



FALL 2016

TRENDS OF TEEN ALCOHOL USE

REGION 1, TEXAS

PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTER, REGION 1 TEXAS

MANAGED CARE CENTER FOR ADDICTIVE/OTHER DISORDERS, INC

1715 26th St | Lubbock, TX 79411 | 806.780.8300

The PRC, Region 1

Who We Are

The Prevention Resource Center (PRC) is a service of Managed Care Center for Addictive/Other Disorders, Inc. We serve the 41 counties of the Texas Panhandle and South Plains Region.

We serve as the central data collection repository and substance abuse prevention training liaison for Public Health Region 1, funded by a grant from the Department of State Health Services.

Our duties are to identify local community, county, and regional data resources that will provide and share data to enhance and maximize data collection and support the central data collection repository efforts.

Our Mission

The purpose of the Prevention Resource Center is to support activities that enhance and improve substance abuse prevention services across Region 1 of the State of Texas. The Resource Center serves as a central repository for data collected throughout Region 1 that will be used to develop a Regional Needs Assessment.

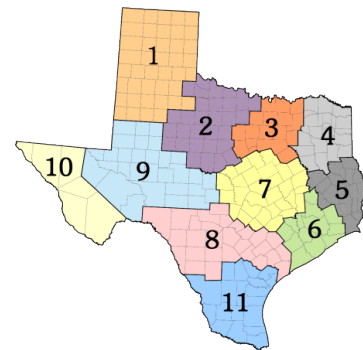
Our specific goals are:

- To provide current, relevant, and community-wide data on substance abuse trends
- To enhance the ability of our communities to more effectively respond to changes in substance abuse trends
- To influence data driven changes in the standards and attitudes within our communities

Our Region

We serve the following counties in West Texas:

- Armstrong, Bailey, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Cochran, Collingsworth, Crosby, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Dickens, Donley, Floyd, Garza, Gray, Hale, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hockley, Hutchinson, King, Lamb, Lipscomb, Lubbock, Lynn, Moore, Motley, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, Terry, Wheeler, & Yoakum.



How We Serve our Community

We serve our communities by providing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) data to schools, colleges and universities, or other community agencies. This is done through **Information Dissemination** which provides awareness and knowledge of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, and issues and trends through the data collected by the central data repository.

Our **Community-Based Process** aids the community to more effectively provide "TIPS" (Treatment, Intervention and Prevention Services) for ATOD problems through community mobilization, collaboration, coalition building, networking and community empowerment efforts.

Through **Environmental and Social Policy**, we aim to reduce the incidence and prevalence of ATOD in the general population by establishing and/or changing written and unwritten standards, codes and attitudes within the community. This strategy also aims to combat substance abuse and related harms with concerted, community-based and comprehensive efforts to change norms, behaviors, systems and context that contribute to substance abuse problems in our communities.

Tobacco Strategies

Our Tobacco Specialist works with tobacco retailers to understand and comply with Texas laws concerning the sale and display of tobacco products. The Prevention Resource Center provides education to tobacco retailers and the media concerning tobacco laws and the harmful effects of tobacco.

Community Cooperation

The Prevention Resource Center collaborates with other agencies by sharing data about substance abuse issues, trends, planning, training and other activities within our region and state. The Prevention Center coordinates with regional coalitions and supports their prevention efforts.

Richard Kolas, ACPS

Program Director

1 December 2016

Prevention Resource Center, Region 1

Managed Care Center for Addictive/Other Disorders, Inc.

1715 26th St. Lubbock, TX 79411

Tel (806) 780-8300

Fax (806) 780-8383

prc1.org

Introduction

Underage drinking is a serious public health issue in the United States. Alcohol is the most widely used and abused substance among American adolescents¹ and this use/abuse poses enormous health and safety risks for everyone—regardless of age or drinking status. Nationally, more than half (52.2%) of all Americans aged 12 or older were current alcohol users in 2013—that translates to an estimated 136.9 million current drinkers².

Anyone may feel the effects of aggressive behavior, property damage, injuries, violence, and deaths that may result from underage drinking. In short, underage drinking should be a nationwide concern rather than simply a problem for some families in our community.

Annually, about 5,000 people under the age of 21 die from alcohol-related injuries involving underage drinking in the United States. Of these deaths, about 1,900 (38%) involve motor vehicle crashes, 1,600 (32%) result from homicides, and 300 (6%) result from suicides³. In

addition, 40% of people who first drink before age 15 become alcohol dependent as adults. This is four times the rate of those who wait until 21 to have their first drink⁴.

