



# PICADA

(Prevention & Intervention Center  
for Alcohol & Drug Abuse)

## Teens Face Pressure To Fit Into Wisconsin's Alcohol Culture

She was at a family party at a house in Southern Wisconsin and all of her cousins were drinking. She eyed a box of Mike's Hard Lemonade before pulling out a bottle. "Oh, you're cool," her cousins bantered. She didn't like the taste. She drank the whole bottle anyway.

There's nothing wrong with drinking alcohol if it's done responsibly, said another Wisconsin student who points out that she's German and drinking is part of her heritage. Another student from a rural area near in Wisconsin, didn't think back to what he learned in his eighth grade health class about alcohol — what it does to the body — when a friend handed him a Busch Light from a cooler. "I was in the moment, and everyone else was drinking and staying the night," he said. "All of them drink often, so I said, 'Why not this one time?'" Wisconsin is ahead of the pack when it comes to excessive drinking, and that identity filters down to younger generations.

In Wisconsin, alcohol is very available to young people. It might surprise you to know that the easiest place to get a beer in Wisconsin is probably right next to the milk in the fridge.

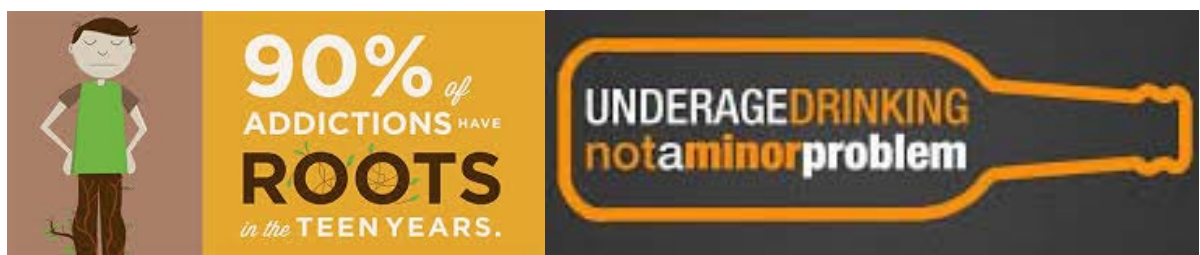


### A Cultural Shift?

Overall, the rate of underage drinking in high school is trending down. Yet while Wisconsin's rate of underage drinking has dropped significantly, about 65 percent of Wisconsin high school students reported having at least one drink ever on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. That's above the national average of 60 percent. The number of Wisconsin high schoolers who have at least tried alcohol fell by just 1 percentage point between the 2013 and 2017 reports; whereas the national rate dropped by 6 percent.

For Madison, a Wisconsin high school student, being asked to drink is a fairly common occurrence with her peers. For the most part, those who offer drinks usually accept her excuses that she has other things to do. She's worried it will affect her participation in clubs and sports.

(CONTINUED PAGE 2)



The Wisconsin teen culture finds it normal to drink. It seems that teens speak so highly of it that that it creates a pressure to drink.

### Local Ordinances

In 2009, municipalities began adopting ordinances that made it illegal, but not a crime, to provide a location for underage drinking. Those ordinances were struck down by the District II Court of Appeals in 2016. The following year, the state signed into law the Social Host bill, which fines adults \$500 for a first offense for providing a location for underage drinking.

Community coalitions, like Belleville Cares, began providing refrigerator locks for unattended or unsecured refrigerators — like those in garages — because research shows a youth's first drink is often pilfered from home, and can start as early as middle school.



### Bad Influences

The effects of drinking on teenagers and young adults are widespread. Youth who drink face more school, social and legal problems. Drinking also causes a disruption of hormones that can impact growth, raise the risk for suicide, memory problems and more, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For youth who begin drinking at 14 or earlier, 47 percent experience alcohol dependence at some point in their life compared to 9 percent for those who start drinking at 21 or older, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse Alcoholism (NIAAA).

The NIAAA also reports that

- more than 1,800 college-aged students die each year from alcohol-related injuries
- nearly 700,000 students are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.
- drinking by gender doesn't bode well for young women, for whom underage binge drinking — defined by women having more than four drinks in a short period of time — has been trending up in the past decade.
- young men are participating less in casual drinking, young women are pulling ahead.

