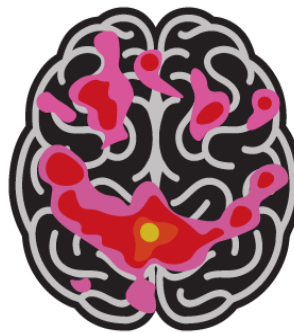


# Impact of Underage Drinking

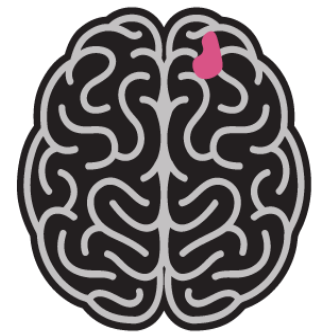
## Impact on the Body

Heavy and excessive drinking can lead to health problems in people of all ages, however, it is especially dangerous for younger people both for their brain and their body. The human brain's frontal lobe doesn't stop fully developing until around 25. Why is this important to know? We actively use our prefrontal lobe every day to make decisions. Its other functions include planning, judgment, impulse control and language. Research has found that teens who drink actually have a smaller pre frontal lobe compared to teens who do not drink. Another area of the brain that is impacted is the hippocampus, which is the part of the brain that is involved in memory. The hippocampus function is uniquely sensitive to teen alcohol use.

## The Effects of Heavy Drinking on the Teen Brain









Teenager who is a Heavy Drinker



Regular Teenager

These images show that a heavy drinker doesn't activate the same brain areas as a non-drinker normally does for memory and learning.

## Effects of ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Body parts/organs	Effects
<b>Brain</b> 	Causes mood and behavioural changes, depression, agitation, memory loss
<b>Heart</b> 	Arrhythmia of atrium and ventricle, stroke, hypertension, haemorrhage
<b>Liver</b> 	Fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis, cirrhosis
<b>Pancreas</b> 	Pancreatitis, which can lead to diabetes
<b>Immune system</b> 	Suppresses development/ability of immune cells
<b>Mouth, oesophagus, pharynx, larynx, breast</b> 	Cancer

Alcohol can actually damage or even destroy the hippocampus nerve cells. As a result, teens who drink can have difficulty creating new and lasting memories or recalling information.

Outside of the brain, youth drinkers have a higher risk of developing cirrhosis of the liver, pancreatitis, hepatitis, high blood pressure, and anemia. There is also the risk of developing many different types of cancers. Clear evidence suggests that heavy alcohol use can affect the development of and increase the risk of breast, liver, esophageal, head and neck, and colorectal cancer. Emerging evidence is also pointing to an increased risk of melanoma, prostate, and pancreatic cancer.

## Influence of Underage Drinking

There are several factors that contribute to why someone underage would consider drinking.

One of the most common factors is peer pressure which can be both direct and indirect.

Direct peer pressure involves one person to another, with things like offering someone a drink explicitly or encouraging a person to drink.

Indirect peer pressure may look like a group of popular students may all be drinking alcohol and they may be considered cool. Others will

strive to also be seen in this same light and may then participate in the modeled behavior (drinking alcohol) to try and fit in with this social group, whether or not they are asked to join in.

Family can also contribute to why someone underage would consider drinking. Youth pay attention to what their parents do and the behavior they are modeling both the good and the bad. If adults in your teen's life drink heavily, they may think this is normal, and may mimic this behavior.

Advertising and marketing can also influence perceptions, and show drinking in a more favorable light that can encourage underage drinking. Teens often look up to celebrities, and if they see them drinking, they may be more likely to try it, too.



## Consequences of Underage Drinking

Alcohol can impair the judgement upon those who choose to consume too much and as a result there can be some serious and often times fatal consequences:

- Increases the risk of physical and/or sexual abuse, which can lead to physical injuries
- Problems at school
  - Grades
  - Behavior
  - Not participating in after school activities/sports
- The use of other illegal drugs that a teen would not normally take while sober
- Alcohol poisoning which occurs when there is so much alcohol in a person's bloodstream that areas of the brain that controls basic life-support systems such as breathing, heart rate and temperature control-starts to shut down.
- Legal Consequences:
  - Drinking and Driving:
    - There are numerous legal penalties for underage DUI including fines, probation, community service, loss of driver's license (often for an entire year), mandatory alcohol education with a treatment professional and/or jail time.

