

PRESS RELEASE

Thanksgiving: a Time for Celebration and Caution



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With turkey, football games, and getting together with family and friends, the Thanksgiving holiday weekend is exceptionally busy. This is also a time when there are more

opportunities for binge drinking to become a problem for underage youth, young legal drinkers home for the holidays getting together with friends, and adults.

According to SAMHSA's [National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#):

- There were an estimated 10.0 million underage (aged 12 to 20) drinkers in 2010, including 6.5 million binge drinkers and 2.0 million heavy drinkers.
- Among young adults aged 18 to 25 in 2010, the rate of binge drinking was 40.6 percent, and the rate of heavy drinking was 13.6 percent.
- The rate of binge drinking among persons aged 65 or older in 2010 was 7.6 percent, while the rate of heavy drinking was 1.6 percent in this age group. The binge drinking rate for this age group was lower than it was in 2009, when it was 9.8 percent.

The holidays can turn from a time of celebration into a time of tragedy because of the surge in underage drinking. What can parents do? First of all, make your disapproval of underage drinking very clear. It's not an option, is not acceptable, and is illegal. We've seen time and again that parents and adults have a big influence on children's decisions not to drink. In fact, SAMHSA has an online [guide](#) (PDF) to help parents and caregivers clearly communicate their expectations and create an action plan. Additional information and materials on how to help prevent underage drinking are available at <http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/>.

For adults of legal drinking age, it's important that as you celebrate this holiday season to look at your drinking habits and how they may affect your health. <http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/>

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