

What's at Stake When Teens Drink Alcohol

- ◆ If you are under 21, it is illegal to buy, possess, or drink alcohol.
- ◆ If you are under 21, driving with any amount of alcohol in your system is against the law.
- ◆ Adults who provide alcohol to children under 18 can be fined up to \$2,500 per child.

Stake #1: Receiving an alcohol citation from a police officer

Drinking can cause trouble with the law: teens can be arrested for purchasing, possessing, or drinking alcohol. You could be held in juvenile detention and have to do community service.

Stake #2: Using a Fake I.D. can have long term consequences

If you get caught using a fake I.D. to buy alcohol you will lose your driving license for 6 months, you risk not being able to get a security clearance as an adult, and it may come up when applying for a job or college.

Stake #3: Alcohol poisoning can land you in the hospital or kill you

Binge drinking can cause alcohol poisoning and respiratory arrest, which can progress to coma or death. Someone gulping beer from 16 – 20 oz cups could easily and quickly drink himself to death.

Stake#4: Injuries or death from accidents

Alcohol affects the brain and causes poor decision-making and impulsivity. People who drink are more likely to do dangerous and stupid things, which can lead to injuries or death from falls, drowning and other accidents.

Stake#5: Unplanned sex, pregnancy & STDs

When people drink, their boundaries and inhibitions weaken, which can lead to doing more sexually than they had planned. Teens are more likely to have sex after drinking alcohol and less likely to use condoms than when sober. This places them at high risk for HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and unwanted pregnancy.

Stake#6: Sexual assault and/or rape

Drinking can cause irresponsible and “out of character” behavior, and lead to unwanted sexual advances. Drinking makes women less able to protect themselves and men more likely to force partners into having sex. In cases of sexual assault, 75% of perpetrators and more than 50% of the victims had been drinking before the assault.

Stake#7: Fights, vandalism, crime

People who drink are more likely to get into fights and arguments, commit crimes, and destroy property. Alcohol use is involved in half of murders, accidental deaths, and suicides. 32% of incarcerated teens were drunk at the time of their crime and/or arrest.

Stake #8: Long term health consequences

Alcohol use can cause damage to the adolescent body, which can carry over into adulthood, including growth problems, brain damage, liver diseases, heart disease, cancers, and gastric illnesses.

Stake #9: Alcoholism

Teens that start drinking young are more likely to become alcoholics. The disease of alcoholism worsens over time until alcoholics crave alcohol and can't limit their drinking. They continue to drink despite the real problems it causes in their lives. It's a true, physical addiction, complete with painful withdrawal symptoms.

Stake #10: Dying in a car crash or killing someone else

Drinking and driving is the biggest killer of teenagers. Being drunk reduces reasoning ability, movement control and reaction speed making being behind the wheel of a car deadly.

Teens should never drive after drinking alcohol or ride with a driver who has been drinking - no matter how hard it is to say “no” to a good friend. Be a Good Friend – Don't let them drive.