

# Underage Drinking and Parenting Influence: Data and Resources

**Underage drinking is a public health problem affecting the health and safety of our community; the solutions are everyone's responsibility.**

## 2012 Dane County Youth Assessment (DCYA) data (Dane County Youth Commission)

Key findings among high school youth:

- 43% of youth said they drank alcohol in the past 12 months. Students who drink alcohol were most likely to report getting alcohol from their friends and at parties as their most frequent source of alcohol (62% and 60% respectively). DCYA Overview Report (page 11): <http://www.publichealthmdc.com/documents/DCYouthRpt.pdf>
- Students who report being at someone's home where teens were drinking alcohol and the parents knew, have over three times more risk to drink alcohol. If this risk factor were eliminated among all high school youth, there would be 47% less drinking in this population. See graph below (PHMDC)
- Students who report they have been at someone's home where teens were drinking alcohol and the parents knowingly provided the alcohol have two and a half times greater risk of alcohol use. If this risk were eliminated among high school youth, there would be 31% less drinking in this population. See graph below (PHMDC)
- While many parental actions can impact underage drinking, the riskiest are when youth are in homes with other teens drinking alcohol and parental acceptance of the activity occurs (PHMDC):

***Teens drinking alcohol at someone's home when parents know it, is the most significant risk for Dane County youth***

<b>Risk Factors</b> Reported by youth	<b>Prevalence</b> % of 9-12 graders reporting this risk factor	<b>Risk Ratio</b> Relationship between using alcohol in the past 12 months and exposure to the risk factor, with the amount it increased an individual's risk	<b>Population Attributable Fraction</b> % of the alcohol use among this population of youth that would be reduced if the risk factor was eliminated
Students have been at someone's home where teens were drinking alcohol and the parents knew it	43.5	3.1 Three times higher risk	47.3
Students have been at someone's home where teens were drinking alcohol and the parents knowingly provided the alcohol	31.6	2.4 Two and a half times higher risk	31.1
Parents feel it is not wrong/a little wrong for youth to drink alcohol	27.5	2.1 Twice higher risk	22.6
Parents never/sometimes know where youth are when they go out	13.3	1.9 90% higher risk	10.6
Parents never/sometimes set clear rules about what youth can and cannot do	18.9	1.6 60% higher risk	9.9
Parents never/sometimes have consequences if youth break rules	21.5	1.5 50% higher risk	9.2
Parents never/sometimes encourage youth to do well	7.4	1.4 40% higher risk	2.9
Parents never/sometimes monitor youth' school progress	20.9	1.4 40% higher risk	7.1
Parents never/sometimes talk with youth about things that bother them	42.2	1.3 40% higher risk	12.8
Parents never/sometimes talk to youth about their future plans	20.8	1.2 20% higher risk	3.9

## The costs

- Youth who drink alcohol are more likely to experience school and legal problems, injuries, car crashes, suicide and violence.
  - Underage Drinking Fact Sheet (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm>
- Underage drinking cost Wisconsin \$1.0 billion in 2010.
  - Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation: <http://www.udetc.org/factsheets/WI.pdf>
- Underage drinking is part of a bigger picture when examining the costs of excessive drinking in Dane County, costing each Dane County resident \$1342 annually.
  - *The Burden of Excessive Alcohol Use in Wisconsin* (pages 39-40)  
<http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/publications/other/burden-of-excessive-alcohol-use-in-wi.pdf>

## Solutions

A young person's decision to use alcohol is influenced by many factors. Everyone in the community should give the message that underage drinking is not okay.

- While they can't do it alone, parents can help prevent the harm of underage drinking and reduce the related costs by making a habit of knowing about their adolescents' activities and behaviors.
  - Parental Monitoring Fact Sheet:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/adolescenthealth/pdf/parental\\_monitoring\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/adolescenthealth/pdf/parental_monitoring_factsheet.pdf)
- Families can help prevent underage drinking by staying involved in their children's lives. It is important for families to pay attention to what's happening with their teens. They cannot give alcohol to their children. Families need to tell their children that alcohol use is off limits to them and their friends in your home. Families can help youth find ways to have fun without alcohol, and work with others in the community to create friendly, alcohol-free places where teens can gather.
  - Action guide for families (Surgeon General):  
<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/underagedrinking/familyguide.pdf>
  - More resources for parents (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMSHA]):  
<https://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/parents.aspx>  
<http://www.samhsa.gov/underagedrinking/>
- The message about the harms associated with underage drinking should be the same whether youth hear it in school, at home, in places of worship, on the sports field, in youth programs, or in other places where young people gather.
  - Action guide for communities (Surgeon General):  
<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/underagedrinking/communityguide.pdf>
  - Health First Wisconsin – Preventing Alcohol Abuse: <http://www.healthfirstwi.org/alcohol/resources.php>
- Implementing and enforcing social host ordinances (establish significant forfeitures for adults that enable alcohol use of unrelated minor children in their homes) is one of many effective ways to influence and change the norms about underage drinking and decrease underage drinking in communities.
  - Policies to improve health (University of WI Population Health Institute):  
<http://whatworksforhealth.wisc.edu/program.asp?t1=21&t2=13&t3=35&id=79>
  - Model policies for coalitions (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America):  
<http://www.cadca.org/files/ModelSHO-Ordinance-%20Ventura-9-05.pdf>
  - Resources for coalitions
    - (RAND Health and SAMSHA):  
[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical\\_reports/2007/RAND\\_TR403.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2007/RAND_TR403.pdf)
    - (WI Alcohol Policy Project): <http://law.wisc.edu/wapp/resources.html>
    - Using stories to influence alcohol policies for healthier communities (WI Clearinghouse):  
<http://preventionspeaks.org/>

## For more information, contact:

Jenny Lujan, RN  
Public Health Madison and Dane County  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 507  
(608) 242-6533  
jlujan@publichealthmdc.com