



20 percent of adult Iowans engaged in binge drinking.

Binge Drinking Among Iowans

Binge drinking is a common behavior, but some populations are more likely to engage in binge drinking than others. In Iowa, males are two times more likely to binge drink than females (Figure 2). Young adults aged 25-34 years of age are most likely to binge drink, followed by those aged 18-24 and 35-44 years old (Figure 3). Adults with a college education are twice as likely to binge drink as people without a high school diploma. Iowans with household incomes over \$50,000 are twice as likely to report recent binge drinking than Iowans with household incomes less than \$24,000 (BRFSS, 2015). The Iowans most at risk of binge drinking are males aged 25-34 years with a college degree and a household income over \$50,000 (BRFSS, 2015).

Males aged 25-34 with a college degree and income \$50,000+ are most likely to binge drink.



Alcohol: Binge Drinking Prevalence in Iowa

Alcohol is the most commonly used substance in Iowa and binge drinking is a common form of alcohol consumption. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2016) defines binge drinking as five or more alcoholic drinks for males and four or more alcoholic drinks for females on the same occasion. According to the 2015 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 20 percent of adult Iowans (over 400,000 people) engaged in binge drinking (Figure 1). This is similar to the national rate of 16 percent (Figure 1). In 2015, Iowa ranked 5th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for the percentage of adults who binge drank (CDC, 2016a). Despite decreasing by 13 percent between 2011 and 2015, binge drinking remains a serious public health concern in Iowa.

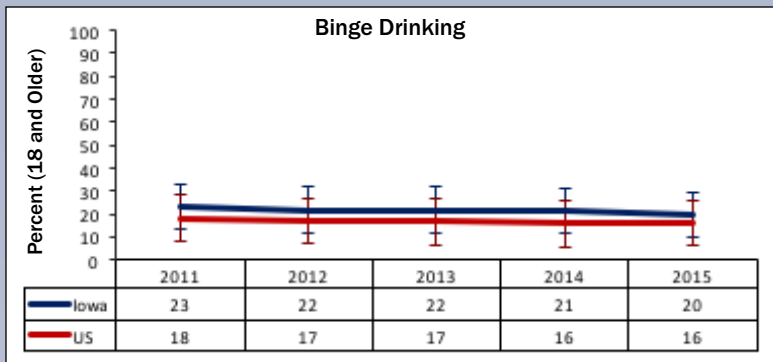


Figure 1: Percent of adults reporting binge drinking in the past 30 days, BRFSS, 2011-2015

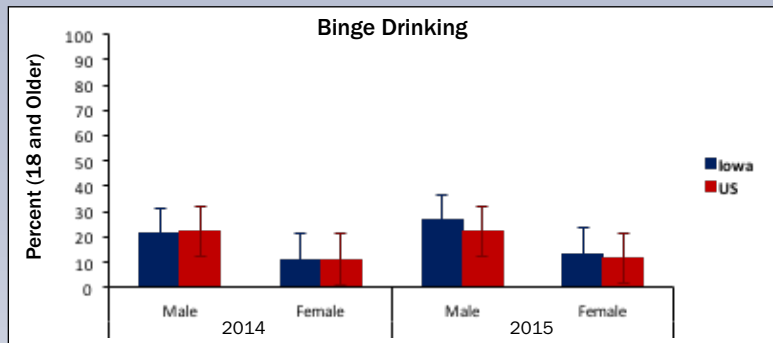


Figure 2: Percent of adults reporting binge drinking in the past 30 days by gender, BRFSS, 2014-2015

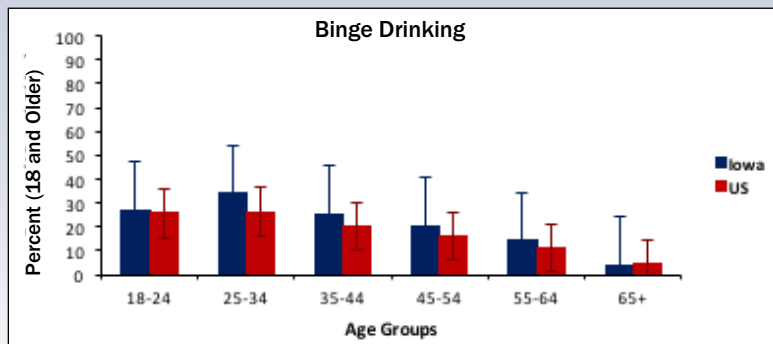


Figure 3: Percent of adults reporting binge drinking in the past 30 days by age, BRFSS, 2014-2015



Five percent of 6th, 8th and 11th grade students reported binge drinking.

