

ECDHD Teen Alcohol Fact Sheet

In the 2011 Community Health written surveys indicated that general alcohol abuse was the top perceived risky behavior in all four of the counties ECDHD serves by both Hispanic and Non-Hispanics. Concerns of underage alcohol use were well documented in the 2010 *Columbus Issues and Efforts Survey*. Drug and alcohol use by youth was the top concern among survey participants, with 77.1% reporting it as "very concerning."

Table 2.74	Perceptions of Underage Alcohol Use: Nebraska Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (2011) ¹⁶	
	% Who Agree	
	East Central	Nebraska
Alcohol use among individuals under 21 years old is a big problem in your community.	79.5%	72.0%
Your community should do more to prevent alcohol use among individuals under 21 years old.	80.5%	76.9%
Your level of agreement with the notion that "drinking is a rite of passage for youth," meaning it is an important milestone as they move into adulthood.	22.0%	18.9%

Why is alcohol use a concern for all of the community?

Car Accidents: Alcohol is a factor in approximately 41% of all deaths from motor vehicle crashes. Our youth surveys show that more of our ECDHD youth get in a car with someone who is drinking than the state average; this places them more at risk.

Physical Fights: Excessive alcohol consumption increases aggression and, as a result, can increase the risk of physically assaulting another person

Sexual Assault: Excessive alcohol use is commonly involved in sexual assault. Binge drinking is a risk factor for sexual assault, especially among young women in college settings. Research suggests that there is an increase in the risk of rape or sexual assault when both the attacker and victim have used alcohol prior to the attack.

Teen Pregnancy: Alcohol increases the chances of engaging in risky sexual activity including unprotected sex and sex with multiple partners. Women who use alcohol in pregnancy can have infants with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) which in its most severe form can cause mental retardation and birth defects. These women are also more likely to have a baby die from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Long-term alcohol misuse is associated with liver disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and neurological damage as well as psychiatric problems such as depression, anxiety, and antisocial personality disorder. The risk of cancer is higher with alcohol for cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, and colon. Excessive drinking may result in memory loss and shrinkage of the brain. Research suggests that women are more vulnerable than men to the brain damaging effects of excessive alcohol use, and the damage tends to appear with shorter periods of drinking.

Death: Excessive alcohol use is the 3rd leading lifestyle-related cause of death for the nation and is responsible for an average of about 30 years of potential life lost for each death.

Evidence Based Alcohol Use Interventions

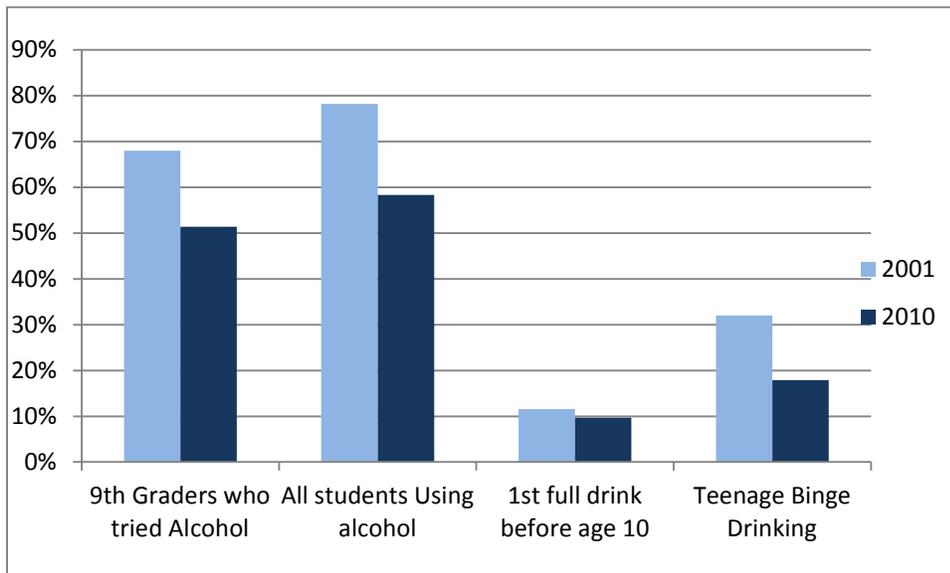
Initiating or enhancing retailer compliance checks helps reduce teen alcohol use. The retail checks are coordinated with local law enforcement and violators receive legal or administrative sanctions if the sale alcohol to minors in a community.

Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) training programs give owners, managers, and staff of establishments that serve alcohol knowledge and skills to help them serve alcohol responsibly and fulfill the legal requirements of alcohol service. Server training addressing properly checking IDs.

Another strategy to prevent excessive alcohol consumption and related harms is to limit access by regulating the hours during which alcohol can legally be sold. Policies limiting hours of sale may apply to outlets that sell alcohol for consumption at the place of purchase (on-premises outlets, such as bars or restaurants) or elsewhere (off-premises outlets, such as liquor stores).

Dram shop liability allows the owner or server of a retail alcohol establishment where a customer recently consumed alcoholic beverages to be held legally responsible for the harms inflicted by that customer. Examples of such harms may include death, injury or other damages as a result of an alcohol-related car crash.

The community has had a continuous effort to fight underage drinking for the past thirteen years. Many of our local district youth alcohol statistic have improved over the past nine years although ECDHD still has more teens drinking than the US average for alcohol use.



There are approximately 79,000 deaths attributable to excessive alcohol use each year in the United States.¹ This makes In the single year 2005, there were more than 1.6 million hospitalizations³ and more than 4 million emergency room visits⁴ for alcohol-related conditions.