In 2013, 11.6% of American adolescents aged 12 to 17 (or about 2.9 million adolescents) reported that they were current alcohol users⁵. Many of these adolescents (6.2% or 1.6 million) reported binge drinking⁶ in the past month. Adolescent alcohol consumption is a serious problem today.

In 2013, adolescent drinking cost Texans \$5.5 billion dollars, or \$3.50 for each drink.

Still, 67.2% of all Texas adolescents report trying alcohol at least once in their lifetime⁷ and 36.1% report consuming alcohol in the last thirty days. This is higher than the national average and may indicate that Texas adolescents consume more alcohol, on the average, than their peers in other states.

Consequences of Underage Drinking

In 2013, adolescent drinking cost Texans \$5.5 billion dollars⁸. That translates to \$2,075 per year for each youth in Texas or \$3.50 every time an adolescent took a drink in 2013. Underage drinkers consumed 13% of all the alcohol sold in Texas that year which totaled \$1.1 billion dollars in sales. That is \$599 million dollars for the alcohol industry.

Often, adults consider underage drinking as normal behavior, or simply a rite of passage into adulthood. In some cases, adults may even encourage adolescents to consume alcohol under specific circumstances. In Texas, it is legal for an adult to provide alcohol to their children although it is illegal for

¹ National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, p. 1.

² SAMHSA 2014, p. 3.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, pp. 10-11.

⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵ SAMHSA 2014, p. 3.

⁶ Binge drinking is usually defined as 5 or more drinks in a row for men and 4 or more drinks in a row for women.

⁷ Center for Health Statistics (CHS)

⁸ Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, p. 1.

an adult to supply alcohol to a minor who is not their child unless their parent or guardian is present and consents⁹. Laws like these may allow unintended access of alcohol to adolescents.

Alcohol often plays some role in human tragedies and underage drinking is associated with the following:

Table 1: Common Consequences of Underage Drinking¹⁰

Common Consequences of Underage Drinking		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risky sexual behavior leading to unwanted pregnancy and STD, including HIV and AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cause a range of physical consequences, from hangovers to death from alcohol poisoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a risk factor for heavy drinking later in life
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In conjunction with pregnancy, may result in fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, including fetal alcohol syndrome, which remains a leading cause of mental retardation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cause alterations in the structure and function of the developing brain, which continues to mature into the mid- to late twenties, and may have consequences reaching far beyond adolescence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk for medical problems such as cancers of the oral cavity, larynx, pharynx, and esophagus; liver cirrhosis; pancreatitis; and hemorrhagic stroke
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illicit Drug Use 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Failure • Tobacco Use

Additionally, alcohol consumption by underage college students is commonplace, although it varies from campus to campus and from person to person. Many college students, as well as some parents and administrators, simply accept alcohol use as a normal part of student life. Nationally, 80% of college students drink alcohol while 40% binge drink¹¹ and about 20% engage in frequent episodic heavy consumption, which is bingeing three or more times over the past 2 weeks¹².

The negative consequences of alcohol use on college campuses each year are particularly serious and pervasive¹³:

- An estimated 1,700 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes
- Approximately 600,000 students are unintentionally injured while under the influence of alcohol
- Approximately 700,000 students are assaulted by other students who have been drinking
- About 100,000 students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape

⁹ Texas Alcohol Beverage Commission, p. 6.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, pp. 9-12.

¹¹ Binge drinking is usually defined as 5 or more drinks in a row for men and 4 or more drinks in a row for women.

¹² National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

¹³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, pp. 12-13.

Methodology

Although data specific to Region 1 on adolescent alcohol use is sparse, there are two regional surveys that the PRC has access to: The Amarillo Texas Prevention Impact Index (TPII) 2013 and the 2013 Lubbock VOICES Survey. The results of these surveys, along with the results from two state-wide surveys, provides the best picture into just how regional adolescents abuse marijuana.

Specifically, this report primarily uses data for region 1 from these four surveys:

- TSS: 2016 Texas Student Survey, Regions 1-2
- YRBS: 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- TPII: 2015 Texas Prevention Impact Index, Amarillo ISD
- 40 DAS: 2015 40 Developmental Assets Survey, Lubbock ISD

Taken together, these surveys begin to illustrate how adolescents in Region 1, Texas perceive harmful risks of using alcohol and how they consume alcohol. Although most of the regional data was collected in Amarillo and Lubbock, other regional teens do seem to follow similar patterns.