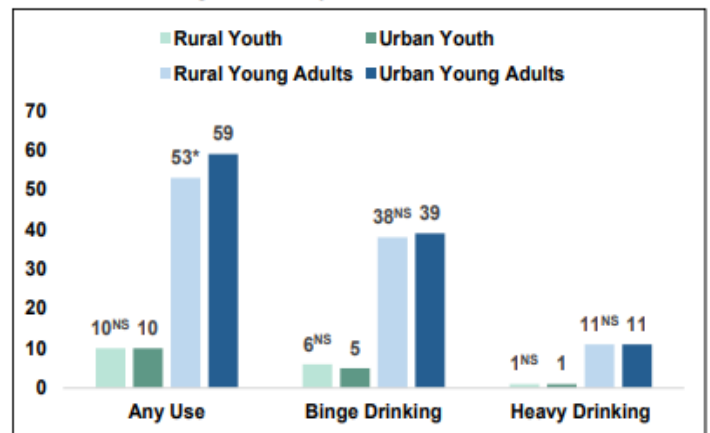
# Rural Vs Urban Underage Drinking

Alcohol use is more prevalent in rural areas in both youth and adult populations. While the research on rural youth drinking is very limited, studies have found that 37% of youth in rural areas use alcohol, as compared to only 34% of youth in urban areas. 5% of those youth will binge drink in rural areas, as compared to only 4% do so in urban areas.

What contributes to high alcohol consumption amongst youth in rural areas:

- Increased social stigma: Rural cultural values of sharing and helpfulness make it easy to access alcohol and residents place a higher value on self-sufficiency than urban residents, which complicates social acceptance for treatment and recovery programming.
- Low perceived harm of substance misuse: Parents of rural teens are more likely than urban parents to downplay the harms of alcohol use and to allow for their teenagers to consume alcohol in their homes, believing that teen drinking is a “rite of passage”. Unsurprisingly, rural teens also perceive alcohol use as not harmful and more likely than urban teens to begin drinking at earlier ages.
- Central role of faith-based organizations in providing social services, including prevention services: Rural communities are more likely than urban communities to depend on faith-based social services for emergency food aid, low-cost childcare and clothing, and substance misuse services. These faith based organizations have varying levels of knowledge about alcohol and drug pharmacology and may not be trained in evidence-based prevention or interventions.
- Decreased access to treatment and recovery programs: Because people living in rural communities have reduced access to primary care providers, diagnosing substance use disorders is considerably more difficult as a part of routine medical care since changes in patterns of behavior may be harder for physicians to identify.

Figure 1. Rates of Alcohol Use in the Past Month among Youth and Young Adults, by Residence



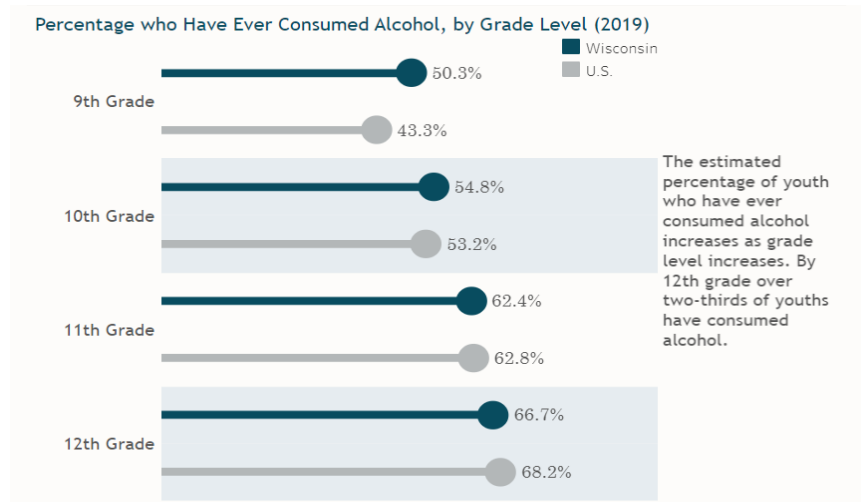
\*Rural-urban differences significant at p. <.05

NS = no significant difference



# Wisconsin and Underage Drinking

Underage drinking over the years has become a serious problem in the state of Wisconsin. In this state, 65% of teens have tried alcohol at least once, and nearly 42,000 of our high schoolers tried alcohol before age 13. 32.7% of Wisconsin youth have had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more occasions in the past 30 days and 18.4% had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (binge drinking) in the past 30 days.



