

Protecting Missouri's Youth Starts With Preventing Alcohol Misuse

COMMUNITY ACTION CAN PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING

Underage drinking in Missouri and nationwide poses serious health and safety risks for young people. Alcohol is the most commonly used drug among people under 21, and underage drinking contributes to thousands of preventable deaths and risky behaviors each year in the U.S. (CDC).

According to the 2024 SAMHSA Missouri underage drinking report, tens of thousands of Missouri youth ages 12–20 report drinking and binge drinking alcohol in the past month—indicating that underage use remains a significant public health concern.

Adult binge drinking—defined as four or more drinks for women or five or more for men on a single occasion—is common across the U.S. and influences youth access and norms around alcohol (CDC).

THE BOTTOM LINE:

These patterns underscore the need for prevention strategies that protect young people, reduce early initiation, and limit access to alcohol in Missouri communities.

THE PREVELANCE AND CONSEQUENCES OF UNDERAGE DRINKING IN MISSOURI

ALCOHOL IS ONE OF THE MOST USED SUBSTANCES AMONG MISSOURI YOUTH.

According to the 2024 Missouri Student Survey, 6.8% of Missouri youth in 6th-12th grade reported using alcohol within the past 30 days making alcohol one of the most used substances among youth.

OVER 30% OF MISSOURI YOUTH FIND IT 'EASY' TO OBTAIN ALCOHOL.

According to the 2024 Missouri Student Survey, 39.9% of Missouri Youth in 6th-12th grade reported that they believe it is 'easy' or 'sort of easy' to obtain alcohol.

107 MISSOURI YOUTH DIE FROM EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL USE ANNUALLY.

According to the National Center of Drug Abuse Statistics, an average of 2,877 annual deaths in Missouri are attributable to excessive alcohol use. People under the age of 21 account for 3.27% of these deaths.

CONTACT US



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Alcohol:

Additional Talking Points

2024 MISSOURI STUDENT SURVEY DATA

- Past 30 Day Use
 - 6.8% of 6th-12th graders in Missouri who participated in the survey reported that they have used alcohol within the past 30 days.
- Perception of Availability
 - 39.9% of 6th-12th graders in Missouri who participated in the survey reported that they believe alcohol is 'very' or 'sort of easy' to get.
- Perception of Harm
 - 37.3% of 6th-12th graders in Missouri who participated in the survey reported that they believe there is 'no' or 'slight risk' if they drink alcohol (no dosage specified).
 - 24.8% of 6th-12th graders in Missouri who participated in the survey reported that they believe there is 'no' or 'slight risk' if they take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly everyday.
 - 18.5% of 6th-12th graders in Missouri who participated in the survey reported that they believe there is 'no' or 'slight risk' if they have 5+ drinks, once or twice a week.

MISSOURI DATA

Alcohol-related deaths in Missouri are more likely to involve underage drinkers dead from acute causes.

- 18.9% of Missouri adults over 18 binge drink at least once per month.
- The median number of drinks per binge is 5.5; the 25% most active drinkers consume a median 7.7 drinks per binge.
- Binge drinking adults in Missouri binge a median 1.8 times monthly; the 25% most active drinkers binge 4.8 times per month.
- An average of 2,877 annual deaths in Missouri are attributable to excessive alcohol use.
- The 5-year average annual rate of excessive alcohol deaths per capita in Missouri increased by as much as 50.4% from 2015 to 2019.
- Missouri averages one (1) death from excessive alcohol use for every 2,139 people aged 18 and older or 6.02 deaths for every 10,000 adults.
- 70.5% of people who die from excessive alcohol use in Missouri are male.
- 52.5% of excessive alcohol use deaths are from chronic causes, such as Alcohol Use Disorder.
- 80.2% of deaths in Missouri from excessive alcohol use are adults aged 35 years and older.
- 3.72% of people in Missouri who die from excessive alcohol use are under the age of 21.
- The CDC estimates 77,921 years of potential life is lost to excessive alcohol use each year.
- Missouri taxpayers spent \$4.604 billion as a result of excessive alcohol use in 2010; adjusted for inflation, this is equivalent to \$6.215 billion or \$2.47 per drink in 2022 US\$.