

Alcohol marketing and underage drinking

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A new study by a research team including scientists from the Prevention Research Center of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation provides a systematic review of research that examines relationships between exposure to alcohol marketing and alcohol use behaviors among adolescents and young adults.

The researchers identified 38 cross-sectional studies that examined the relationship between alcohol marketing and alcohol use behaviors over a 40-year period.

Across types of alcohol use outcomes, such as lifetime alcohol use and [alcohol problems](#), exposure to marketing such as alcohol advertising, alcohol-related merchandise, and alcohol promotion and media sources, such as television and billboards, the researchers concluded that alcohol marketing exposure was positively associated with young peoples' alcohol use.

In general, relationships for alcohol promotion, such as alcohol-sponsored events, and owning alcohol-related merchandise were more consistently positive than for other advertising exposures such as seeing [alcohol advertising](#).

These positive associations were observed across the past four decades, in countries across continents, and with small and large samples.

Dr. Sharon Lipperman-Kreda, an author on the study, notes that: "Although we cannot make causal inferences because of the cross-sectional nature of the studies, they do provide evidence that alcohol industry marketing may be one factor contributing to drinking and alcohol-related problems among [young people](#)." This review of research literature over forty years indicates that future policies should regulate [alcohol marketing](#) to a greater extent than they do currently, and this may have important short- and long-term public health implications for reducing underage or problematic alcohol use among youth.

More information: Laura J. Finan et al, Alcohol Marketing and Adolescent and Young Adult Alcohol Use Behaviors: A Systematic Review of Cross-Sectional Studies, *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, Supplement* (2020). [DOI: 10.15288/jsads.2020.s19.42](https://doi.org/10.15288/jsads.2020.s19.42)

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