## Legal Consequences of Underage Drinking

In the state of Wisconsin, someone must be over the age 21 in order to possess or consume alcohol. It should be noted that fines/punishments for being caught possessing or consuming alcohol underage can differ depending on where someone is in the state of Wisconsin. Generally, if someone between the age of 17-20 is caught knowingly possessing or consuming alcohol, that person could be given a \$100-\$200 dollar fine. If someone received multiple underage drinking tickets within the same year, the fine increases as followed: 2nd in a year: \$200-\$300. 3rd in a year: \$300-\$500. 4th & subsequent in a year: \$500-\$1000.

What about Underage Drinking & Driving?

The penalties for an underage OWI will depend entirely on the youth's current criminal record. First offense OWI's in Wisconsin will be subject to a fine of \$250-\$500, a 30 to 90-day suspension of their driver's license, and a mandatory alcohol assessment. Additionally, it may result in jail time depending on the severity of the OWI or if an accident occurred as a result of being under the influence.

## Wisconsin Odd Underage Drinking Law

Believe it or not, in the state of Wisconsin, someone doesn't have to be 21 to legally drink in a bar or restaurant. If accompanied by a parent or guardian and if permission is given, someone under the age of 21 can legally be served and sold an alcoholic beverage in any licensed premises. While there are some states that allow parent-supervised underage drinking at home, few allow underage drinking at bars if they are accompanied by parents or guardians.



# How to Reduce Underage Drinking

- Keep an open line of communication
  - It is crucial that youth understand that no matter what they have to say, they will be heard out.
  - Open and honest communication with the youth, whatever age that they are and should be one of the main goals as a parent/community.
  - Educate and be knowledgeable about the real dangers of underage drinking, including binge drinking.
- Share knowledge
  - Get the word out about policies to prevent underage drinking. This includes alcohol compliance checks for people buying alcohol, including on the Internet.
  - Help people learn about the latest research on underage alcohol use. Include information about the dangers of youth alcohol use for teens and others. An informed public is key to ending underage drinking.
  - Teach young people about the dangers of underage alcohol use. Support programs that help teens already involved with drinking.
- Change the teen scene
  - Create friendly, alcohol-free places where teens can gather.
  - Create programs, including volunteer work, where young people can grow, explore their options, succeed, and feel good about themselves without alcohol.
  - Help teens realize that, like “doing drugs” or smoking, underage drinking is unhealthy and can drastically impact their lives.
  - Let teens involved with underage drinking know that it’s okay to ask for and get help.
- Take Action
  - Work to change community attitudes about underage drinking.
  - Focus as much community attention on underage drinking as on tobacco and drug use.
  - Work with State, Tribal, and local groups to reduce underage drinking.
  - Make it easier for young people who are involved with or at risk for underage drinking to get help.
  - Get the word out about underage drinking laws. The law that makes drinking under age 21 illegal is only one of them. Other laws forbid selling or giving alcohol to youth. Others make it against the law to drink and drive. Work to help ensure these laws are always enforced.



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Agreement	Desk	Mathematics	Science
Attendance	Exam	Motel Room	Secretary
Backpack	Examine	Motor	September
Badger	Excitement	Oak Tree	Social
Bell	First Day	Orientation	Study
Calendar	Friend	Park	Sunburn
Classroom	Grades	Patience	Teamwork
Computers	Gym	Principal	Temporary
Consult	Intercom	Quiz	Weather
Course	Language	Recover	Welcome
Credit Card	Learning	Remedy	Written

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McFarland is a small community south of Madison in Dane County. In January of 2017, a group of concerned citizens came together to discuss substance abuse problems in the McFarland area. The McFarland RADAR is a result of these meetings

**We are comprised of local representatives from schools, businesses, churches, village administration as well as parents, and youth—all working together to promote healthy lifestyles**

**For more information go to: <https://www.radarmc.com/>**



For time, day and place of meetings, please contact Cathy Kalina at [CathyK@fsmad.org](mailto:CathyK@fsmad.org)

*The McFarland RADAR (RADAR stands for Relevant Alcohol & Drug Awareness Resources) Coalition works to develop, implement and support environmental strategies to reduce substance abuse.*

*We believe by working together, we can nurture social and environmental changes to make the McFarland area a safer and healthier place, brightening the future of our children, youth and families.*

### **McFarland RADAR Mission Statement**

*“The mission of McFarland’s RADAR Coalition is to promote healthy lifestyles in the McFarland area through alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education efforts.”*

### **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

We are asking you to give the gift of time. Make a difference in the lives of our youth and our community by

1. Working with us in providing support for planning, project management and awareness campaigns
2. Helping with coalition events, conferences, workshops, and fairs held throughout the year.
3. Being a voice for change in our community, it is time to come together and be that force for change in the McFarland area.