

UNDERAGE DRINKING

IN RHODE ISLAND

BHDDH | October 11, 2021

THE PREVALENT PROBLEM: UNDERAGE DRINKING

There is a significant public health concern regarding teens and alcohol. Due to accessibility and perception of harm, alcohol is the drug of choice among adolescents^{1,2}. Each year, roughly 4,300 deaths of those under 21 are attributed to underage drinking in the United States¹. Combined with other consequences, underage drinking poses risks to the health and safety of young people^{1,3}.

According to 2020 RIYAS data,

69%

of young adults (ages 18-20) drink.

AND

10%

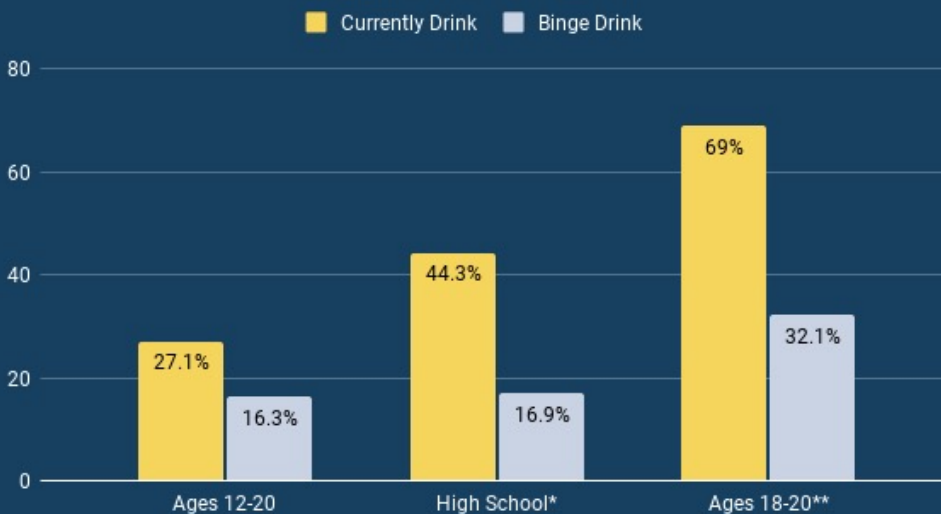
Of young adults (ages 18-20) had their first drink **before the age of 13**.

According to 2018-2019 NSDUH data, among those 12-20,

16.3% binge drink in RI

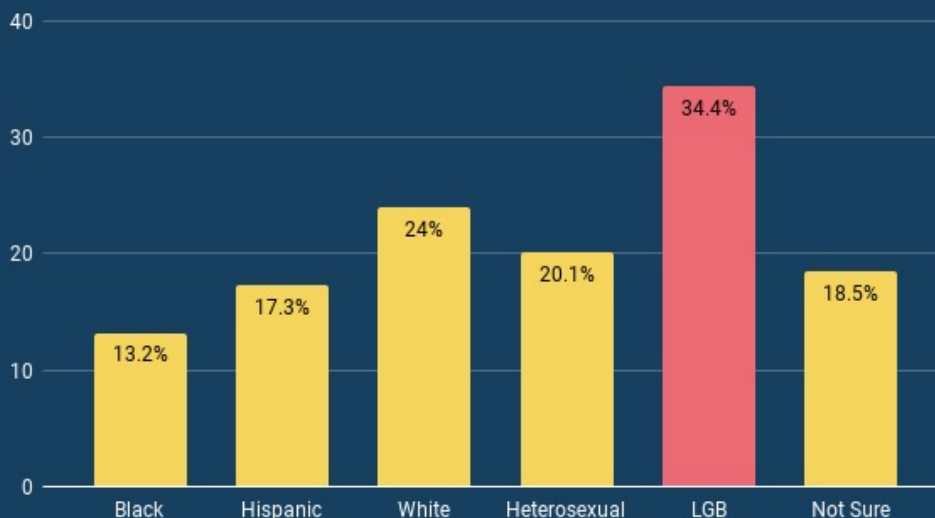
11.2% binge drink in the U.S.

