

TOO MANY MINNESOTA TEENS ARE DRINKING

- The 2004 Minnesota Student Survey found that 63% of high school seniors and 40% of 9th graders drank alcohol in the past year.
- More than one-third of 12th grade boys and one-quarter of 12th grade girls report binge drinking (five or more drinks in a row) in the two weeks before the survey.
- The average American child tries alcohol before the age of 13. Youth who drink before they turn 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who start drinking at 21.
- Underage drinkers consume 19.7% of all alcohol consumed in the U.S.



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TEENS AND ALCOHOL ARE A DANGEROUS MIX

- Alcohol use by underage drinkers is a major public health and public safety problem in the United States. Alcohol is a key factor in the four leading causes of death among young

people in America: traffic crashes, homicides, injuries, and suicides.

- Alcohol affects adolescents differently than adults. Exposing the developing brain to alcohol may have long-lasting effects and increase the chance of addiction.
- The earlier children drink, the more likely they are to have alcohol-related problems. Younger drinkers are more likely to be the victims or perpetrators of violence, to drive drunk or ride with a drinking driver, to drop out of school, or to have unplanned and/or unprotected sex.
- Underage drinking impacts the U.S. and Minnesota economy. The consequences of underage drinking are estimated to cost our nation more than \$58 billion per year and the citizens of Minnesota \$1.0 billion in 2001.



MINNESOTA JOIN TOGETHER



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*Working together to reduce
underage drinking
through policy change*

CHANGING STATE POLICY TO REDUCE TEEN DRINKING

Minnesota Join Together (MJT) is a coalition of youth, adults, and organizations working to keep alcohol out of the hands of youth. In virtually every case of underage drinking, you will find an adult who provided the alcohol – an older friend or sibling, a clerk at a convenience store, or even a parent. We advocate policy that encourages adults to be responsible and not provide alcohol to youth.

- Underage drinking is not just about kids saying no. It's also about getting adults to stop providing alcohol to kids.
- Changing laws is an effective way to stop adults from providing alcohol.
- Working together we can stop the flow of alcohol to youth.



POLICY PRIORITIES

- **Increase the alcohol excise by at least a nickel per drink.**
Alcohol use cost Minnesotans \$4.5 billion in 2001 – more than \$900 for every person in the state. These costs are 17 times higher than the \$260 million collected from alcohol sales in 2004.
- **Increase compliance checks.**
Alcohol compliance checks are conducted by law enforcement officers to confirm that businesses that sell alcohol are asking for proper ID. Making these checks mandatory and including proper penalties will make it even harder for youth to get their hands on alcohol.
- **No wine in grocery stores.**
Minnesota Join Together opposes any effort allowing the sale of wine in grocery stores. Creating more places where youth can easily get their hands on alcohol is a bad idea. We should be making it harder for them to get alcohol – not putting it next to the chocolate milk.

Be a part of MINNESOTA JOIN TOGETHER



Support MJT and our work to protect the health and safety of young people and communities by reducing underage alcohol use and its negative consequences.

My contribution is enclosed for:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100

I am not able to contribute at this time, but please add me to the MJT database.

Name: *(please print)*

Home address:

City: _____ State: _____

ZIP: _____ State Leg. District: _____

Home phone: _____

Other phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Return form to:

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