

UNDERAGE STUDENTS ACCESSING ALCOHOL: TREND DATA FROM PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES, 2007-2012

Started in 2000, Partners in Prevention (PIP) is a statewide coalition tasked with reducing risky behaviors among college students, in part by improving college environments. In 2005, campus communities across the state began implementing laws and policies in their communities which educate servers and sellers of alcohol about the consequences of serving to underage patrons or patrons who provide alcohol to minors. Since 2007, Partners in Prevention campuses have implemented evidenced-based strategies in their communities which hold students accountable for off-campus behavior and educate students about making safer choices when socializing off campus. Trend data is available from the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey that shows how environment and access to alcohol has changed on these campuses.

CHANGES IN RISKY ALCOHOL BEHAVIORS <i>Students Younger than 21</i>	2007 <i>n=2763</i>	2010 <i>n=2598</i>	2012 <i>n=2925</i>	Net % Change* 2007-2012
Drank at bars/restaurants	15%	11%	9%	40%
Drank at a private party/off campus residence	59%	46%	42%	29%
Drank at a social Greek house	12%	14%	15%	-25%
Drank in a residence hall	7%	4%	6%	14%
Given alcohol by someone over 21	57%	45%	44%	23%
Used a fake I.D.	7%	6%	6%	14%
Given alcohol by a family member	14%	9%	8%	43%
Get alcohol from people they know who work in a bar or restaurant	10%	6%	5%	50%
Go where I.D.'s are not checked	15%	9%	8%	47%

*Percent change found using the percent difference formula: (2007 Percentage - 2012 Percentage) / 2007 Percentage

DISCUSSION

Among students at 12 publicly funded institutions of higher education in Missouri, underage access in nearly all environments and across all access methods has decreased from 2007 to 2012. Perhaps the most encouraging results relate to the most common access environments and strategies used by underage students. The most common place for an underage student to drink alcohol has traditionally been at private parties or off campus social gatherings. From 2007 to 2010, this fell from 59% to 46%, a 22% decrease. Additionally, in 2012 it fell to 42%, producing a net percentage decrease of 29% since 2007. Also, the most common method used to obtain alcohol by an underage individual has always been from a friend over the age of 21. This likewise fell from 57% to 45% to 44% in six years, a 23% difference. Underage students drinking at bars and restaurants decreased 40%, the largest decrease in this category. Related, underage students accessing alcohol from someone they know at a bar or restaurant decreased 50%, resulting in the largest decrease in access locations. The only increase in access

appears to be from those underage students drinking in social Greek houses, increasing slightly from 12% to 15% since 2007.

SUMMARY

These data are highly encouraging. Decreases were seen across the board of underage students drinking at bars, private parties and residence halls. Decreases were also seen in all methods used by underage students to access alcohol. This indicates that campus initiatives to lower this risky behavior have been successful. The only increase occurred among underage drinking at social Greek houses. The fact that overall underage drinking in the PIP12 has decreased in this period should come as no surprise, but the fact that underage drinking at social Greek houses has increased, even slightly, while an overall decrease has occurred, indicates a concern to be addressed within campus strategic plans for prevention.

Report prepared by Partners in Prevention Research & Evaluation Staff

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