Underage Drinking in Rhode Island 2018-2020



NSDUH 2018-2019 | YRBSS 2019* | RIYAS 2020**

Disparities in High School Alcohol Use

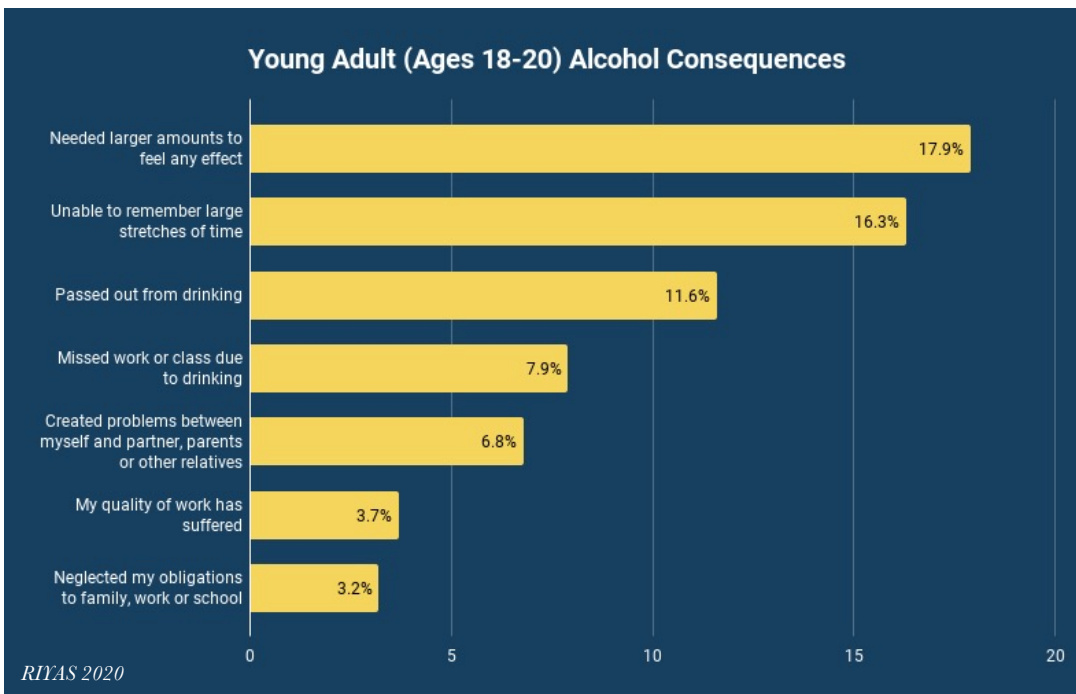
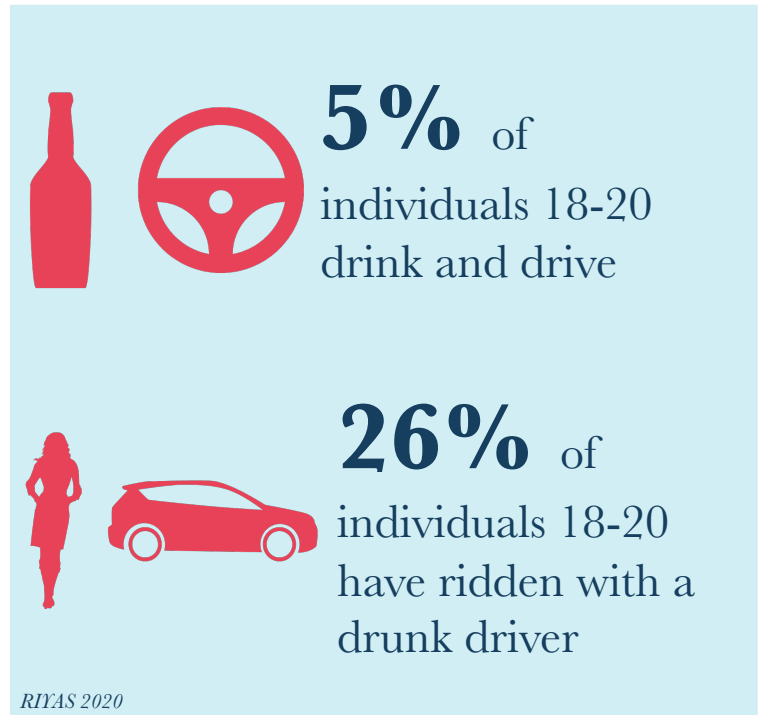


