

# ALCOHOL USE IN ADOLESCENTS

## APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS AND UNDERAGE DRINKING PREVENTION MONTH IN MICHIGAN

Adolescence is a critical period for brain development, and early alcohol use is linked to long-term negative outcomes, including increased risk of substance use disorders, poor academic performance, risky behaviors, and adverse health effects.

### Risks of Adolescent Alcohol Use

#### Social, Academic, & Legal Issues

- More school absences
- Lower grades
- Drinking and driving risks
- Increased likelihood of drug misuse

#### Physical & Mental Health Risks

- Increased violence (homicide, suicide, sexual violence)
- Higher risk of injuries (crashes, burns, falls, drowning)
- Stunted growth and slower brain development (memory issues)

#### Sexual Health Risks

- Higher risk of STIs, HIV, and unplanned pregnancy
- Engaging in unprotected sex (lack of condom use or preventive medicine)

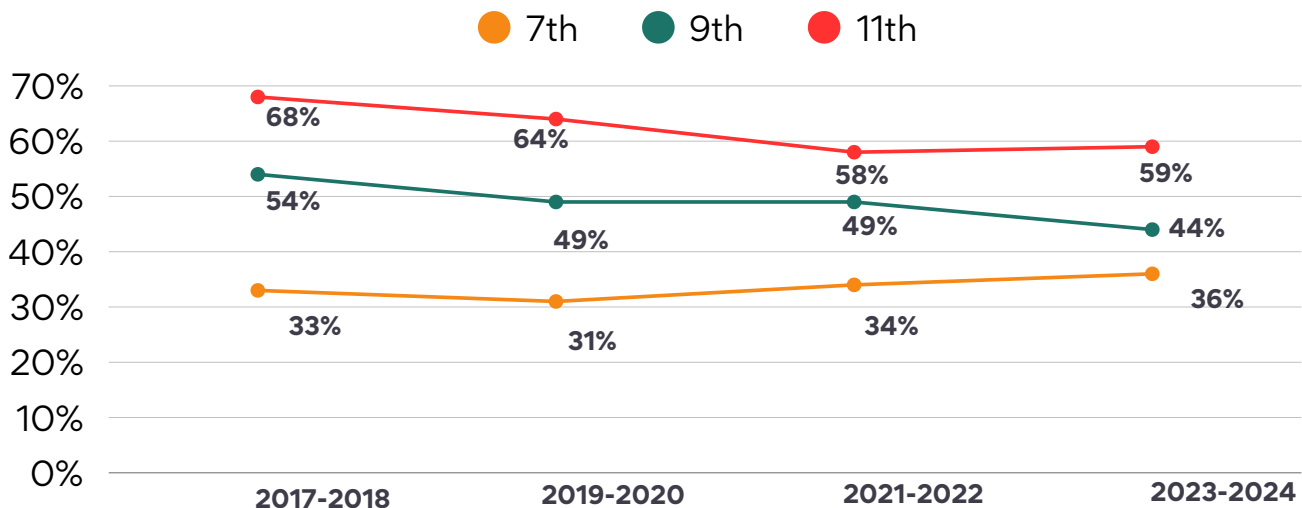
#### Long-Term Impact

- Greater likelihood of excessive alcohol use or alcohol use disorder in adulthood

### Based on National Statistics

- Adolescents are 4x more likely to drink alcohol if their parents binge drink.
- Alcohol use and binge drinking among high school students have generally decreased in recent decades.
- More high school girls drink alcohol and binge drink, compared to high school boys.
  - This is a shift from previous years when boys drank more than girls

### PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO REPORTED SORT OF EASY OR VERY EASY TO GET ALCOHOL

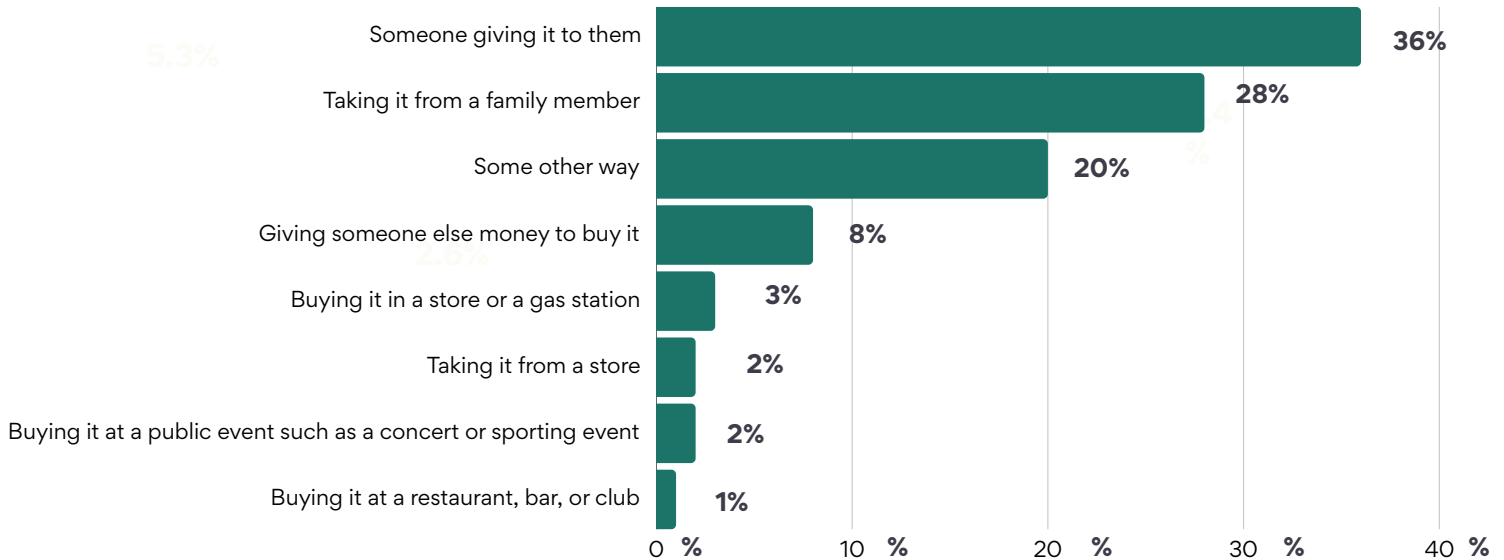


11th-grade students consistently reported the highest ease of access to alcohol, with more students indicating that obtaining alcohol was 'sort of easy' or 'very easy.'



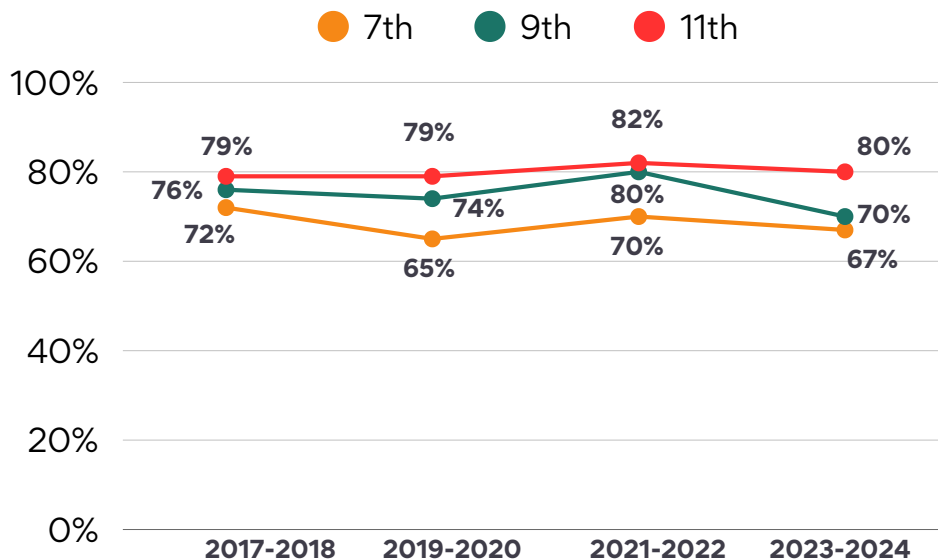
# ALCOHOL USE IN ADOLESCENTS

**2023-2024: AMONG HIGH SCHOOL (9<sup>TH</sup> AND 11<sup>TH</sup>) STUDENTS WHO DRANK RECENTLY (PAST 30 DAYS), THE PERCENTAGE WHO USUALLY GOT THEIR ALCOHOL BY**



The majority of high school students who recently drank alcohol reported obtaining it from someone who gave it to them, followed by taking it from a family member.