Regional Adolescent Perceptions of Alcohol

How teens perceive alcohol is vital to understanding how teens consume alcohol in our region. These perceptions directly correlate to how alcohol is treated by teens and what strategies Prevention Specialists can employ in order to educate adolescents about the dangers of alcohol consumption.

Perception of Access

Adolescents can only use Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) substances if they have access to these substances. The Texas Student Survey asks 7th to 12th grade students to rate how easily they can find these products. In general, the less able adolescents can find these substances, the less likely they are to consume these substances. Overall, Texan High School students perceive alcohol to be the easiest to get with 58.2% reporting that access to alcohol is either somewhat or very easy for them.

Table 2: Perceived Accessibility to Alcohol, TSS 2016¹⁴

If you wanted to, how difficult would it be for you to get alcohol?						
	Never Heard of It	Impossible	Very Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Somewhat Easy	Very Easy
All Grades	16.0%	15.2%	7.2%	12.0%	19.6%	29.9%
Grade 7	28.5%	29.5%	9.3%	8.5%	11.0%	13.3%
Grade 8	18.9%	20.1%	10.4%	14.0%	19.2%	17.3%
Grade 9	18.9%	13.7%	7.1%	13.1%	17.7%	29.7%
Grade 10	9.0%	12.6%	6.2%	12.3%	27.4%	32.6%
Grade 11	10.2%	7.2%	2.0%	11.3%	19.3%	49.9%
Grade 12	7.5%	4.6%	7.2%	13.4%	24.9%	42.4%

¹⁴ Source: Texas Student Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use, 2016; Regions 1-2

Perhaps of greatest concern regarding access is that 67.3% of Texas twelfth grade students report that alcohol is either somewhat easy or very easy to obtain. Still, one quarter (24.3%) of Texas seventh grade students report that alcohol is either somewhat easy or very easy to obtain.

Amarillo-area adolescents report a slightly lower perception of access to alcohol. In 2014, 39.6% of these teens reported that alcohol is either very or fairly easy to obtain¹⁵. It may be that adolescents are less likely to access alcohol when compared to the Texas State average. However, 46.5% of Amarillo-area adolescents report that alcohol is either likely or very likely to be present at parties.

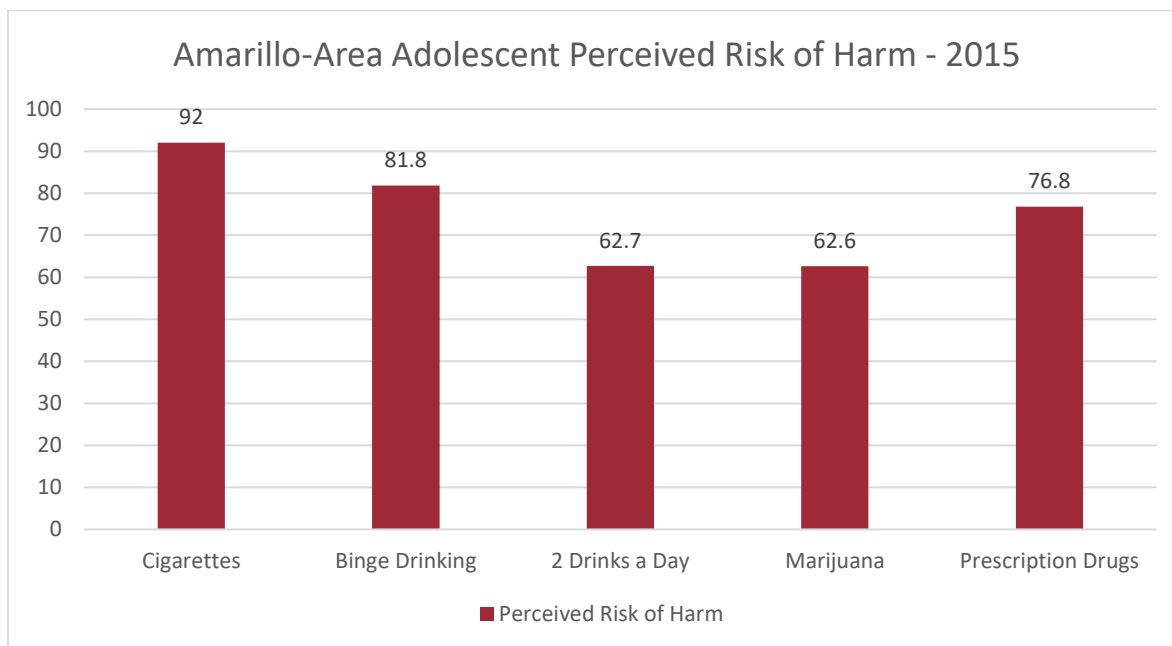
Interestingly, Amarillo-area students believe that 39% of other students drink at least once a month and that 29% of other students binge drink¹⁶. This is higher than what their peers report actually drinking.

