

# Utah Underage Drinking Statistics Every Parent Should Know

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\$0.2 billion — that was the [cost of underage drinking and substance abuse](#) in 2013 (the most current year analyzed) for the state of Utah. This number can be hard to fathom. And yet, when you consider all of the expenses associated with substance abuse, you can see how the costs quickly add up. This includes some \$37.3 million in medical costs, \$43.2 million is lost work and \$138.3 million for pain, suffering, property damage, legal costs, alcohol treatment injuries and violence. This amounts to \$707.00 per year per young person. If you find this shocking, let's look at some more interesting underage drinking statistics that you need to know as a parent or concerned friend or family member.

## Utah Underage Drinking Statistics

- In 2012, youth rehab admissions accounted for [12% of all alcohol treatment](#) admissions.
- Youth who begin drinking before the age of 15 are [4X more likely to become dependent and 2.5X as likely to become alcohol abusers](#) than their peers who don't drink until 21.
- Among 9th to 12th graders, [30.7%](#) report having had at least 1 drink.
- [11% of children](#) under 13 have had at least 1 full drink. This does not include the occasional sip or two.
- Even though underage persons cannot purchase the alcohol for themselves, they still account for [\\$43 million](#) in annual sales for the state.
- Utah is a leader among states who have implemented tough penalties and counter-measures to prevent and prosecute drunk driving. Utah has been awarded [5 stars by MADD](#), a well-respected organization that fights drunk driving nationally. But there is still work to be done.

## What Can We Do About Underage Drinking in Utah

Despite tough penalties and efforts on the part of the state and concerned citizens to eliminate underage drinking,

it's still a problem. We must all work together to help stop this epidemic.

1. Parents should talk to their children about underage drinking and let them know why it is so harmful and that you do not approve. Know where your children are and be involved in their lives.
2. If alcohol is in the home, it should be locked up. Even the smartest and most well-behaved teen can be tempted to try alcohol if it is available, especially when friends come over.
3. Don't be a part of the problem. If an underage person asks you to provide alcohol, don't do it. You are not only causing potential long-term harm, but you could also face severe penalties like 1 year in prison and/or a \$2500.00 fine along with the court costs that will be much more.
4. Know the penalties and share them with your friends and loved ones.
  - First Offenses that include misrepresenting age are a class B misdemeanor and can carry a fine of up to \$1 Thousand and/or up to six months in jail, completely at the judge's discretion. ([Utah Code Ann. Section 32B-4-411\(1\)\(a\)\(i\)](#))
  - For a second offense, the violator is guilty of a class A misdemeanor, which carries a fine of up to \$2500 and/or up to 1 year in jail. ([Utah Code Ann. Section 32B-4-411\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#))

Underage drinking simply isn't worth it. And the cost to the child, the parents, and the state is enormous. But together we can protect our children and end underage drinking.