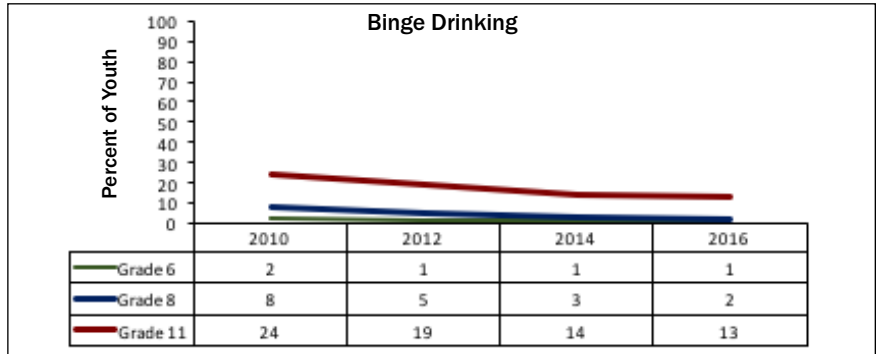


Figure 4: Percent of students reporting binge drinking in the past 30 days by grade, IYS, 2010-2016

Binge drinking is seen as a rite of passage for adolescents in some communities, neighborhoods, and families. The 2016 Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) reported that 5 percent of 6th, 8th, and 11th grade students reported binge drinking. The percentage of 8th and 11th grade students who binge drank significantly decreased since 2010 (Figure 4). Despite this downward trend in binge drinking over time, the likelihood of binge drinking increases with age.

Cost and Problems Associated with Binge Drinking

- In 2010, binge drinking cost the United States nearly \$200 billion due to loss of productivity, health care and crime associated with the behavior (CDC, 2015);
- In Iowa, excessive alcohol use including binge drinking cost \$1.9 billion, or \$1.59 per drink in 2010 (CDC, 2016);
- Binge drinkers are 14 times more likely to drive while intoxicated (CDC, 2015).
- Female college students who binge drink are six times more likely to report sexual assaults (Howard, Griffin, & Boekeloo, 2008);
- Unintentional injuries (car crashes, falls, drowning, etc.; CDC, 2015);
- Intentional injuries (firearm injuries, sexual assault, domestic violence, etc.; CDC, 2015);
- Unintended pregnancy (CDC, 2015);
- Increased risk of high blood pressure, stroke and cardio-vascular disease, alcohol poisoning, liver disease, and neurological damage (CDC, 2015), and
- Students who binge drink may experience poor attendance, lower or failing grades, and social problems (fighting and lack of participation in youth activities; CDC, 2016c).

There are increased health risks due to binge drinking.

References:

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System [BRFSS]. (2015). Prevalence and trends data. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2015). Fact Sheets – Binge Drinking. Retrieved on April 27, 2017 from <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/binge-drinking.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2016a) Alcohol and Public Health: Text Description for Data and Maps Page. Retrieved on May 18, 2017 from <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/data-table-text.htm#prevalence>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2016b). Prevention status reports. Retrieved from <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/psr/?state=iowa>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC]. (2016c). Fact Sheets – Underage Drinking. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm>

Howard, D. E., Griffin M. A., & Boekeloo, B.O. (2008). Prevalence and psychosocial correlates of alcohol-related sexual assault among university students. *Adolescence*, 43, 733-750.

Iowa Youth Survey [IYS]. (2016). 2016 Iowa Youth Survey: State of Iowa results. Retrieved from http://www.iowayouthsurvey.iowa.gov/images/2016_State_IYS%202016%20State%20Report.pdf

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA]. (2016). Binge drinking: Terminology and patterns of use. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/tools-learning-resources/binge-drinking-terminology-patterns>

Addressing the Binge Drinking Problem in Iowa

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Bureau of Substance Abuse offers services to prevent binge drinking. These services include:

- Funding substance abuse prevention agencies that provide alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention across all 99 Iowa counties;
- Identifying specific counties that have higher rates of underage drinking and youth binge drinking and then funding these counties to utilize environmental strategies which address the entire county, across the lifespan;
- Funding community coalitions to address underage drinking and binge drinking;
- Supporting counties to provide services focused on prevention education, referral, intervention or post-treatment;
- Providing grants for youth programs focused on leadership, education and mentoring services that help prevent risks associated with drinking.

Further Information

For more information about prevention and treatment resources in Iowa, please visit the IDPH Substance Abuse Prevention website at <https://idph.iowa.gov/substance-abuse/prevention> or the Your Life Iowa website at <http://www.yourlifeiowa.org/>.