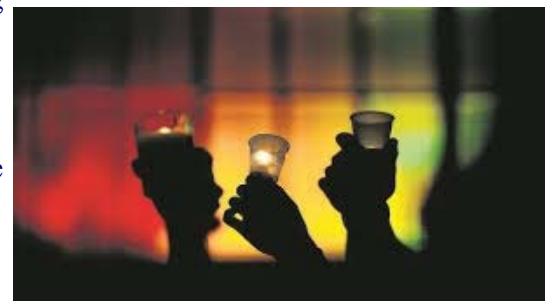
Sixty-seven percent of female high school students in Wisconsin have had an alcoholic drink compared to 62 percent of their male peers, according to the 2017 CDC youth risk survey.

### Top 8 Reasons Why Teens Try Alcohol and Drugs

There is no single reason why teenagers use drugs or alcohol. But here are some of the core issues and influences behind the behavior of teenage drug and alcohol use. It's important that you, as a parent, understand these reasons and talk to your kids about the dangers of drinking and doing drugs.



- **Other People.** Teenagers see lots of people consuming various substances. They see their parents and other adults drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes and, sometimes, trying other substances. Also, a teenager's social scene often revolves around drinking and smoking marijuana. Sometimes friends urge one another to have a drink or smoke pot, but it's just as common for teens to start trying a substance because it's readily available and they see all their friends enjoying it. In their minds, they see drug use as a part of the normal teenage experience.



- **Popular Media** Forty-five percent of teens agree with the statement: “The music that teens listen to makes marijuana seem cool.” And 45 percent of teens agree with the statement “Movies and TV shows make drugs seem like an ok thing to do.” (PATS 2012) So be aware of the media that your son or daughter is consuming and talk to them about it.



I'm one of those self-harming and self-medicating types. Drugs and alcohol are my go-to avoidance tools. For that reason, I'm hesitant to get antidepressants. I also want to work out whatever I can

- **Escape and Self-Medication** When teens are unhappy and can't find a healthy outlet for their frustration or a trusted confidant, they may turn to chemicals for solace. Depending on what substance they're trying, they may feel blissfully oblivious, wonderfully happy or energized and confident. The often rough teenage years can take an emotional toll on children, sometimes even causing depression, so when teens are given a chance to take something to make them feel better, many can't resist. For example, some teens abuse prescription medicine to manage stress or regulate their lives. Sometimes they abuse prescription stimulants (used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) to provide additional energy and the ability to focus when they're studying or taking tests. Others are abusing prescription pain relievers and tranquilizers to cope with academic, social or emotional stress.

- **Rebellion** Different rebellious teens choose different substances to use based on their personalities. Such as **alcohol** is the drug of choice for the angry teenager because it frees him to behave aggressively. **Methamphetamine, or meth**, also encourages aggressive, violent behavior, and can be far more dangerous and potent than alcohol. **Marijuana**, on the other hand, often seems to reduce aggression and is more of an avoidance drug. Some teens abuse prescription medicine to party and get high.

- **Instant Gratification** Drugs and alcohol work quickly. The initial effects feel really good. Teenagers turn to drug use because they see it as a short-term shortcut to happiness.
- **Lack of Confidence** Many shy teenagers who lack confidence report that they'll do things under the influence of alcohol or drugs that they might not otherwise. This is part of the appeal of drugs and alcohol even for relatively self-confident teens; you have the courage to dance if you're a bad dancer, or sing at the top of your lungs even if you have a terrible voice, or kiss the girl you're attracted to. And alcohol and other drugs tend not only to loosen your inhibitions but to alleviate social anxiety. Not only do you have something in common with the other people around you, but there's the mentality that if you do anything or say anything stupid, everyone will just think you had too many drinks or smoked too much weed.
- **Misinformation** Perhaps the most avoidable cause of substance use is inaccurate information about drugs and alcohol. Nearly every teenager has friends who claim to be experts on various recreational substances, and they're happy to assure her that the risks are minimal. Educate your teenagers about drug use, so they get the real **facts about the dangers of drug use**.



Teens Face Widespread Exposure To & Misinformation About Substances



# Cigarette and E-Cigarette Warning Labels

**FDA proposed graphic cigarette warnings** are overdue and deadline is close. The new graphic warnings proposed by the FDA to be on cigarette packs are a dramatic improvement compared to the text-only warnings which have become unnoticed and unread. Graphic warnings are supported by extensive scientific evidence that will allow the United States to use this best-practice strategy to reduce tobacco use. Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death globally. Tobacco industry marketing and promotion are a prominent factor encouraging tobacco use, spending billions of dollars a year to promote their cigarettes. Evidence demonstrates that cigarette packing, including size, shape, colors, and logos impact consumer perceptions of health risks related to tobacco use and attitudes towards smoking (WHO). The World Health Organization's (WHO) Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC) recommends graphic warning labels to cover over 30% of the front and back of the pack's surface.

