

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

Statistical Analysis Center Data Brief

Arizona Youth Survey Reported Underage Drinking

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Arizona.

December 2014

Background

According to data from the Arizona Youth Survey (AYS), which is administered by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's Statistical Analysis Center, underage drinking among Arizona youth has been declining for a number of years. The percentage of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade youth across Arizona who reported having used alcohol at some point in their lifetime fell from 61.7 percent in 2006 to 46.2 percent in 2014. The AYS is an anonymous school-based survey designed to collect information on the prevalence of drug use and other delinquent behaviors among Arizona 8th, 10th, and 12th grade youth and the circumstances in which they live. In 2014, the survey was implemented in 243 schools from all 15 Arizona counties resulting in a final sample size of 48,244 youth. Among the data collected were self-reported measures of past 30-day and lifetime alcohol and drug use. This research brief summarizes the results from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014 AYS for self-reported underage drinking relative to county, respondent demographics, age of initiation of alcohol use, and other selected measures. Additional AYS data and information is available by clicking [here](#).

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Lifetime Use					
8th Grade	50.4%	47.8%	45.1%	37.3%	31.5%
10th Grade	67.6%	66.2%	64.1%	59.1%	52.9%
12th Grade	74.5%	74.8%	72.8%	69.2%	67.0%
Total	61.7%	59.6%	58.2%	51.7%	46.2%
30-Day Use					
8th Grade	24.1%	23.2%	21.9%	17.1%	13.4%
10th Grade	39.2%	37.7%	34.7%	32.1%	27.8%
12th Grade	47.0%	46.8%	45.0%	43.5%	40.6%
Total	34.4%	33.1%	31.9%	28.1%	24.1%
Binge Drinking					
8th Grade	13.4%	13.1%	12.4%	8.7%	6.3%
10th Grade	22.4%	22.4%	21.0%	17.5%	14.4%
12th Grade	28.2%	30.2%	29.2%	26.5%	22.7%
Total	19.9%	19.9%	19.5%	15.7%	12.6%

Youth Alcohol Use

The tables and charts in this section examine lifetime alcohol use, past 30-day alcohol use, and youth binge drinking (five or more drinks within a couple of hours over the past two weeks). In 2014, 46.2 percent of youth respondents used alcohol in their lifetime (Table 1). The percentage of youth reporting lifetime alcohol use has consistently declined from the 61.7 percent reported in 2006. Arizona 12th grade youth are more likely than any other grade to have used alcohol in their lifetime (67.0 percent of 12th grade youth in 2014). Reported past 30-day alcohol use and binge drinking have also fallen consistently since 2006 to 24.1 percent and 12.6 percent of youth in 2014, respectively. Similar to the data on lifetime alcohol use, 12th graders were more likely to use alcohol in the past 30 days (40.6 percent) and to binge drink (22.7 percent) than 8th and 10th grade youth.

Youth 30-day alcohol use increased as grade level increased across most Arizona counties in 2014 (Table 2). In Apache, Navajo, and La Paz Counties, ten percent or less of 8th grade youth used alcohol in the past 30 days. Greater than 45 percent of 12th grade youth in Mohave, Pima, and Santa Cruz Counties reported using alcohol during the past 30 days in 2014.

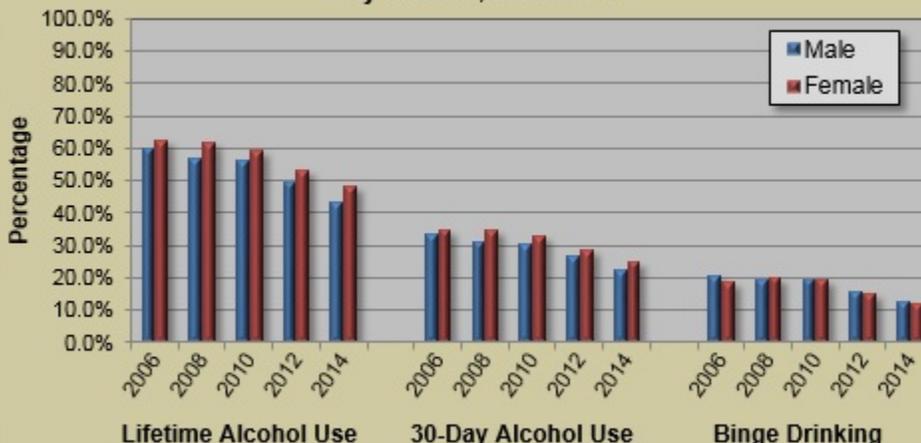
Both male and female youth have reported declines in lifetime, 30-day, and excessive (binge) alcohol use from 2006 to 2014 (Chart 1). Females consistently reported higher rates of lifetime and 30-day alcohol use from 2006 to 2014. With the exception of 2008, males were more likely to binge drink over the same period.

