



RESEARCH SUMMARY
Date Compiled: July 2024

Key takeaways from included research:

- A study was conducted in Australia to examine alcohol advertisements on social media platforms that are utilized by youth (age 17-25). After exposing university students to 796 ads on Facebook and Instagram, researchers concluded that majority (74.99%) included call to action features, while 42.14% related to ease of access, and 45.27% were sales incentives as the most common themes of ads. Alcohol ads are prevalent, especially among youth, therefore more needs to be done and researched on whether increased exposure increases alcohol use behaviors.
- Researchers examined the prevalence and overlap of secondhand harms from other people's use of alcohol, cannabis, opioids, and other drugs. They found that lifetime prevalence of secondhand harms from alcohol, cannabis, opioids, or other drugs was 34.2%, 5.5%, 7.6%, and 8.3%, respectively. They also concluded substantial overlap of lifetime harms, with almost 30% of those reporting secondhand alcohol harm also reporting drug harms. Researchers call for population-focused interventions to prevent harms to the individual as well as secondhand harms to those around them.
- Due to global evidence of alcohol use being a contributor of intimate partner violence (IPV), researchers wanted to document the breadth and nature of harms and impact of men's drinking on women. They concluded that men's drinking results in a multitude of direct, indirect, and hidden harms to women. More explicit prevention efforts are needed to target men's drinking and the impact on women.
- A new study examined reasons that young adults choose not to drink in relation to demographics, alcohol use patterns, timing, and typical drinking motives. Researchers found that the most common reason to abstain was "wasn't interested in drinking" and "didn't want to get drunk." Gender, race/ethnicity, time of the week, and drinking motives were found to be differentially linked to reasons not to drink. Researchers indicated that findings suggest that reasons not to drink reflect personal decisions and highlight situational barriers that can be utilized in brief interventions.
- An Australian study examined alcohol products (ZAPs) and whether they are actually a harm reduction mechanism or attract adolescents to want to try alcohol. They found ZAPs to be salient and attractive to Australian youth with 37% of surveyed youth having tried ZAPs. The researchers concluded that these products are exposing minors to additional alcohol-related stimuli which may increase their risk of underage drinking.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: AN ALCOHOL ADVERTISEMENT EVERY 3 MINUTES

June 2024

Introduction: There is growing concern over the lack of regulation of alcohol advertisements on social media platforms frequented by youths. This study aims to build upon existing literature by assessing the frequency with which young Australians (17–25) are shown advertisements promoting alcohol use and the themes utilised in these advertisements.

Methods: A total of 125 Australian youths (mean age 18.74 years; 74.40% female) were recruited in exchange for course credit to participate in an online study. Participants scrolled through Facebook or Instagram for a period of 30 min and screenshotted any alcohol advertisements encountered. Participants then identified the advertisement qualities (or ‘themes’) present in the advertisements, based on pre-identified categories. Demographic, social media usage and historical personal, peer or familial substance use behaviour data was also collected.

Results: Seventy-one university students were exposed to 796 alcohol advertisements across both platforms, and they encountered an advertisement every 2 min and 43 s on average. Most advertisements included call to action features on both Facebook (78.80%) and Instagram (71.17%). Advertisements relating to ease of access (promoting subscription/home delivery; 41.72% and 42.56%) and sales incentives (special offers, promotions, samples or bonuses with purchase; 43.70% and 46.84%) were most common across both platforms.

Discussion and Conclusions: Alcohol advertisements are highly prevalent online, particularly among Australian youth social media users. Future research should endeavour to identify whether temporal use of alcohol is a predictor of subsequent exposure to alcohol advertising on social media, and whether this exposure is likely to increase successive alcohol use behaviours.

Source: Rutherford, B., Leung, J., Stjepanovic, D., & Chan, G. C. K. (2023). Through the looking glass: An alcohol-related advertisement every 60 s. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 42, S161-S161. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dar.13886>

In the News: Rutherford, Brienna. (2024, June 6). Young people may see more than 20 alcohol ads per hour on social media, research finds. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/young-people-may-see-more-than-20-alcohol-ads-per-hour-on-social-media-research-finds-231699>

PREVALENCE AND CORRELATES OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG HARMS TO OTHERS: FINDINGS FROM THE 2020 U.S. NATIONAL ALCOHOL SURVEY

June 2024

Objective: Measure prevalence and overlap of secondhand harms from other people’s use of alcohol, cannabis, opioid, or other drugs and examine sociodemographic and other correlates of these secondhand harms.

