

UNDERAGE DRINKING IN AMERICA

A MADD and Nationwide Insurance Survey Conducted by The Gallup Organization

2006

Alcohol: Most Serious Drug Problem Facing Today's Youth

- When asked what is the *single greatest problem* facing today's youth, 44 percent cited drugs, 34 percent cited alcohol and 17 percent cited crime and violence.
- Survey responses regarding drugs as the single greatest problem increased five percentage points from 39 percent in 2000, while responses regarding alcohol made a larger jump of seven percentage points from 27 percent in 2000.
- When alcohol was combined with a list of other drugs, alcohol was cited as the *most serious drug problem* facing today's youth by the largest percentage of respondents (47 percent), followed by amphetamines/methamphetamines (35 percent) and marijuana (28 percent).

Americans Say Underage Drinking is a Serious Problem

- Virtually all (96 percent) say underage drinking is a serious problem among young people, up from 94 percent in 2000. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) say it is a very serious problem, up from 61 percent in 2000.
- Of those who said underage drinking is a very serious problem, 74 percent were female compared to 54 percent male.

Most Americans Say Alcohol is Too Easily Accessible by Those Under 21

- More than four out of five (83 percent) respondents say alcohol is too easily accessible by those under the legal drinking age of 21.

Support of Initiatives and Programs to Prevent Underage Drinking

Increased initiatives and programs to reduce:

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| • underage drinking among high school students during prom season | 91 percent |
| • underage drinking among college and high school students during spring break | 90 percent |
| • underage and binge drinking among college students | 90 percent
(88 percent in 2000) |

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Support for Underage Drinking Prevention Campaign

- More than eight in ten (83 percent) respondents say they favor a federal government-funded media campaign to reduce underage drinking, similar to the federally-funded anti-drug campaign.
- Three fourths (76 percent) of respondents favored tougher restrictions for alcohol advertising.

Support of Enforcement to Prevent Underage Drinking

Stronger enforcement of laws targeting:

- bars and restaurants serving minors alcohol 92 percent
- minors drinking alcohol underage 91 percent
- adults who provide alcohol to minors 91 percent
- zero tolerance laws to deter underage drinking and driving 89 percent (86 percent in 2000)
- parents who provide alcohol to minors 87 percent

Support of Penalties to Prevent Underage Drinking

Tougher penalties for:

- bars and restaurants serving alcohol to minors 91 percent
- retailers and other adults who provide alcohol to minors 91 percent (88 percent in 2000)
- parents who provide alcohol to minors 87 percent (83 percent in 2000)
- minors who drink alcohol underage 86 percent

Support for Graduated Driver's Licensing

More than three fourths (81 percent) of respondents supported graduated driver's licensing for teens, that is, receiving a driver's license in stages that would restrict hours of operation, the number of minor passengers and penalties for traffic violations, up from 76 percent in 2000.

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The questionnaire was developed and conducted by the Gallup Organization for Mothers Against Drunk Driving and sponsor Nationwide Insurance in commemoration of MADD's 25th anniversary. A total of 1004 interviews were conducted by telephone with a representative sample of the U.S. public age 16 and over. Among this group, 926 were identified as licensed drivers. The findings are based on licensed drivers. The study was conducted during the period of July 26 – August 14, 2005. The findings are representative of all men and women age 16 and over residing in U.S. households with telephones. For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be plus or minus three percentage points.