Perceived Risk of Harm

Convincing adolescents that ATOD substances are harmful to them is what Youth Prevention efforts are all about. Overall, 50.3% of Texas students report they believe alcohol to be very dangerous. This is less dangerous than they perceive marijuana (58.2%) or tobacco (56.8%)¹⁷ to be.

Regionally, adolescents do perceive ATOD substances as having a higher risk of harm than Texas teens. Over 92% of Amarillo-area adolescents perceive cigarettes as harmful and 62.6% of these same students perceive marijuana as harmful. Still, only 62.7% of Amarillo-area students perceive two drinks of alcohol a day as harmful. 81.8% of participants responded that binge drinking is dangerous.

Figure 1: Perceived Risk of Harm, TPII 2015¹⁸



¹⁵ 2014 Texas Prevention Impact Index

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ 2016 Texas Student Survey of Drug and Alcohol Abuse

¹⁸ Texas Prevention Impact Index, 2015

Depending on how one looks at the data, regional adolescents may or may not consider alcohol as dangerous as compared to the Texas State average. Although the TSS does report that 50.3% of Texas adolescents perceive alcohol as very dangerous, 29.7% also answered that alcohol is “somewhat dangerous”. Taken together, one could say that 80% of Texas adolescents feel that alcohol is either somewhat or very dangerous while only 62.7% of regional adolescents reported two drinks a day as dangerous. However, 81.8% of regional adolescents report that they believe binge drinking is harmful. Depending on how one defines “drinking”, regional adolescents are either consistent with or below state average for perceived risk of harm.

Table 3: Perceived Risk of Harm to Alcohol Use, TSS 2016¹⁹

How dangerous do you think it is for kids your age to use alcohol?					
	Very Dangerous	Somewhat Dangerous	Not Very Dangerous	Not at All Dangerous	Do Not Know
All Grades	50.7%	31.4%	11.8%	2.3%	3.7%
Grade 7	68.2%	19.5%	7.0%	1.7%	3.5%
Grade 8	56.2%	29.1%	10.7%	2.2%	1.8%
Grade 9	44.8%	33.3%	13.7%	1.8%	6.4%
Grade 10	44.7%	37.1%	12.7%	1.5%	4.0%
Grade 11	43.7%	34.6%	13.9%	4.0%	3.8%
Grade 12	43.0%	37.6%	13.8%	3.2%	2.5%

Regional Adolescent Consumption of Alcohol

The majority of regional alcohol consumption data that is available comes from the 2016 Texas Student Survey of Substance Abuse (TSS) and the 2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey – Texas Results (YRBS). Both of these surveys give data for the State of Texas and is not available at a regional or county level of detail. These do afford communities a general idea of what may be occurring among their young people. This data provides an excellent frame from which to compare any local information concerning ATOD use.

Data specific to Region 1 on alcohol consumption and underage drinking is sparse but there are two surveys that the PRC has access to: The Amarillo Texas Prevention Impact Index (TPII) 2013 and the 2015 40 Developmental Assets Survey, Lubbock ISD. These surveys are centered in the Amarillo and Lubbock metropolitan areas but they should not be dismissed by rural areas within the region.

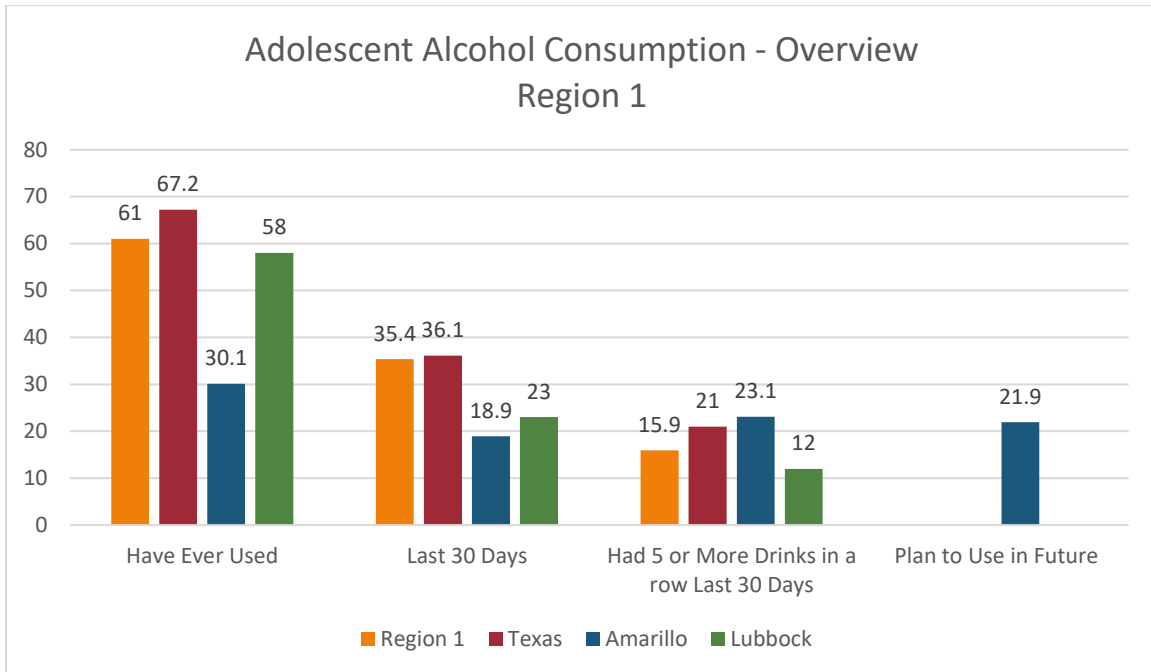
Overview

Generally speaking, available data seems to indicate that adolescents in Region 1 (61%) have consumed alcohol consistent to state (67.2%) results. Unfortunately, more regional adolescents (35.4%) report using alcohol in the last 30 days than other Texas teens (36.1%)²⁰.

¹⁹ Texas Student Survey of Drug and Alcohol Use, 2016

²⁰ Ibid.

Figure 2: Overview of Alcohol Consumption, Region 1



Still, it is troubling that 23.1% of Amarillo-area adolescents reported that they engaged in binge drinking over the past month which is higher than both state and regional-level findings. Although this is only slightly more than Texas Students surveyed by the YRBS (2.1% more), it is over 7% higher than the regional students surveyed by the TSS. Finally, there is a greater disparity between having ever used and used within the last 30 days for Texas adolescents (33.1%) than for Amarillo-area adolescents (11.2%). This may indicate that regional adolescents are more likely to consume alcohol more often if they use it at all.

Table 4: Prevalence and Recent Use of Alcohol, TSS 2016²¹

Prevalence and Recent Use of Alcohol – TSS 2016					
	Past Month	School Year	Ever Used	Never Used	
All Grades	35.4%	40.2%	61.0%	39.0%	
Grade 7	16.8%	19.2%	36.0%	64.0%	
Grade 8	22.1%	24.4%	47.9%	52.1%	
Grade 9	38.4%	43.3%	65.0%	35.0%	
Grade 10	41.5%	48.2%	70.6%	29.4%	
Grade 11	50.3%	57.5%	78.0%	22.0%	
Grade 12	49.7%	55.6%	76.0%	24.0%	

Current Use

Regional adolescents are reporting, ranging from 35.4% to 18.9% of survey participants, that they have consumed alcohol in the last 30 days. Students believe that they (and other adolescents) are likely to

