

## Underage Drinking Prevention Campaign

(NAPSA)—Alcohol is the most widely used substance of abuse among America's youth, contributing to the three leading causes of death among 12- to 20-year-olds (unintentional injury, homicide and suicide).

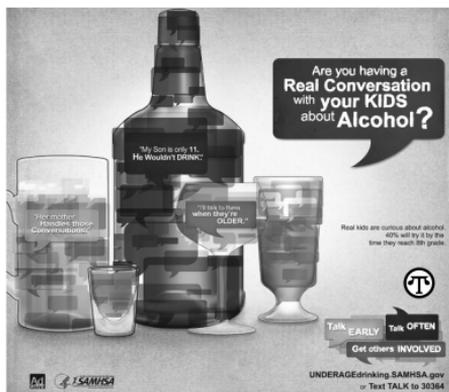
Research shows that those who start drinking before age 15 are six times more likely to have alcohol problems as adults than those who start drinking at age 21 or older. According to a study, more than a quarter of youth in that age group (27.6 percent) drank alcohol in the past month.

A survey by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) shows that the underage drinking rates were as high as 40 percent in some states such as North Dakota and Vermont.

The study also reveals that nationwide, approximately 8.6 percent of past-month drinkers ages 12–20 purchased their own alcohol the last time they drank. The rates were among the highest in Louisiana and the District of Columbia and among the lowest in Alaska and New Mexico.

To combat the epidemic of underage drinking, SAMHSA and the Ad Council have produced a series of national public service advertisements to encourage parents to talk to their children about drinking alcohol at an early age.

“Underage drinking is a national crisis putting the lives of millions of Americans at risk as well as the futures of many of our youth,” said SAMHSA



**Those who start drinking before age 15 are six times more likely to have alcohol problems as adults than those who start at age 21 or older.**

Administrator Pamela S. Hyde, J.D. “The national educational campaign aims at bringing to bear the most effective weapon against underage drinking—conversations between parents and their children.”

Created by ad agency Deutsch Inc. through the Ad Council, the PSAs aim to reach parents of children ages 11–15, with an emphasis on parents of middle school children. The ads encourage parents to talk early, talk often and get others involved.

The related website features an action plan that parents can personalize for their children to help start the conversation and shareable resources to send to family members, peers and other adult influencers on their child's decision to drink.

For more information, visit [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov).