

ALCOHOL

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Alcohol is the most frequently used drug by teens and causes many health problems (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, 1993).

Statistics show that teens who drink are more likely to be involved in a car crash, get into a fight, have unwanted or unsafe sex, drown while intoxicated, experience problems at school, damage significant relationships, and retard their intellectual and emotional growth.

People who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who wait until age 21. Each additional year of delayed drinking onset reduces the probability of alcohol dependence by 14 percent.¹

YOUTH & ALCOHOL
A teen's primary source for alcohol is adults, older friends, siblings, and parents.



It is against the law for adults to provide alcohol to teenagers.

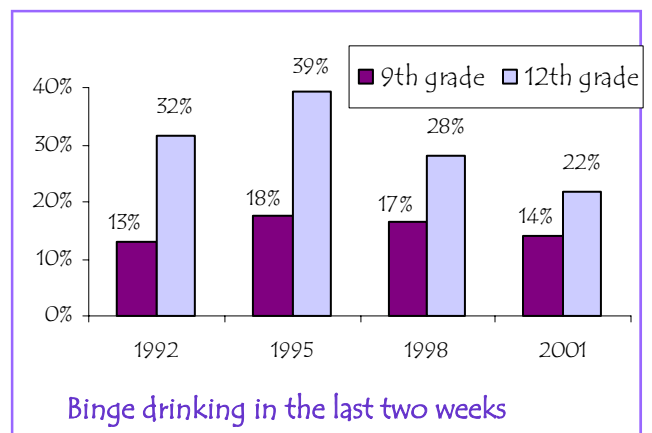
Studies show that children who are allowed to drink at home are more likely to drink outside the home.

Richfield experiencing a decrease in alcohol use²

Binge drinking (5 drinks or more on one single occasion in the past two weeks) for 9th graders decreased from 17% in 1998 to 14% in 2001. For the same time period, 12th grader's binge drinking decreased significantly from 28% to 22%, respectively.

Richfield 9th graders experienced a significant decrease in reporting teen alcohol use within the last 30 days from 31% in 1998 to 25% in 2001. The 12th graders also had a decrease with 48% in 1998 to 42% in 2001.

According to the 2000 Telephone Survey, 88% of parents agreed that they felt undermined by other parents that allowed their children to drink.³



What parents say and do about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use is the most important variable affecting a young person's decision to drink...or not to drink.

Richfield
Youth
Alcohol
2003

What can you do?

BE A ROLE MODEL

Talk with your kids about alcohol and reasons not to drink; stay informed about alcohol issues.

Make it a habit to greet your children when they arrive home at night. If they are aware that you're waiting for them, they can more easily refuse alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Discuss with your children ways to avoid drinking in difficult situations. Set a good example with your own alcohol use and response to underage drinking.

Parents can support each other by not providing alcohol to minors and encouraging others to do the same.

Know your child's friends' parents; discuss common expectations, and help each other maintain them.

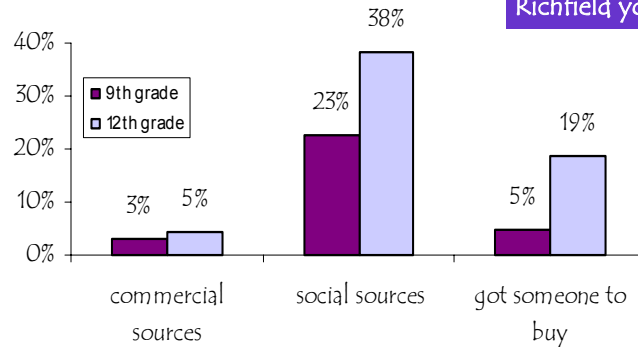
Encourage youth participation in safe, chemically-free activities.

Be aware of your children's plans and whereabouts. Establish rules about underage drinking, curfew, other behaviors; establish consequences.

Get involved. Join the Richfield Advisory Board of Health, Tri-City Partners, or the Alcohol Action Group. These groups are working together to reduce underage drinking and marijuana use.

For more information on alcohol or marijuana contact Drew Brooks, 952/563-8984 dbrooks@ci.bloomington.mn.us or Melissa Drews, 952/563-8901 mdrews@ci.bloomington.mn.us

Richfield youth are getting alcohol from:



Commercial Sources:

- Took alcohol from store
- Bought over the internet
- From bars/restaurants
- Stores

Social Sources:

- Got from friend/family members
- At parties
- Took from home
- Took from friend's home

State and County Activities

Tri-City Partners, in partnership with state and county efforts, implement strategies that target the shared environment.

Activities include:

New State Laws⁴

Keg Registration - Requires alcohol retailers to label and record all beer keg sales made in Minnesota. Keg can be tracked back to the purchaser.

Civil Cause of Action - Expands civil liability to include cases of adult provision of alcohol to youth, allowing the injured par-

ties the right to sue the adult provider to recover their damages.

Kevin Brockway Law - Increases criminal penalties on adult providers from a gross misdemeanor to a felony in certain cases.

County

Hennepin County Diversion Program: Hennepin County provides an Education and Diversion Program for those under the age of 21 who have been cited with alcohol and marijuana offenses.

What Tri-City Partners are doing

At the local level, our primary focus is to equip youth and adults, in different community segments, with the skills and resources to influence adolescent substance abuse. The influence creates conditions that make underage drinking and marijuana use less desirable. Some of the activities include:

- **Together We Stand campaign** - letters and postcards sent to parents of 11th & 12th graders concerning their children's plans for spring break, prom, and graduation. Media pieces and water-bill inserts are used to raise awareness.
- **Let's Talk Baskets** - a communication tool to be used during parent gatherings to develop standards that support parents of their children's friends.
- **Congregational Substance Abuse Team Ministries** - faith communities trained to provide prevention and recovery support activities.
- **Teen Improvisational Theater (IMPROV)** - students act out short scenes on teen issues for workshops, meetings, and community forums. An interactive audience discussion follows, guided by an adult facilitator.
- **Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)** - high school students provide peers with prevention and intervention tools to deal with the issues of underage drinking, drunk driving, and other destructive decisions.
- **Other Enforcement Activities** - partnerships with schools and police departments, addressing availability through alcohol compliance checks, and parking lot surveillance.

Sources: 1. National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA)

2. Minnesota Student Survey, MN Department of Children, Families, and Learning

3. Telephone Survey, Assessing Community Norms and Expectations about Youth Alcohol and Marijuana Use, Wilder Research Center, October 2000

4. Minnesota Join Together, www.miph.org/mjt for full text of these laws

OUR MISSION:



The mission of Tri-City Partners for Healthy Youth and Communities is to promote health, reduce risks, and build assets in our youth and communities. Tri-City Partners work with organizations, groups, and concerned citizens on projects to reduce high-risk behaviors and enhance healthy youth development. Information cards are available for the areas of youth and tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, teen pregnancy prevention, and physical activity and nutrition for the cities of Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield. Funding for these activities has been provided by the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Tobacco Endowment.