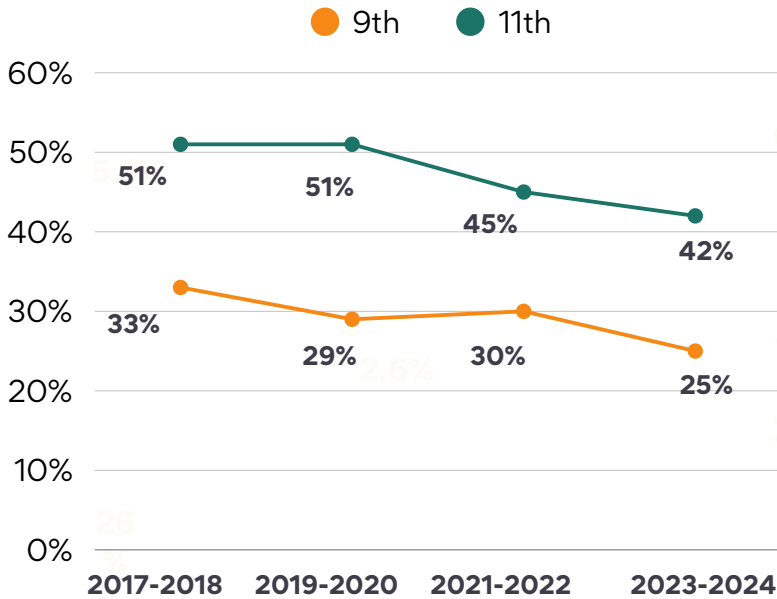
**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHOSE PARENTS OR OTHER ADULTS IN THEIR FAMILY EVER TALKED WITH THEM ABOUT WHAT THEY EXPECTED THEM TO DO OR NOT TO DO WHEN IT COMES TO ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUG USE**



Over the past four survey periods, 11th-grade students were the most likely to report that their parents or other adult family members had discussed expectations regarding alcohol and other drugs with them, more so than 7th and 9th graders. Research shows that adolescents who are aware of their parents' opinions on youth drinking are more likely to align with those expectations.

# ALCOHOL USE IN ADOLESCENTS

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO EVER DRANK ALCOHOL

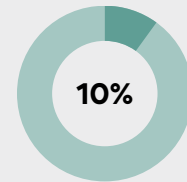


Over the past four survey periods, the percentage of students reporting ever drinking alcohol has steadily declined among 9th and 11th graders. In the 2017-2018 survey, 51% of 11th graders reported ever drinking alcohol, dropping to 42% in 2023-2024.

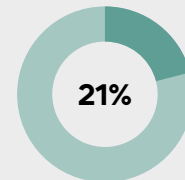
Average age of first alcohol use among high school students surveyed in 2023-2024: **12.6 years**

## KEY STATISTICS

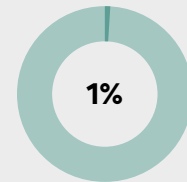
Alcohol-Related Risk Behaviors (2023-2024)