YRBSS 2019

THE AFTER EFFECTS: ALCOHOL CONSEQUENCES

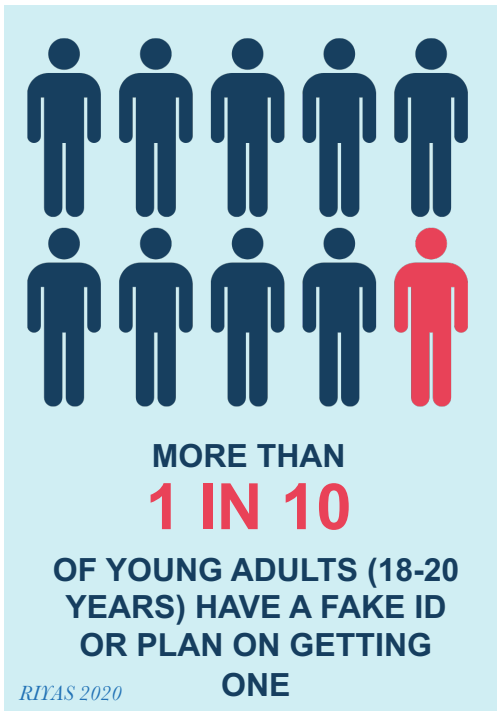
Underage individuals who drink alcohol are more likely to experience negative consequences³.

Alcohol affects regions of the brain associated with: memory; heartbeat; judgement; and restraint⁴. When the brain is developing it is left susceptible to damage and lasting changes from substances, including alcohol⁵. As a result, underage drinkers may engage in risky behaviors, have academic problems, and have increased mental health complications. In fact, when compared to nondrinkers, underage drinkers ranked lower in academic performance and had higher instances of anxiety and depression⁵. Nationwide, roughly one-million high school students binge drink. These same students were more likely to use other drugs such as marijuana and cocaine⁵.

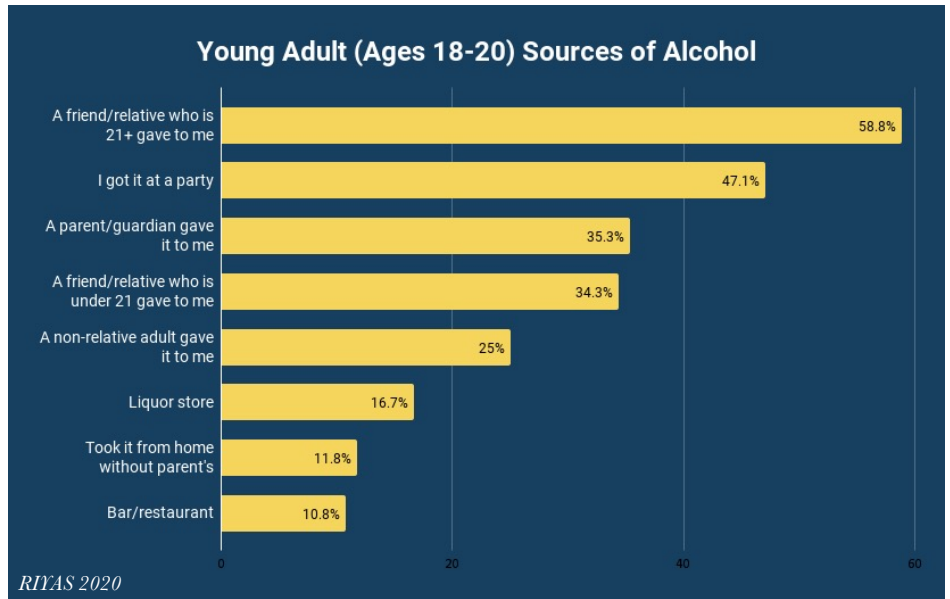


SUPPLY AND DEMAND: SOURCES OF ALCOHOL

Parents play a crucial role in determining how youth view underage drinking². Attitudes towards underage drinking can lead to behavior changes. Talking to children at a young age about drinking responsibly, the risks of underage drinking, and the misleading industry messages may reduce the likelihood of underage drinking^{1,5}. Changing the environment is equally as important. Limiting accessibility of alcohol in the home can decrease the chances of a teen to get alcohol. This includes storing liquor in a locked cabinet and not supplying minors with it⁵.