²¹ Texas Student Survey, 2016

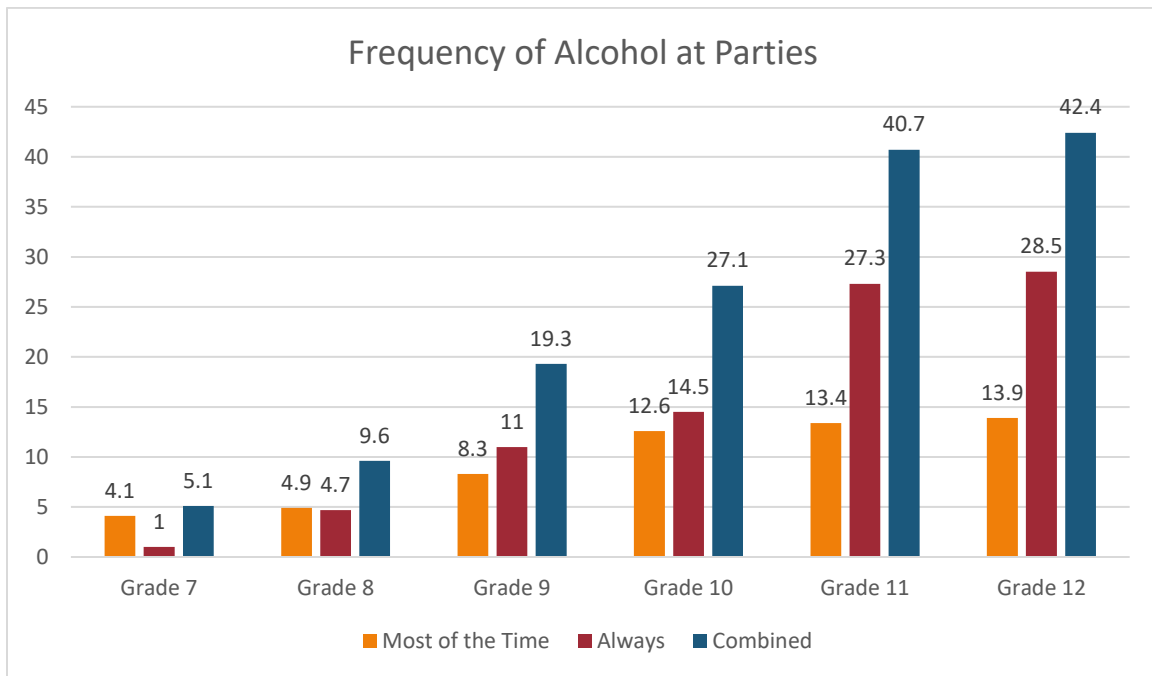
consume alcohol during the following times and at the following locations. Parties seem to be the most likely (46.5%) opportunity for adolescents in Region 1 to consume alcohol.

Table 5: Youth Alcohol Use, TPII 2015²²

How likely are youth in your community to use alcohol?			
	Likely		Very Likely
Before School	6.0%		4.2%
Week Nights	15.5%		8.9%
During School	5.7%		4.1%
Weekends	16.1%		24.1%
At Lunch	5.4%		4.4%
School Functions	4.5%		3.7%
After School	16.4%		11.6%
At Parties	13.0%		33.5%

Data from the 2016 Texas Student Survey seems to support the prevalence of alcohol at parties:

Figure 3: Frequency of Alcohol at Parties, TSS 2016²³



Overall, it seems more likely that regional adolescents will encounter alcohol at parties than the state average (46.5% vs. 40.3%). Naturally, the older students seem more likely to encounter alcohol at parties with the biggest increase being the transition from Grade 10 (27.1%) to Grade 11 (40.7%).

