

# LAWS FACTS LEAD

## LEARN ALCOHOL BASICS

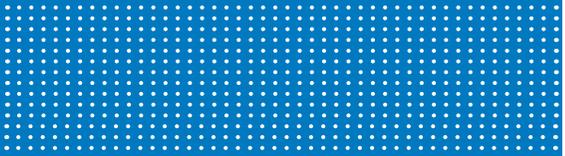
Information for **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**



Virginia Department of  
Alcoholic Beverage Control  
**Education and Prevention**  
Publication Series



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# INTRODUCTION

High school is the start of the exciting adventure into adulthood! Friends, schoolwork, fun, extracurricular activities and volunteering all shape your day-to-day life. High school years are fast paced and full of new experiences. Some teens choose to stay away from alcohol and be strong leaders among their friends. Others do not take this path. It's important for you to know the facts, stay healthy and safe, and support those around you!

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## IS IT LEGAL FOR TEENS TO DRINK ALCOHOL?

In Virginia, it is illegal for anyone younger than 21 to purchase, possess or drink alcohol. If found in violation of this law it can result in fines of up to \$2,500, loss of driving privileges, community service hours or even jail time.



Thinking of using someone's ID to obtain alcohol? Think again! A fake ID is any document that establishes a false identity. They are illegal to possess, manufacture, sell or use. Using a fake ID can get you in the same legal trouble as listed above. Each year, Virginia ABC trains bartenders, bouncers, wait staff, managers and clerks to recognize fake IDs from Virginia and other states.

WHAT IS

# ALCOHOL?

Alcohol is created naturally when sugars in grains, vegetables and fruits are fermented. Alcohol is defined as a drug that reduces your ability to think rationally and impairs your judgment. It is a depressant, which means that it slows your body functions down.



BEER 12 OZ.



WINE 5 OZ.



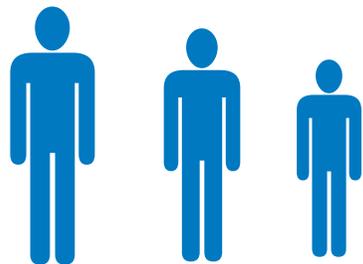
80-PROOF  
LIQUOR 1.5 OZ.

## TYPES OF ALCOHOL

There are a variety of beverages that contain alcohol. Beer, wine, liquor, hard ciders, malt beverages and cocktails all vary in packaging, percentage of alcohol and flavor. You probably have seen a few of these beverages that are advertised to look and sound appealing to you. It isn't easy to know how much alcohol is in a drink! Standard drinks are different types of beverages that contain the same amount of alcohol, thus having an equal impact on Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) levels.



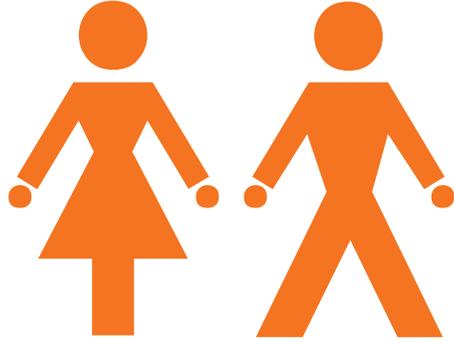
Teens who start drinking before the age of 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse in their lifetimes than those who begin drinking at age 21 or older.



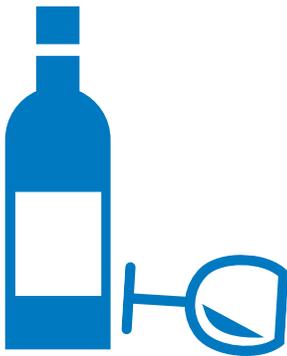
In 2014, 66 percent of 12th graders, 50 percent of 10th graders, and 27 percent of 8th graders reported to have consumed alcohol.

# BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION (BAC)

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is the amount of alcohol that is present in the bloodstream. Many factors affect BAC including gender, weight, rate of consumption, drug use, strength of alcohol and the amount of food in the body. For example, alcohol will have a different impact on a 140-pound male than it will on a 140-pound female.



