

Fewer U.S. kids binge drinking

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(HealthDay)—A new federal report finds that fewer U.S. teens and young adults are indulging in frat-party style drinking because their levels of binge drinking have gone down over the past six years.

But not all teens and young adults are forgoing extra drinks. Fourteen percent of young people from 12 to 20 years old reported [binge drinking](#) at least once within the past four weeks.

Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks on one occasion within a few hours, according to the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).

"Alcohol use continues to be a serious public health issue for young people, their families, and communities," said Frances Harding, director of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention at SAMHSA.

"We've made plenty of progress through prevention efforts, yet the work still needs to continue." she said in an agency news release.

The findings about underage drinking appear in a report issued by SAMHSA and are based on an annual survey of 67,500 people in the United States aged 12 and older.

The consequences of excess drinking in youth are significant. About 4,300 [underage drinkers](#) die each year from excess drinking, the report said. Kids who binge-drink in high school are more likely to do poorly in school, have sex with six or more partners, and to try illicit drugs such as marijuana and cocaine, according to the researchers.

The survey found that the percentage of underage binge drinking over the last month was highest in North Dakota, Vermont and New Hampshire, all at 21 percent.

Excess drinking by teens and [young adults](#) was lowest in North Carolina (12 percent) and Tennessee and Utah, both at 11 percent, the report found.

More information: For details about preventing underage drinking, try the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's ['Talk. They Hear You' campaign](#).

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