Methods: This cross-sectional analysis used data from 7,799 respondents (51.6% female; 12.9% Black, 15.6% Hispanic/Latiné; mean age: 47.6) in the 2020 U.S. National Alcohol Survey. Secondhand harms included family/marriage difficulties, traffic accidents, vandalism, physical harm, and financial difficulties. Weighted prevalence estimates provided nationally representative estimates of these harms. Logistic regression assessed associations between individual characteristics and secondhand harms.

Results: Lifetime prevalence of secondhand harms from alcohol, cannabis, opioid, or other drugs was 34.2%, 5.5%, 7.6%, and 8.3%, respectively. There was substantial overlap among lifetime harms: almost 30% of those reporting secondhand alcohol harms also reported secondhand drug harms. Significant correlates of secondhand substance harms included female sex (alcohol, other drug);

white (alcohol, opioid), American Indian/Alaska Native (opioid), and Black (cannabis) race/ethnicity; and separated/divorced/widowed marital status (opioid). Those reporting family history of alcohol problems had significantly higher odds of reporting secondhand harms across substance types. Individuals who reported frequent cannabis use had higher odds of reporting secondhand alcohol and opioid harms compared to those with no cannabis use, (aOR=1.55; aOR=2.38), but lower odds of reporting secondhand cannabis harms (aOR=0.51).

Conclusions: Although less prevalent than secondhand alcohol harms, 14% of participants reported secondhand harms from someone else's drug use and frequently experienced secondhand harms attributed to multiple substances. Population-focused interventions are needed to reduce the total burden of alcohol and drug use.

Source: Rosen, E. M., Kerr, W. C., Patterson, D., Greenfield, T. K., Ramos, S., & Karriker-Jaffe, K. J. (2024). Prevalence and correlates of alcohol and drug harms to others: Findings from the 2020 US National Alcohol Survey. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, jsad-23.
<https://doi.org/10.15288/jsad.23-00387>

A GLOBAL REVIEW OF THE IMPACT ON WOMEN FROM MEN'S ALCOHOL DRINKING: THE NEED FOR RESPONDING WITH A GENDERED LENS **May 2024**

Background: Global evidence shows that men's harmful alcohol use contributes to intimate partner violence (IPV) and other harms. Yet, interventions that target alcohol-related harms to women are scarce. Quantitative analyses demonstrate links with physical and verbal aggression; however, the specific harms to women from men's drinking have not been well articulated, particularly from an international perspective.

Aim: To document the breadth and nature of harms and impact of men's drinking on women.

Methods: A narrative review, using inductive analysis, was conducted of peer-reviewed qualitative studies that: (a) focused on alcohol (men's drinking), (b) featured women as primary victims, (c) encompassed direct/indirect harms, and (d) explicitly featured alcohol in the qualitative results. Papers were selected following a non-time-limited systematic search of key scholarly databases.

Results: Thirty papers were included in this review. The majority of studies were conducted in low- to middle-income countries. The harms in the studies were collated and organised under three main themes: (i) harmful alcohol-related actions by men (e.g. violence, sexual coercion, economic abuse), (ii) impact on women (e.g. physical and mental health harm, relationship functioning, social harm), and (iii) how partner alcohol use was framed by women in the studies.

Conclusion: Men's drinking results in a multitude of direct, indirect and hidden harms to women that are cumulative, intersecting and entrench women's disempowerment. An explicit gendered lens is needed in prevention efforts to target men's drinking and the impact on women, to improve health and social outcomes for women worldwide.