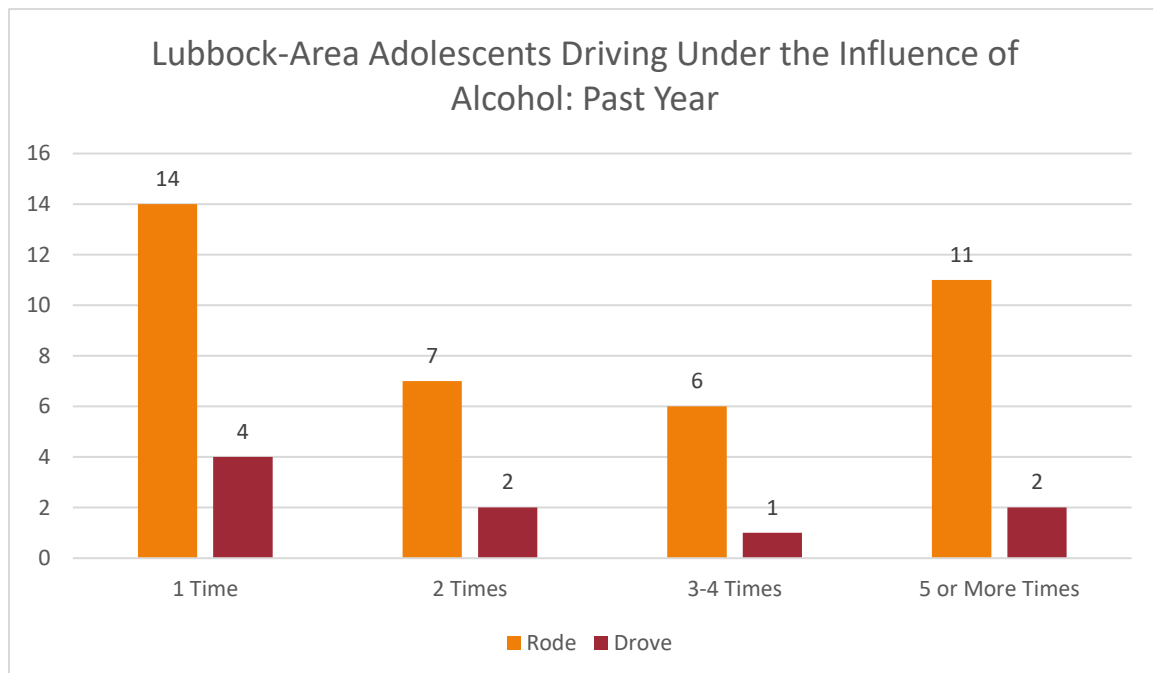
²² Texas Prevention Impact Index, 2015

²³ Texas Student Survey, 2016

Although parties seem to be the most likely time for Regional Adolescents to consume alcohol, other at risk times include weeknights (24.4%), weekends (40.2%), and after school (28.0%). Parents, educators, and other regional caregivers should factor in these at risk times for alcohol consumption when developing any prevention strategies.

In addition to consuming alcohol at parties, many regional adolescents either drive while under the influence of alcohol or ride with someone who has been drinking. 14% of Lubbock-area adolescents report riding once in the past year in a vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking and 11% report doing so five or more times in that same time frame.

Figure 4: Lubbock-Area Adolescents Driving Under Influence of Alcohol: Past Year²⁴



Equally poignant, 15% of Amarillo-area adolescents reported operating a vehicle after drinking at least once. It seems that regional adolescents are less likely to drink and operate a vehicle than to ride with someone driving while drunk. Still, give the potential life-threatening consequences to both them and the community, more emphasis on these dangers are needed in our region.

Conclusion

New national-level data concerning adolescent consumption of alcohol may indicate some troubling trends. Almost 12% of Americans aged 12 to 17 report that they currently use alcohol and many (6.2%) report that they are binge drinking. Adolescent alcohol consumption is a serious problem today.

Overall, Adolescent consumption of alcohol in our region is higher when compared to other Texas regions and regional teens are more likely to drink more often if they drink at all. This may indicate that

²⁴ 40 DAS, 2015

adults in Region 1 are more permissive of adolescent alcohol consumption. Most adolescents have access to alcohol at parties.

Key Findings

- It seems that regional adolescents are more likely to encounter alcohol at parties than the state average (46.5% vs. 40.3%).
- Older students seem more likely to encounter alcohol at parties with the biggest increase potential being the transition from Grade 10 (27.1%) to Grade 11 (40.7%).
- It is troubling that 23.1% of Amarillo-area adolescents reported that they engaged in binge drinking over the past month which is higher than regional and state-level findings (15.9% and 21%).
- There is a greater disparity between having ever used and used within the last 30 days for Texas adolescents (33.1%) than for Amarillo-area adolescents (11.2%). This may indicate that regional adolescents are more likely to consume alcohol more often if they use it at all.
- 14% of Lubbock-area adolescents report riding at least once in the past year in a vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking and 11% report doing so five or more times in that same time frame.

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Contact Information

<p>Joseph Dickerson, APS Community Liaison</p> <p>Tel: 806-780-8300 Fax: 806-780-8383 joseph.dickerson@mccaod.com</p>	<p>Diane Wilson Community Liaison</p> <p>Tel: 806-331-2723 Fax: 806-331-2728 diane.wilson@mccaod.com</p>	<p>Robert Schafer, CPS Evaluator</p> <p>Tel: 806-780-8300 Fax: 806-780-8383 bob.schafer@mccaod.com</p>
<p>Richard Kolas, ACPS Program Director</p> <p>Tel: 806-780-8300 Fax: 806-780-8383 Jackie.johnson@mccaod.com</p>		

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