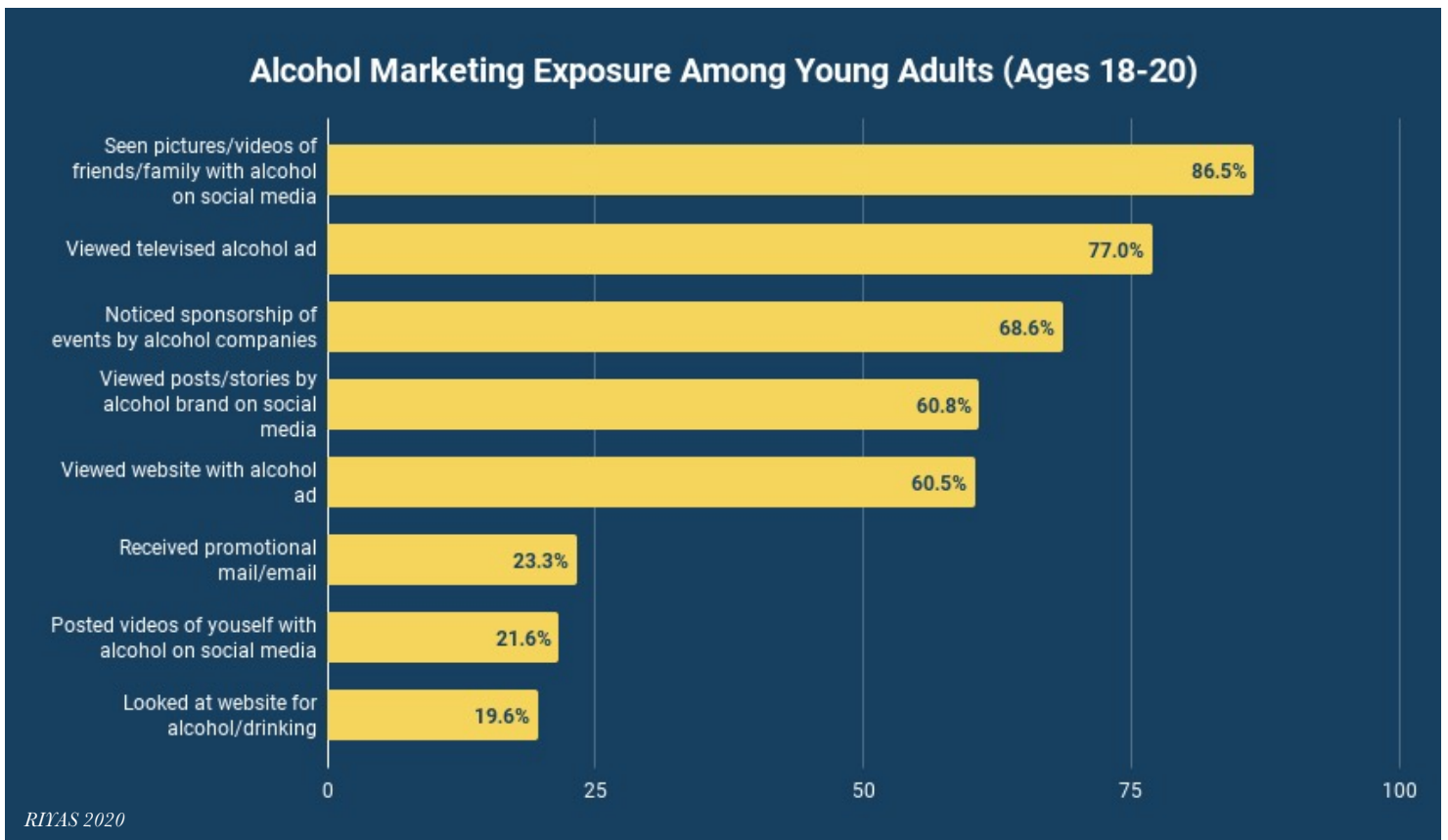


Among underage drinkers, the most common source of alcohol was by a friend or relative over the age of 21.