Source: Wilson, I. M., Willoughby, B., Tanyos, A., Graham, K., Walker, M., Laslett, A. M., & Ramsoomar, L. (2024). A global review of the impact on women from men's alcohol drinking: the need for responding with a gendered lens. *Global Health Action*, 17(1), 2341522.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2024.2341522>

PREVALENCE AND CORRELATES OF DAILY-LEVEL REASONS NOT TO DRINK AMONG YOUNG ADULTS WHO USE ALCOHOL

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Background: This study examined reasons not to drink in young adults in relation to demographics, alcohol use patterns, timing (weekend vs. weekday), and typical drinking motives.

Methods: Young adults who reported past 30-day alcohol use and at least one nondrinking day (n = 614; mean age = 21.5 years \pm 0.53) completed a survey of alcohol-related measures (e.g., typical drinking motives) and up to 14 daily surveys that included 12 reasons not to drink assessed on nondrinking days. Multilevel logistic regressions were estimated for each reason not to drink and related covariates.

Results: The most common reasons not to drink on a given day were “wasn't interested in drinking” (83.4% of nondrinking days) and “didn't want to get drunk” (81.8% of nondrinking days), with over 96% of participants endorsing each of these at least once. On days (11.6%; by 29.5% of participants) when another drug was used instead of alcohol, 81.8% used cannabis. Sex, race/ethnicity, weekend (vs. weekday), and drinking motives were differentially linked to reasons not to drink. Reporting high-intensity drinking (i.e., \geq 10 drinks on a day) versus binge (5–9 drinks on a day) in the past 2 weeks was linked to “had a hangover recently” (odds ratio = 2.85) as a reason not to drink.

Conclusions: Findings suggest that reasons not to drink reflect personal decisions and highlight ways to acknowledge situational barriers (e.g., saving money for food and essentials) that can be emphasized in brief interventions. Furthermore, reasons not to drink and alcohol motives may work in tandem within the motivational model to impact alcohol use behaviors.

Source: Arterberry, B. J., Peterson, S. J., Schepis, T. S., & Patrick, M. E. (2024). Prevalence and correlates of daily-level reasons not to drink among young adults who use alcohol. *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.15349>

ZERO ALCOHOL PRODUCTS AND ADOLESCENTS: A TOOL FOR HARM REDUCTION OR A TROJAN HORSE?

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Introduction: Zero alcohol products (ZAPs) could reduce alcohol-related harms by acting as a substitute for alcoholic beverages. However, concerns have been raised regarding the potential for these products to expose young people to additional alcohol-related stimuli, further normalising alcohol use and acting as a gateway to underage alcohol consumption. Scarce research has examined whether these concerns are warranted.

Method: This project comprised two parts involving Australian adolescents aged 15–17 years. Part 1 was a series of 5 online focus groups (n = 44) that provided initial insights into perceptions of and experiences with ZAPs. Part 2 was a national online survey (n = 679) that assessed the generalisability of the focus group findings and identified factors associated with ZAP-related attitudinal and behavioural outcomes.

Results: ZAPs were found to be salient and attractive to Australian adolescents. Over a third of surveyed adolescents (37%) had tried ZAPs. The focus group participants and survey respondents generally perceived ZAPs in a positive light, seeing them as a useful alternative to alcohol for both adolescents and adults who want to circumvent social expectations to use alcohol. Some of the study participants acknowledged the potential for ZAPs to serve as a gateway to alcohol use and recommended reducing their visibility and accessibility.

Conclusion: ZAPs are likely exposing minors to additional alcohol-related stimuli potentially increasing their risk of underage alcohol consumption. Regulatory responses to ZAPS need to protect young people from the potential adverse consequences of ZAPs exposure while enabling the products to be used by adults as an alcohol substitute.

Source: Booth, L., Keric, D., Bowden, J., Bartram, A., Sengupta, A., & Pettigrew, S. (2024). Zero Alcohol Products and Adolescents: A Tool for Harm Reduction or a Trojan Horse?. *Appetite*, 107582. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2024.107582>

In the News: Berlage, Eliza. (2024, July 24). Zero-alcohol beverages appeal to teens and could encourage alcohol use, Australian study finds. *ABC Australia*. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-07-25/zero-alcohol-drinks-teens-drinking-culture-risk-cancer-council/104125388>