**10%** of high school students reported recently riding in the car driven by someone who had been drinking

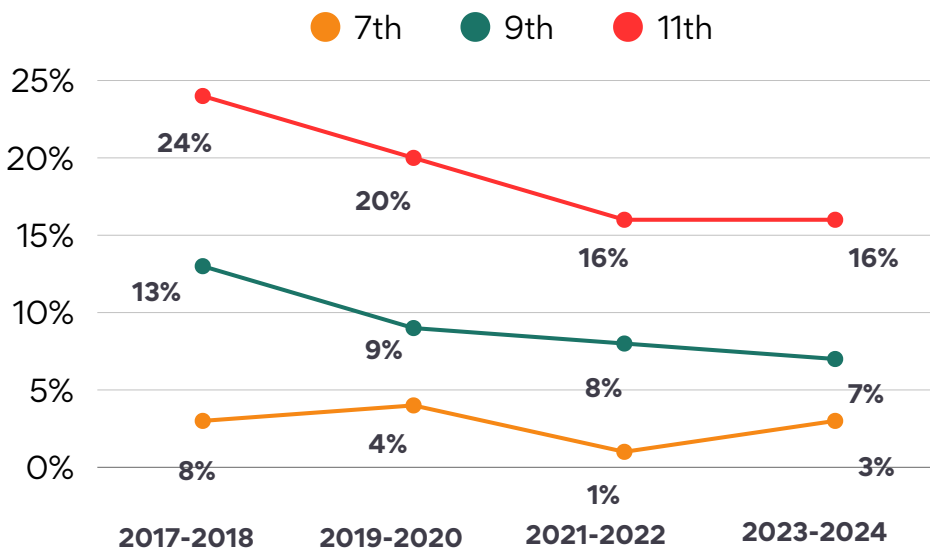


**21%** of middle school students reported ever riding in a car with a driver who had been drinking



**1%** of high school students reported recently driving after drinking alcohol

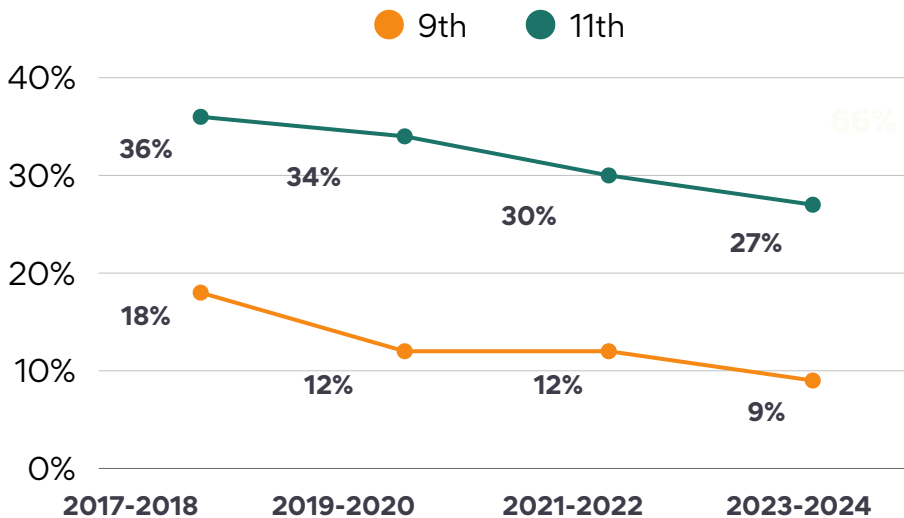
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO DRANK ALCOHOL RECENTLY



Similar to the decline in students reporting ever drinking, recent alcohol use among 9th and 11th graders has also decreased. Among 11th graders, the percentage who reported drinking recently fell from 24% in 2017-2018 to 16% in 2023-2024.

# ALCOHOL USE IN ADOLESCENTS

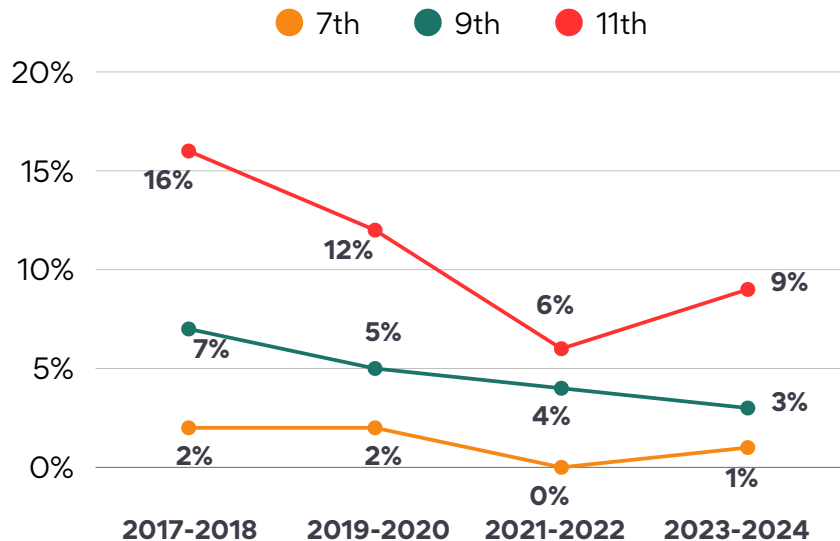
## PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE EVER BEEN DRUNK



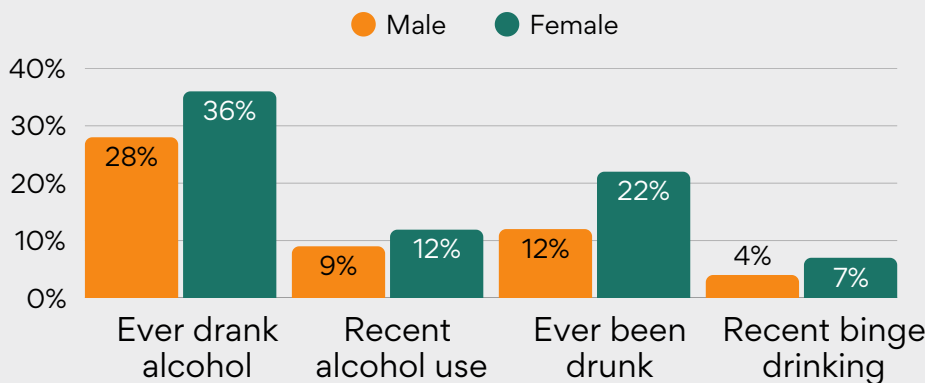
The percentage of 9th and 11th graders reporting ever being drunk has declined over the past four survey periods, decreasing from 36% in 2017-2018 to 27% in 2023-2024. However, this still means that over 1 in 4 11th-grade students have reported being drunk at some point.

## PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO RECENTLY BINGE DRANK

While binge drinking remains most common among high school students compared to middle school students, overall rates have remained low, between 0% and 2% over the past four survey periods. Among 11th graders, recent binge drinking declined by half, from 16% in 2017-2018 to 8% in 2021-2022.



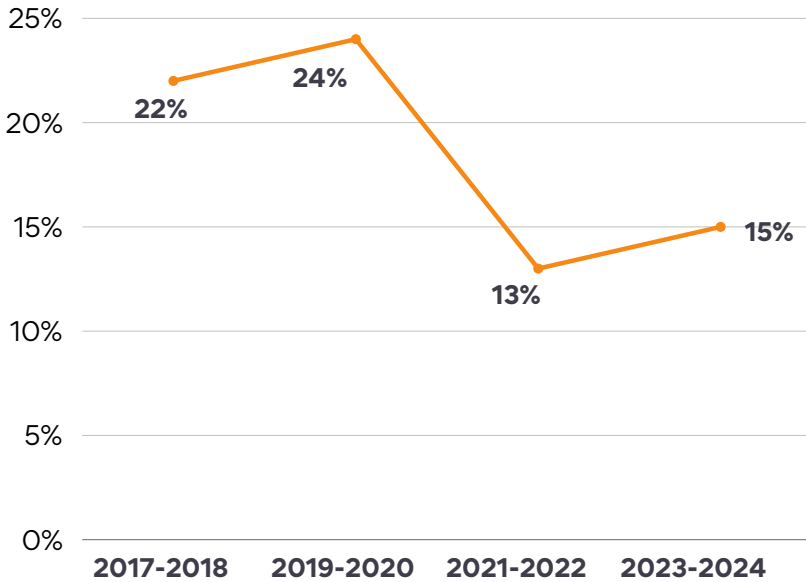
## 2023-2024: PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS REPORTING THE FOLLOWING



Similar to national trends, Eaton County high school females are more likely than males to report ever drinking alcohol, recent alcohol use, ever being drunk, and recent binge drinking.

# ALCOHOL USE IN ADOLESCENTS

**AMONG SEXUALLY ACTIVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, THE PERCENTAGE WHO DRANK OR USED DRUGS BEFORE LAST INTERCOSE**



Alcohol and drug use can increase the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors, including unprotected sex. Over the past four survey periods, the percentage of sexually active high school students who drank or used drugs before their last intercourse decreased from 24% to 13% in 2021-2022, with a slight increase to 15% in 2023-2024.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ADOLESCENT ALCOHOL USE

- 1. Open Conversations:** Parents and trusted adults can discuss alcohol use and set clear expectations.
- 2. Promote Positive Social Norms:** Highlighting that most teens do not drink can help reduce peer pressure and normalize healthy behaviors.

- While fewer students report drinking compared to previous years, a large percentage still engage in alcohol use, including binge drinking and risky behaviors.
- Adolescents who are aware of their parents' expectations regarding alcohol are less likely to drink. Open communication is an important protective factor.
- Most high school students who drink report obtaining alcohol from social sources, such as friends or family.

## SOURCES

- [About Underage Drinking | Alcohol Use | CDC](#)
- [Associations Between Parental Drinking and Alcohol Use Among Their Adolescent Children: Findings From National Survey of United States Parent-Child Dyads - PubMed](#)
- [Parenting To Prevent Childhood Alcohol Use | National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism \(NIAAA\)](#)
- Michigan Department of Education, 2017-2024, Michigan school health survey system. <https://bit.ly/3T3OMvV>
- Sexually active: Sexual intercourse during the past three months
- Binge drinking: 4+ drinks for females, 5+ for males in a row, that is, within a couple of hours
- Recent/recent use: during the past 30 days