Table 2. Percentage of Youth Reporting 30-Day Alcohol Use by County, 2014

County	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Apache	9.3%	15.8%	25.6%
Cochise	18.5%	28.6%	38.4%
Coconino	10.9%	28.0%	35.0%
Gila	20.6%	26.9%	44.7%
Graham	10.7%	23.9%	26.8%
Greenlee	31.8%	37.2%	40.4%
La Paz	8.0%	28.4%	28.4%
Maricopa	12.7%	28.0%	42.0%
Mohave	14.4%	30.1%	49.0%
Navajo	10.0%	20.3%	30.1%
Pima	18.6%	30.6%	45.5%
Pinal	19.7%	27.2%	31.5%
Santa Cruz	11.5%	*	61.5%
Yavapai	15.2%	30.5%	43.7%
Yuma	13.0%	19.2%	29.9%
Arizona	13.4%	27.8%	40.6%

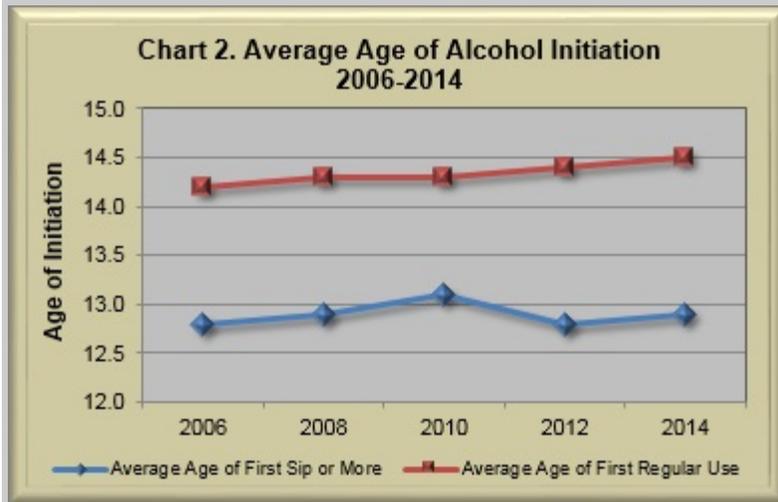
* Represents data where sample size fell below acceptable limit.

Chart 1. Percentage of Students Reporting Alcohol Use by Gender, 2006-2014



Age of Initiation

The average reported age of first sip or more of alcohol among youth increased from 12.8 years of age in 2006 to 13.1 in 2010, but fell to 12.9 in 2014 (Chart 2). The average reported age of first regular alcohol use among youth rose overall from 2006 to 2014. The average age of initial regular alcohol use was 14.2 years of age in 2006 and rose to 14.5 years of age in 2014.



Perceived Risk of Alcohol Use

More than sixty percent of the youth across all five survey years believed that there was “moderate” to “great” risk in drinking alcohol nearly every day. This percentage increased from 63.3 percent in 2006 to 65.9 percent in 2014 (Table 3). Youth in 10th

Table 3. Percentage of Youth Who Believe There Is “Moderate” or “Great” Risk in Drinking 1 to 2 Alcoholic Drinks Nearly Every Day, 2006-2014

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
8th Grade	59.4%	59.8%	61.1%	63.0%	64.8%
10th Grade	65.2%	62.1%	63.4%	64.4%	67.9%
12th Grade	67.7%	63.6%	65.1%	64.1%	65.6%
Total	63.3%	61.4%	62.8%	63.7%	65.9%

grade were most likely to perceive “moderate” to “great” risk in 2012 and 2014, a departure from 2006 to 2010 when 12th graders were most likely to perceive such risk. From 2006 to 2014, perceived risk grew among 8th and 10th graders, but not among 12th graders.