A BAC level of .08 is the legal intoxication limit for drivers 21 years of age or older in most states. However, it is important to remember that even at a level of .02 or upon finishing your first drink, you will experience effects of consuming alcohol. The more alcohol you consume, BAC levels rise, increasing your risk of danger. Although you may not feel it, impairment begins with the first drink.



Excessive alcohol consumption contributes to more than 4,300 deaths among underage youth, that is, persons younger than 21 years of age, in the United States each year.

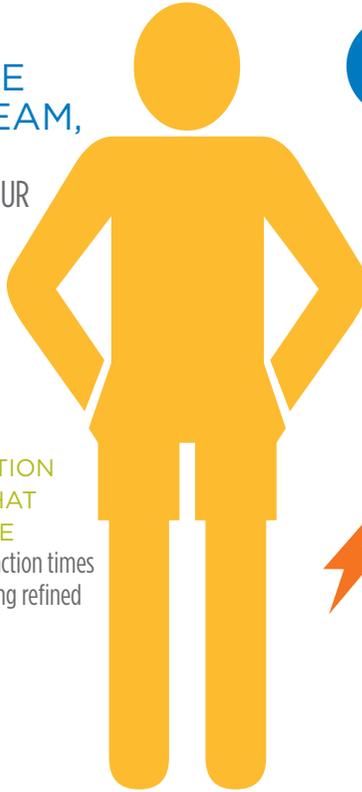
# ALCOHOL'S EFFECT ON THE BODY



ONCE IN THE BLOODSTREAM, ALCOHOL BEGINS TO PHYSICALLY AFFECT YOUR BODY AND ACTIONS.



THE BRAIN AND BODY DEVELOPS OVER TIME WELL INTO ADULthood.



KEY COMMUNICATION CONNECTIONS THAT IMPACT YOUR FINE MOTOR SKILLS, reaction times and reasoning are still being refined until your mid-twenties.

**TEENS THAT DRINK** are more likely to suffer long-term physical effects of drinking.



MUSCLES CRAMPS, DECREASED ENDURANCE LEVEL AND SLOWED REACTION TIME ARE ALL CONSEQUENCES YOU FACE WHEN CONSUMING ALCOHOL.

BELOW IS A SHORT LIST OF EFFECTS YOUR BODY FACES WITH SHORT-TERM, CONTINUED AND LONG-TERM ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:



## SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

Slower reaction times and reflexes  
Heavy sweating  
Blurry vision  
Nausea and vomiting  
Lowered reasoning ability



## CONTINUED EFFECTS

Memory loss  
Anxiety and depression  
Muscle cramps  
Slowed breathing  
Impaired sports performance



## LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Cirrhosis, or permanent damage of the liver  
Nervous system damage  
Muscles shrinking  
Hallucinations  
Death

Not all of your friends are drinking. In fact, during the last decade more people your age have made the decision not to drink. If you have friends that choose to drink alcohol some may be harming themselves by binge drinking, which can lead to alcohol poisoning.

Binge drinking is the rapid and heavy consumption of alcohol. Binge drinking occurs when a female consumes four drinks or when a male consumes five drinks over a short period of time.



Alcohol poisoning occurs when a large amount of alcohol is consumed, resulting in a high BAC. A high volume of alcohol in the bloodstream causes the body and its major functioning organs like the brain to consequently shut down and can result in death.

## KNOW THESE SYMPTOMS AND HELP SOMEONE BY IMMEDIATELY CALLING 911:

- Confusion
- Slow or no reflexes or response
- Inability and difficulty to remain conscious
- Vomiting
- Trouble with breathing
- Clammy, pale or bluish lips
- Seizures



# LEADING BY MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES

It is never too early to make a good impression. Being healthy may mean taking steps that involve your friends and family. It is important to know you have the potential to influence, support and help those around you. Siblings, friends, parents and teachers all appreciate the healthy choices you make in life.

