to consume alcohol by any means or by anybody. That will affect brain development, binge drinking, and create more Duds at an even higher level.

Now instead of illegal alcohol activity being among the college setting, it is now heavier into the high school setting as well. When the legal drinking age is set at a certain age, people under that age of legality tend to drink less regardless. Since alcohol has been widely proven to not be entirely healthy for consumption and bad for brain development, it is best that the drinking age stays at 21 to reduce the amount of consumption in teens.

One of the major arguments in lowering the drinking age is the comparison many make with other countries and their drinking habits.

It stands to be true that many countries have a considerably lower drinking age or none at all. It also stands to be true that 1 in 10 drinking occasions by younger adolescents in southern European countries resulted in intoxication, versus America where the number is almost half. Beck 2) But the amount of binge drinking taking place in all European countries is a lot higher than it is

in the United States. The reason I believe is that most of the drinking takes place in bars and it resolves to happen a lot more often due to the legality.

The consideration of lower the drinking age for military is one I can agree with.

Those men are considered mature enough to fight for our country and are putting their lives on the line everyday. They are all at the age of 18 and above and have gone through rigorous training and are focused on maintaining their bodies and minds in higher quality than many others at their age. I believe that, with a military ID, alcohol should be legal to provide to those in the military. They are off more mature mindset and I believe they will consume alcohol in a responsible manner.

Of course there are some who are not of the appropriate mindset and if that's the case, they will have to answer to those higher above them and their consequences are not of worth to act without thinking. The other issue with alcohol consumption that is brought to light on more than one occasion is teenagers drinking with their parents onset in the comfort of their own home. The main argument in legalizing drinking with parental consent is that many feel that teaching kids to drink in moderation and the proper way could lead to less binge drinking.

My opinion on the matter is that the younger you start drinking the more likely you are to end up with alcohol message we should promote with our children, but I also don't believe that providing alcohol or promoting drinking is the proper way to go either.

I feel that it is a parents job to speak with their children about the dangers of drinking and the side effects of misusing too much. If a teenager is well educated and well versed on the subject and safety of drinking, then they have a higher chance of being more responsible when alcohol comes their way in a party or college setting.

Although I may not have a problem with a teenager drinking wine with their parents at dinner, it will not be possible to maintain that limit among parents if it is widely legalized to consume at home. Some parents may believe that letting them have a bonfire in the woods with two bottles of hard alcohol is normal, while others feel just wine. Unfortunately, no sis to underage drinking is removed due to the fact that parents buy it and there is no proof in it creating less issues with binge drinking or alcoholism in the future.

Besides alcohol consumption of military men and women, I do not believe that the consumption of alcohol should be made legal to anyone below the age of 21 including adolescents who have the permission of parents/guardians to consume in their own homes. It stands to be true that no matter where alcohol comes from or where it is being consumed, teen drinking puts them at a higher risk for unplanned arrogance, car accidents, homicides, suicides and many more unplanned events.