

Alcohol Use in Maine

Kennebec County Profile 2022



Youth Alcohol Use

1 in 5

high school students **drank alcohol** in the last 30 days.¹



3 in 5

high school students feel it is **easy to get alcohol**.¹



1 in 3

of the high school students who used alcohol **reported binge drinking**.¹



2 in 5

high school students **do not believe** that regular alcohol use is **harmful**.¹



Adult Alcohol Use

1 in 6

(Kennebec County) adults report binge drinking* in the past month.²



1 in 3

(Statewide) adults report binge drinking* in the past month.²



1 in 5

(Nationally) adults report binge drinking* in the past month.



***Binge Drinking** is having more than 4 drinks in one sitting for women, and more than 5 drinks for men.

Effects of Alcohol Use

Using alcohol before reaching legal age can **impair brain development** and can affect judgment and memory over the lifespan.

Individuals who use alcohol before the age of 21 are more likely to develop a **substance use disorder**.

Alcohol is linked to serious **health complications**, such as suppressed immunity,³ fetal alcohol spectrum disorders,⁴ and several cancers.⁵

Access and Youth Alcohol Use

Youth who believe alcohol is easy to access are more likely to use it.¹

Alcohol is easier for youth to access when...

Liquor outlets are **closer to schools** and playgrounds⁶

Alcohol is sold at **community events**

Places to buy alcohol are **densely packed** into communities⁷

Alcohol is not **locked away** at home

Home **delivery** and **takeout** orders of alcohol are available⁸

Stores and restaurants do not consistently **check ID**



Resources

¹ 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey

² 2017 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

³ "Drinking pattern and socio-cultural aspects on immune response: an overview"
National Library of Medicine: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20598197/>

⁴ "Basics about FASDs"
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/fasd/facts.html>

⁵ "Alcohol and Cancer Risk"
National Cancer Institute: <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/alcohol/alcohol-fact-sheet#what-is-the-evidence-that-alcohol-drinking-can-cause-cancer>

⁶ "Proximity to Liquor Stores and Adolescent Alcohol Intake: A Prospective Study"
National Library of Medicine: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29656918/>

⁷ "Regulating Outlet Density Prevents Excessive Alcohol Use"
Department of Health and Human Services: <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/content/regulating-alcohol-outlet-density-prevents-excessive-alcohol-use>

⁸ "Increasing Access, Increasing Harm"
Alcohol Policy Resource Center: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.prevention.org%2FResources%2F34aa5461-6e31-4629-86fd-e7c4f7a52871%2FDirect%2520to%2520Consumer%2520Alcohol%2520Infographic.pdf&clen=230515>