I'll wait until I'm legal, thanks.

**DON'T BE AFRAID TO SAY "NO" TO ALCOHOL AT EVENTS OR CELEBRATIONS. SAYING "NO" MAY BE DIFFICULT, SO TRY SOME OF THESE SIMPLE REFUSAL TECHNIQUES:**

I'm good, thanks.

Nope, I'm driving.

I can't. I have a (test, game, concert) tomorrow.

Let's go to the movies!

**OFFER ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES THAT DON'T INCLUDE DRINKING:**

We should watch the entire season of our favorite show!

How about we go for a hike?

Want to go bowling instead?

## TALK TO YOUR PARENTS ABOUT ALCOHOL



It may be difficult, but having open and honest conversations with your parents is an important part of becoming a responsible adult. Parents can help you process your thoughts and feelings about situations with alcohol that made you feel uncomfortable and can help you understand why alcohol can be dangerous.

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## HELP YOUR FRIENDS WHEN THEY NEED IT



Sometimes your friends need to be reminded that just because you aren't participating in risky behaviors, you are still having fun! If you recognize someone is in a dangerous situation, take steps to get them help by assuming responsibility and ensuring their safety. Be proud of your healthy choices and help those around you to be healthier too.

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## SOMEONE IS ALWAYS WATCHING



It may just be your friends, but it might also be a younger sibling. People look to you to be a role model and your actions speak louder than words. Making healthy choices will inspire those around you to do the same.

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## DON'T TAKE THE SPECIAL OUT OF SPECIAL EVENTS



Although special events like prom, graduation, homecoming and beach week are a time for celebration, it's important to be safe and make smart choices.



**STAY AWAY FROM DRINKING GAMES.** Drinking games are often seen as a lot of fun at parties and can easily turn into an unsafe situation. Drinking games make it impossible to keep track of the amount of alcohol consumed.



**USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM.** Leave with the friends you came with and have each other's back!



**PLAN ALCOHOL-FREE ACTIVITIES BEFOREHAND.**

Bring a volleyball or board games to beach week. Go to the movies or have a movie night party after special events. Use a community calendar to find fun and free activities that are available in your area year-round!



**BRING OR GET YOUR OWN BEVERAGE.** You may not be able to avoid alcohol at some parties but that doesn't mean you have to drink. Bring your own beverage and keep it near you or when getting a beverage at a party, make sure it's alcohol free and that you keep an eye on it.



**KNOW WHO TO CALL.** Parents, older siblings and your friend's parents are all good resources when you need help.



**TELL SOMEONE WHERE YOU ARE GOING.** Make sure a trusted adult knows what your plans are and remind them that you will be safe. Give them the address of where you'll be located and make sure they know how to contact any adults in charge.



**HAVE YOUR PHONE CHARGED.** Keep your phone charged so you can easily contact someone if you need help.



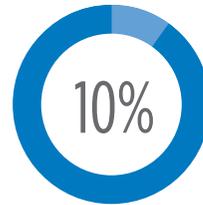
**UNDERSTAND YOUR RISK.** Alcohol can give a false sense of security, which can make you think that you are in a safe situation when you are actually in danger. Don't let anyone pressure you to stay in a situation where you don't feel comfortable. Leave if you feel uneasy.



Remember to NEVER drink alcohol and drive, or accept a ride with someone who has been drinking. Statistics show nearly a third of alcohol-related teen traffic deaths occur during April, May and June. Parties can turn dangerous and sometimes tragic for underage drinkers.



Teens who drink before 21 are 7 times more likely to be in a motor vehicle crash because of their drinking later in life.



In 2013, 10 percent of high school students reported driving after drinking alcohol and 22 percent reported riding with a driver that had been drinking.

## COLLEGES ARE LOOKING FOR HEALTHY LEADERS

Alcohol use can affect your grades, relationships and involvement in extracurricular activities. Colleges are looking for applicants with well-rounded leadership potential and consider underage alcohol violations a serious infraction. Problems with alcohol could result in revoked admittance. Choosing to drink will instill a pattern that will extend into college and could be a gateway to alcoholism in the future.