Youth Access to Alcohol

Alcohol accessibility among youth is also a continuing concern addressed in the AYS. In 2006, 64.2 percent of youth respondents felt that alcohol would be “very easy” or “sort of easy” to obtain (Table 4). In 2014, the percentage dropped to 56.4 percent of youth reporting that it would be “very easy” or “sort of easy” to obtain alcohol. Across the five survey years, respondents who felt it would be “very easy” or “sort of easy” to get alcohol increased as grade level increased. Within all three grades, the percentage of youth reporting “very easy” or “sort of easy” accessibility to alcohol dropped from 2006 to 2014.

Table 4. Percentage of Youth Reporting that Alcohol Is “Very Easy” or “Sort of Easy” to Get, 2006-2014

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
8th Grade	51.4%	52.4%	48.8%	47.9%	42.5%
10th Grade	70.5%	71.8%	64.2%	68.3%	64.5%
12th Grade	77.9%	78.4%	70.2%	74.9%	72.1%
Total	64.2%	64.4%	59.3%	61.2%	56.4%

to alcohol. AYS respondents were given twelve items to report how they obtained alcohol, and the respondents were able to select any and all that applied. Nearly half of respondents who reported alcohol use over the past 30 days obtained alcohol at a party (Table 5). Approximately one-fourth gave money to another individual to purchase alcohol, followed by 22.8 percent and 22.3 percent received alcohol from an underage individual and a non-related individual over 21 years of age, respectively. Parties continues to be the most likely source of alcohol reported by youth within all three grade levels.

Drinking and Driving

In the AYS, questions were asked regarding drinking and driving as well as being the passenger of a driver who had been drinking. The percentage of youth who reported being a passenger of a driver who had been drinking alcohol fell steadily from 31.9 percent in 2006 to 20.0 percent in 2014 (Table 6). The percentage of youth (ages 16 and older) who reported driving a vehicle within the past 30 days after drinking alcohol also fell steadily from 14.6 percent in 2006 to 7.5 percent in 2014.

Table 5. Percentage of Youth Who Used Alcohol in the Past 30 Days by How the Alcohol Was Obtained, 2014

How Was Alcohol Obtained?	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade	Total
Bought in a Store	7.4%	7.6%	10.5%	8.7%
Bought at a Restaurant, Bar, or Club	4.7%	3.5%	5.4%	4.6%
Bought at a Public Event	4.5%	3.0%	3.7%	3.7%
Gave Someone Money to Purchase	14.5%	25.4%	35.7%	26.8%
Parent/Guardian Gave to Me	19.8%	16.7%	17.1%	17.7%
Other Family Member (Over 21) Gave to Me	20.5%	16.2%	15.8%	17.1%
Non-Related Individual (Over 21) Gave to Me	15.4%	21.5%	27.2%	22.3%
Individual (Under 21) Gave to Me	19.8%	26.4%	21.6%	22.8%
Obtained at a Party	33.8%	45.6%	51.0%	44.8%
Took from Home	25.2%	21.8%	15.2%	20.0%
Took from a Store or Someone Else’s Home	7.5%	9.2%	5.7%	7.3%
Obtained Some Other Way	26.3%	17.8%	13.7%	18.3%

Table 6. Percentage of Youth Who Reported Driving After Drinking or Riding with a Driver Who Had Been Drinking in the Past 30 Days, 2006-2014

	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
Passenger in the Car or Other Vehicle After the Driver Was Drinking Alcohol	31.9%	29.2%	28.5%	24.7%	20.0%
Driving the Car or Other Vehicle After Drinking Alcohol (16 Years of Age and Older)	14.6%	13.1%	11.8%	10.1%	7.5%

This data brief was prepared by:
 Matt Bileski M.A., Research Analyst
 Arizona Criminal Justice Commission
 1110 West Washington, Suite 230
 Phoenix, AZ 85007
 (P) 602.364.1374
 (F) 602.364.1175
 Review full reports at: www.azcjc.gov