



Parents Are Heroes

A Newsletter of the **Making Sobriety Attractive (MSA) Program**,
a SAMHSA-funded Drug-Free Communities Project for Kent County,

"80% of teens who believe their parents disapprove, do not drink alcohol!"

Presented by www.ALERTLabs.org of Michigan

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• Underage Drinkers Seldom "Grow Up;" They Just Become Old Teenagers

• MSA Schools: Drinking Reduced 15% and Unwanted Sex or Sexual Contact Down 56%

Previous Parent Newsletters at alertlabs.org/newsletter.php

PARENTS OF CHILDREN with AOD Problems: Alanon Meeting, Monday at 7:30 p.m. Mayflower Church (call: 361-5227)

"For many young women, eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia are joined at the hip with smoking, binge drinking and illicit drug use. Warning: Where you see the smoke of eating disorders, look for the fire of substance abuse and vice versa."

www.casacolumbia.org/absolutem/templates/PressReleases.aspx?articleid=350&zoneid=46

Obesity and High Blood Pressure by Age 24: New research finds that people who began binge drinking

Underage Drinkers Seldom "Grow Up;" They Remain Immature Problem Drinkers as Adults

Underage drinking Causes Brain Damage and Interrupts the Maturation

Process. The brain damage resulting from underage alcohol use:

1. Delays learning of both work and social skills during the teen years,
2. Results in substandard performance through the adult years.

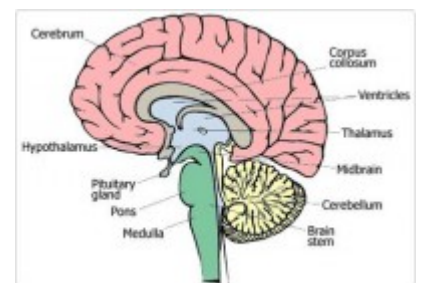
As a result of adolescent drinking, says the American Medical Association (AMA), "Teen drinkers perform worse in school, and have an increased risk of social problems, depression, suicidal thoughts and violence [including suicide and acquaintance rape]. Alcohol also disrupts the release of hormones necessary for growth and maturation [resulting in immature, self-centered adults]." (www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/)

Research has demonstrated that the hippocampus of teens who use alcohol is 10 percent smaller than in teens who did not use alcohol. Therefore, those who drink remember 10 percent less of what they have learned when compared to non-drinkers. To compound the problem, although all heavy drinking causes a degree of brain damage, one drink for an adolescent does the same brain damage to a teenager as two drinks for an adult. Thus,

A four drink binge for a 15-year old girl = an eight drink binge for an adult woman.

(http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/388/harmful_consequences.pdf)

Alcohol causes "rewiring" of the teen brain: the resulting loss of memory, the impairment of the developing "CEO skills" of *organizing, planning, priority setting, risk analysis, judgment*, etc. affect adolescents not only during their teen years but on into their adulthood: According to a Report of the AMA: **Those who drink alcohol while underage can NEVER catch up with those who did NOT drink during the teen years.** www.ama-assn.org/ama/no-index/about-ama/13555.shtml



during their teenage years are more likely to have serious health problems by age of 24. [Journal of Studies on Alcohol](#), July 2004

DROWNING - Alcohol use is believed to be a major contributing factor **and** is associated with 40% to 50% of drownings...
http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/cgi/search?fulltext=alcohol+and+brain+damage&quicksearch_submit.x=12&quicksearch_submit.y=7

Would you let your 17 -20 year old go to Florida or Cancun on Spring Break? WHY? WHY NOT? Speak up at info@alertlabs.org

The ALERT Labs Group:
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Contact us at
info@alertlabs.org

This leads to a BASIC TRUTH:

All use of addictive substances prior to the development of maturity (at about age 21+ for women and at around age 25+ for men) causes brain damage resulting in learning and behavior problems; thus it is critically important to prevent underage alcohol and other drug use.

REDUCED DRINKING in Kent County MSA Schools Averages 15% Since 2006 and Result in REDUCED NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

Consequences of AOD Use	<u>Decrease 2006-09</u>
Drove a car under the influence	<u>-65%</u>
Had unwanted sex or sexual contact*	<u>-56%</u>
Got into a fight or argument	<u>-43%</u>
Been in trouble with the police	<u>-41%</u>
Been punished by parent or guardian	<u>-19%</u>

*Question asked in only 2 of 3 schools.

Game Helps Parents and Children Talk about Alcohol & Other Drugs

The DVD game designed to be played on a computer includes a set of "Safe Harbors," which are guidelines that focus on six principles:

1. Establish and maintain good communication with your child.
2. Get involved in your child's life.
3. Make clear rules and enforce them with consistency and appropriate consequences.
4. Be a positive role model.
5. Help your child deal with the need for peer acceptance.
6. Monitor your child's activities.

Some of the ideas included in the "Safe Harbors" encourage parents to get to know their child's friends and their parents; to allow for daily one-on-one time with their child; to ask for their child's opinions; and to help their child say no to alcohol offered by peers. www.samhsa.gov/samhsaNewsletter/Volume_18_Number_1/UnderageDrinkingDVDGame.aspx

Violent Behaviors Involve One in Four Girls – AOD Use is a Culprit

Teenage girls who engaged in violent behaviors in the past year were more likely, than those who did not, to indicate *past-month binge alcohol use* (15.1 versus 6.9 percent), *marijuana use* (11.4 versus 4.1 percent), and *use of illicit drugs* other than marijuana (9.2 versus 3.2 percent). http://www.samhsa.gov/samhsaNewsletter/Volume_18_Number_1/ViolentBehavior.aspx

Heavy Drinking and Other Drug Use Linked to 9 of Top 10 Causes of Death

A study in Alaska revealed that 90% of preventable deaths are attributable to heavy drinking and other drug use. www.juneauempire.com/stories/031510/sta_590793064.shtml