

The Law

Getting a driver's license is one of the highlights of being a teenager. But underage drinking can affect your driving privileges.

If you are convicted of any of the following:

- lying about your age to obtain alcohol,
- carrying a false ID card, and/or
- purchasing, consuming, possessing, attempting to purchase, or transporting alcohol,

you may have your driving privilege suspended for a minimum of 90 days and face fines. For youth under 16 or without a driver's license, the 90 day penalty begins on their 16th birthday. You will be unable to apply for a learner's permit for the time period of the suspension.

The **Zero Tolerance Law** reduced the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) required to charge minors (under age 21) with Driving Under the Influence to .02%. In addition to license suspension, legal consequences include fines, legal fees, a criminal record, drug and alcohol assessment, alcohol highway safety school, and jail. The minor will also be faced with underage drinking charges and penalties.

Adults who furnish alcohol to anyone under 21—even their own children—could be fined and/or serve time in jail.

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board's Bureau of Alcohol Education offers a variety of alcohol education materials free of charge.

For more information, please contact us:

**Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board
Bureau of Alcohol Education**

Northwest Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17124-0001

www.lcb.state.pa.us

Or call our toll-free line:
1 (800) 453-PLCB (7522)

Hearing Impaired: TTD/TTY (717) 772-3725



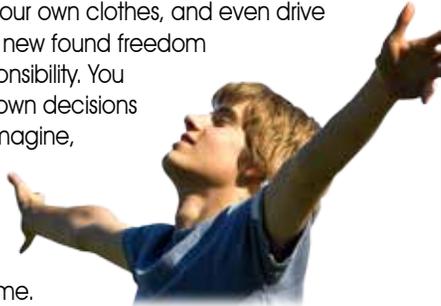
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This information is not intended to be legal advice, but merely conveys information pertinent to alcohol-related offenses. For more information or further clarification, please contact your local District Attorney's Office or a private attorney.

Straight Talk for Teens about Alcohol



One of the cool things about being a teen is having more freedom. You can stay out later, earn your own money, buy your own clothes, and even drive a car! With all this new found freedom comes more responsibility. You get to make your own decisions now. It's hard to imagine, but a lot of the decisions you make today could affect your life for years to come.



When facing a decision, knowing all the facts can steer you in the right direction. Choosing not to drink alcohol before you're 21, may be a difficult decision but it is the safest, healthiest, and only legal choice to make. Underage drinkers risk not only their own health and well-being, but they can hurt their family, friends, and others.

Alcohol's Physical Effects

The chemicals in alcohol go straight into your blood where they are carried to the rest of your body. Here are just some of the parts of your body that alcohol affects:

Brain—Alcohol damages your brain cells, making it harder to learn and remember new information. Alcohol in your system will mess up your coordination, vision, balance, reflexes, and concentration.

Heart—Alcohol can overwork the heart. This can lead to high blood pressure and heart disease.

Liver—The liver keeps your blood clean and healthy, but too much alcohol can damage it. People who drink too much can develop liver diseases, including cirrhosis – a condition where the liver can't do its job anymore.

Stomach—Too much alcohol can upset your stomach and cause you to throw up. Heavy drinkers can develop stomach ulcers and problems digesting their food.

Cancer—Studies done by the American Cancer Society have shown evidence that heavy alcohol use can cause at least eight different types of cancer in the body.

What Can This Lead To?

- **Injuries.** Because alcohol impairs the coordination and judgment necessary for everyday activities, it is involved in a high percentage of falls, drownings, burns, other injuries, and deaths.
- **Violence.** Alcohol clouds judgment and reasonable thinking, sometimes leading to violence. A significant proportion of violent crimes among students, including rape, robbery, and assault, have been shown to involve alcohol. A survey of college administrators indicates that more than one-half of campus incidents, ranging from violent behavior to property damage, were related directly to alcohol use.
- **Emotional Problems.** Alcohol affects your emotions. Negative feelings, including stress, loneliness, and hopelessness become worse. Emotionally troubled youth who drink heavily are at a higher risk for attempted suicide.
- **Stress.** Drinking alcohol to deal with pressures from parents, teachers, friends, coaches, brothers, and sisters only increases the stress.
- **Overdose.** Consuming too much alcohol over a short period of time can cause death from alcohol poisoning.
- **Risk Behaviors.** Alcohol clouds judgment which can lead to risky sexual behavior, sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancy, or HIV/AIDS.



¹National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA), 2010

²Injury Prevention and Control: Motor Vehicle Safety (CDC), 2010

About Drinking and Driving

Underage or Any Age—Drinking and Driving Do Not Mix!

You may have heard it a million times, but it's true: drinking and driving is a deadly combination—especially for teens. Think about all of the skills it takes to drive a car: coordination, balance, concentration, reflexes, vision, reason, and judgement. Alcohol affects every one of these skills. Look at the facts:

- I. Impaired driving is often a symptom of a larger problem: alcohol misuse and abuse. ¹
- II. Drinking and driving motor vehicle crashes cost more than an estimated \$37 billion annually. ¹
- III. In 2010, more than 10,000 people died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes. – That's one person every 51 minutes! ¹
- IV. At all levels of blood alcohol concentration (BAC), the risk of being involved in a crash is greater for young people than for older people. ²

Fitting In Without Alcohol

Teens who drink often use peer pressure as a reason. But remember, part of maturing is taking responsibility for your own actions. Nobody ever said growing up would be easy, but keeping a few things in mind may make life a little easier.

- Focus on the positive things in your life. Develop your talents and spend time doing healthy activities you enjoy.
- Think through the situation. You might be tempted to act first and "deal with it" later, but taking those extra few minutes to think about the consequences may help you make a lifesaving decision.
- Choose your friends carefully. A true friend would not pressure you to do anything you don't want to do—especially if you could get into trouble. Although some people might claim "everybody drinks," it's not true. In a national survey asking whether alcohol had been consumed in the 30 days before the survey, 75% of the 12-20 year olds replied that they did not drink.³

³National Survey on Drug Use and Health, (SAMHSA), 2011