# FACTS

- ✓ It is illegal to drink alcohol before the age of 21.
- ✓ Although you may not feel it, impairment begins with the first drink.
- ✓ Alcohol can have a serious long-term impact on your future.
- ✓ Making positive choices is easier than you think.
- ✓ You may believe that all of your peers are drinking, but that isn't the case.
- ✓ Stay involved, say "no," be a good role model and reach out.
- ✓ Know the signs of alcohol poisoning.
- ✓ Celebrate your milestones and your transition into adulthood responsibly!



In 2014, 44 percent of 12th graders, 34 percent of 10th graders, and 16 percent of 8th graders reported to have smoked marijuana.



In 2014, 34 percent of 12th graders, 23 percent of 10th graders, and 14 percent of 8th graders reported to have smoked cigarettes.



In 2014, 17 percent of 12th graders, 16 percent of 10th graders, and 9 percent of 8th graders reported to have used e-cigarettes.



In 2013, 9.9 million people aged 12 and older reported driving under the influence of illicit drugs.

# RESOURCES

## **The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility ([www.responsibility.org](http://www.responsibility.org))**

The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility leads the fight to eliminate drunk driving and underage drinking and promotes responsible decision-making regarding beverage alcohol.

## **Mother's Against Drunk Driving ([www.madd.org](http://www.madd.org))**

The mission of Mothers Against Drunk Driving is to end drunk driving, help fight drugged driving, support the victims of these violent crimes and prevent underage drinking.

## **Virginia Rules ([www.virginiarules.com](http://www.virginiarules.com))**

Virginia Rules educates middle and high school students on how to make sound decisions and become active citizens of their schools and communities.

## **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ([www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov))**

NIAAA supports and conducts research on the impact of alcohol use on human health and well-being. It is the largest funder of alcohol research in the world.

## **National Association for College Admission Counseling ([www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org))**

The National Association for College Admission Counseling provides information and resources dedicated to serving students as they make choices about pursuing postsecondary education.

## Virginia ABC Education and Prevention Resources

### **Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project (YADAPP)**

A high school youth-led leadership conference equipping teens with a strategic plan and empowering them to keep their schools and communities alcohol and drug free.

### **Project Sticker Shock**

Supplies are provided to community groups in an effort to decrease social providing. The project includes stickers being placed on alcohol packaging reminding buyers to not provide to minors and is done in conjunction with a press event to help raise awareness.

### **Miss Virginia School Tour**

In partnership with Virginia ABC, Miss Virginia travels across Virginia to elementary schools spreading a message of health, wellness and prevention with students and teachers.

### **Being Outstanding Leaders Together (BOLT) Against Drugs and Alcohol**

Provides drug and alcohol prevention knowledge to middle school students through regional community collaboration and high school peer leadership.

### **College Tour**

A multi-stop conference that focuses on promoting zero tolerance for underage drinking, social responsibility, collaboration and leadership on college and university campuses across Virginia.

### **Responsible Sellers & Servers: Virginia's Program (RSVP)**

#### **Managers' Alcohol Responsibility Training (MART)**

Trainings are held regionally and conducted by Virginia ABC special agents to help businesses that sell alcohol become more responsible and to better understand Virginia laws, rules and regulations.

### **Alcohol and Aging Awareness Group (AAAG)**

A statewide affiliate group that provides education, training and resources to prevent the misuse of alcohol and medications as adults age.

### **Virginia Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (VOSAP)**

An organization that promotes collaboration among state and local agencies, organizations, coalitions and faith communities that address substance abuse prevention.

### **Educational Materials**

Publications, online training, and public service announcements are available to the general public at no cost.

### **Grant Program**

Alcohol education and prevention grants assist community partners to develop and enhance initiatives related to alcohol education and prevention. Grant cycle is July - June with applications due in the spring.



*VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL*

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