DISILLUSIONMENT: ALCOHOL MARKETING

While peer pressure and guardian guidance shape a young person’s view on underage drinking, it does not give the full story. Another piece of the puzzle is alcohol marketing¹. The industry’s marketing tactics make their product seem desirable by giving the illusion of care-free fun. With no mention of the risks in their advertisements, youth’s perceptions of alcohol are distorted.



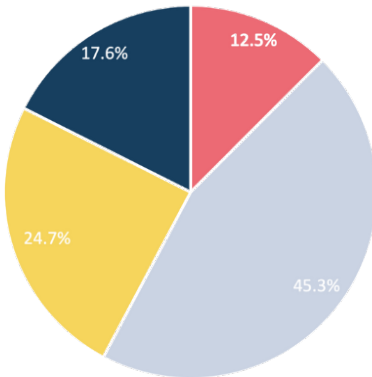
SOCIETAL VIEWS: PERCEPTION OF HARM

Perception of harm is indicative of how dangerous an individual believes a certain action is. Perceptions of harm are influenced by a variety of factors. As seen below, most adults believe that drinking and driving is “very wrong” while the perception of harm of providing alcohol to minors is relatively low. Low perceptions of harm lead to an increase in that behavior.

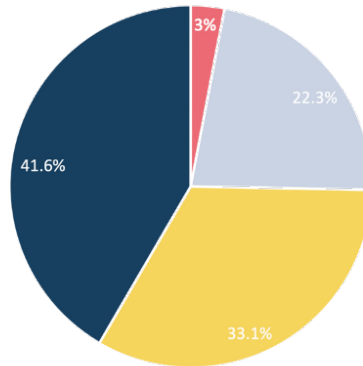
Young adults (ages 18-20) were asked:

How wrong do adults in your family think the following are?

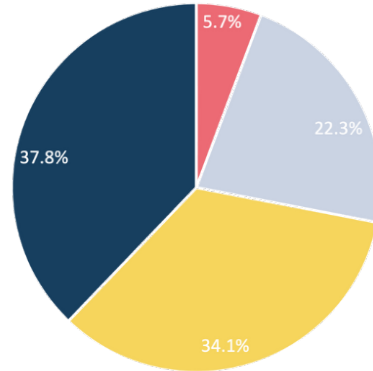
Alcohol Use by Persons Under Age 21



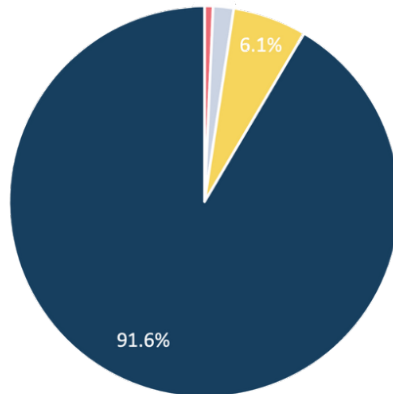
Providing Alcohol to Minors



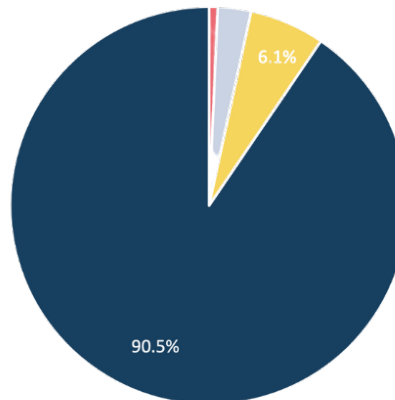
Consuming 5+ Drinks at One Time



Drinking and Driving



Riding with a Drinking Driver



RIYAS 2020 Very Wrong Wrong A Little Bit Wrong Not Wrong At All

DATA SOURCES

- YRBSS:** The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System is a representative sample of high school students in Rhode Island.
- RIYAS:** The Rhode Island Young Adult Survey is a large, non-representative sample of young adults ages 18-25 residing in Rhode Island
- NSDUH:** The National Survey on Drug Use and Health is a representative sample of households in Rhode Island.

REFERENCES

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Rhode Island Young Adult Survey