

# Alcohol use increases over generation in study of moms, daughters in Australia

June 25 2014

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Credit: Kevin Casper/public domain

Drinking alcohol has increased over a generation in a study of mothers and daughters in Australia.

Previous research suggests drinking patterns have changed with more [heavy drinking](#) at younger ages.

The authors compared change in alcohol use over a generation of young women born in Australia born from 1981 to 1983 with that of their [mothers](#) at the same age. Data from an Australian birth [cohort study](#) were used for the two generations of women. The study included 1,053 mothers and daughters with complete data after 21 years of follow-up.

The daughters had greater odds of consuming high and moderate levels of alcohol than their mothers. Daughters between the ages of 18 and 25 had more than five times the odds of consuming the highest level of alcohol (more than 30 glasses of alcohol per month) and nearly three times the odds of consuming between seven and 30 glasses per month. Not having a dependent child roughly doubled the odds of all levels of drinking in both mothers and daughters. Having a partner doubled the odds of [daughters](#) consuming high levels of alcohol while the odds of drinking at the highest levels were more than five times for mothers who were single. Higher education had no effect on consumption.

"In summary, this study provides strong evidence for a large increase in young female drinking during recent decades, as reflected in the drinking of mothers and their female offspring in their early 20s. International research is urgently needed to confirm what we suspect is a trend, which may have been underestimated in many Western countries. It may be time for more aggressive antialcohol programs aimed at [young women](#)." Rosa Alati, Ph.D., M.Appl.Sc., of the University of Queensland, Australia, and colleagues wrote in their *JAMA Psychiatry* article.

**More information:** *JAMA Psychiatry*. Published online June 25, 2014. [DOI: 10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2014.513](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2014.513)

Provided by The JAMA Network Journals

Citation: Alcohol use increases over generation in study of moms, daughters in Australia (2014, June 25) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-06-alcohol-moms-daughters-australia.html>

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