**It has been since 2009** when the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act was passed and Congress initially mandated graphic cigarette warnings. The FDA must meet the court's deadline to issue a final rule by March 15th, 2020. Around 120 countries have already adopted these larger, graphic warning labels with data that suggests that these types of labels are more effective than the current smaller text warnings on U.S cigarettes. The FDA proposed 13 new graphic images to appear on all cigarette packaging. The labeling and marketing of cigarettes in the United States has not been updated since 1984. If approved, it will be the first time in 35 years that the warnings on boxes have changed.

**The FDA has fought** a long fight with the tobacco industries in court. The FDA's previous attempt at mandating graphic warning labels was defeated in court in 2012 on free speech grounds. A panel of judges sided with tobacco companies that the agency couldn't force cigarettes to carry "grisly" images like cadavers, diseased lungs, and cancerous mouth sores. However, the FDA will persevere. Although it is almost certain, according to Mitch Zeller, director of the FDA's Center for Tobacco Products that the tobacco industry will sue the FDA, Zeller states the FDA has "learned a lot" from the first attempt and "took the time through the research to get this right."

Reynolds American is one of the five companies that sued the FDA. They stated that they support public awareness of the harms of smoking cigarettes but the manner in which those messages are delivered cannot run afoul of the First Amendment protections.

Filing suit is not the same as winning. There will certainly be a court battle over the new rule but the FDA continues to fight the tobacco industry to educate and protect the public from the harms and health risks that smoking cigarettes has.



**Juuls** have become the most popular type of e-cigarette sold today and on track to generate around \$1 billion in sales this year. There has been a 78% increase in youth vaping since Juul hit the market. Juul’s mission is “to improve the lives of the world’s one billion adult smokers by eliminating cigarettes. We envision a world where fewer adults use cigarettes, and where adults who smoke cigarettes have the tools to reduce or eliminate their consumption entirely, should they so desire.” But, are e-cigarettes like the Juul actually safer than cigarettes?

In the U.S. an outbreak of vaping-related illnesses has been linked to over 39 deaths and over 2,000 cases of lung injury according to the CDC. E-cigarettes, or vapes, contain chemicals such as benzene (found in gasoline and explosives), formaldehyde (found in embalming fluid), acetone, and many more.

Due to marketing strategies and the discrete design on the smoking device, juuls have become a hit among youth and have created what medical experts are calling a “Juul-driven youth nicotine epidemic”. Juul first hit the market in 2015 with very little information regarding the product. Many youth have claimed that they were not aware that the Juul contained nicotine because Juul originally was discrete about advertising that the product contained nicotine.

**There was a great deal of** backlash about how Juul was targeting a young population despite their efforts to “save the lives of a billion smokers” said Juul. The models in advertisements were young and the fruity flavors attracted a youth audience as well. The advertisements showed people enjoying themselves socially, flirtatiously, and freely. This is the same way cigarette companies used to advertise as well.

It wasn't until 2017, two years after the release of the Juul when the FDA announced they were taking action about the use of e-cigarettes among youth that Juul quit using young models (now any model in the advertisement of Juul must be over the age of 35) and made “more prominent warnings that it’s product contained nicotine”. On Juul’s website they now state, “we want to be part of the solution to end combustible smoking, not part of a problem to attract youth, never smokers, or former smokers to nicotine products.”



There are clear similarities between the advertisements and labeling among e-cigarettes today, like the Juul, and cigarettes back in the 70’s and 80’s. Tobacco companies as well as e-cigarette producers show smoking their products as cool, fun, and with leisure.

It has taken 35 years, and 480,000 deaths due to cigarette smoking annually (CDC) to make a change in the way cigarettes are labeled to include health risks on packaging and we are not even there yet.

We cannot wait another 35 years to do something about the “youth nicotine epidemic” in the United States from e-cigarettes.

**Prevention is key** to reduce the number of youth who have access to cigarettes and e-cigarettes and to accurately educate the population about these products!



The construction of nearly every prevention program begins with an understanding of factors that place people at risk for or protect them from problem behavior.



#### PICADA Programming: 2019-2020

- Alcohol-Other Drug Abuse Basic Information
- Alcohol: True Stories Hosted by Matt Damon
- Community Mobilizing For Change On Alcohol
- CHOICES: A program for women about choosing healthy lifestyles
- Drugs: True Stories
- FORTRESS
- LifeSkills
- Media Detective
- Screening-Brief Interventions

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#### PICADA Managed Websites

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- [www.bellevillecares.net](http://www.bellevillecares.net)
- [www.abovetheinfluencedcw.com](http://www.abovetheinfluencedcw.com)



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