

ALCOHOL PREVENTION ENHANCEMENT SITE

www.kyprevention.com/projects/history-21-mdal/

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 **Research affirms**
the effectiveness of the
21 Minimum Drinking Age

 **SAVES LIVES**

21 MINIMUM LEGAL DRINKING AGE SAVES LIVES

"Although often disobeyed and not always enforced, the age 21 minimum legal drinking age (MLDA) saves lives and prevents a range of other harms," according to a recent review published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs.

History of the 21-MDAL

(21 Minimum Drinking Age Law)

For almost 40 years, most states voluntarily set their minimum drinking age law (MDAL) at 21. At the height of the Vietnam War in the early 1970s, 29 states began lowering their drinking age to more closely align with the newly reduced military enlistment and voting age. In 1983, the evidence showed the decrease in the drinking age resulted in increased alcohol-related fatalities and injuries amongst 16-20 year olds. **So, in 1984, the National 21-Minimum Drinking Age (21-MDAL) became law.**

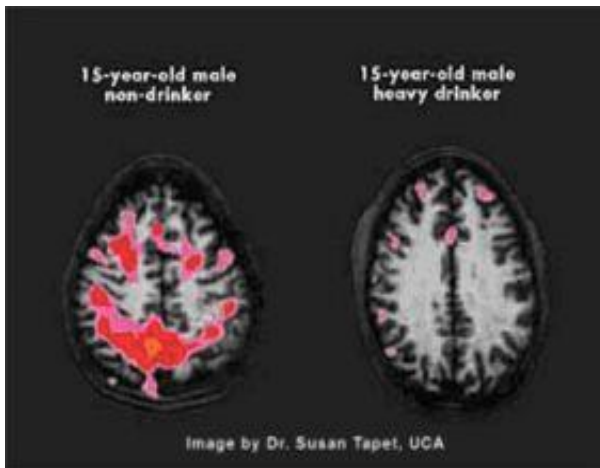
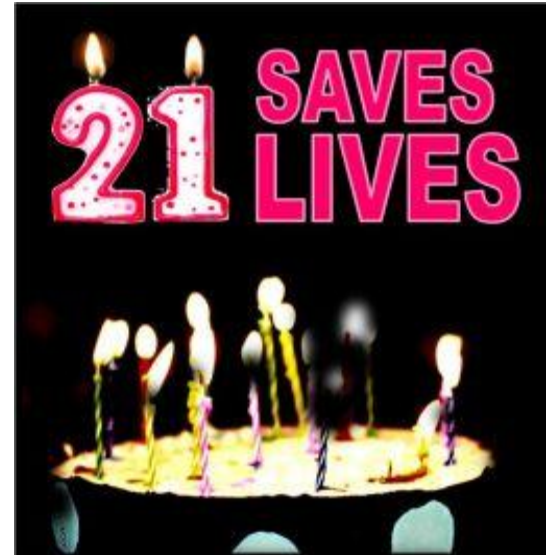


The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the General Accounting Office, the Institute of Medicine, the Surgeon General; the National Institutes of Health, the American Medical Association, the National Transportation and Safety Board and many other *state and federal agencies are strongly in favor of the 21-MDAL due to the overwhelming amount of evidence that...*

"21-MDAL Saves Lives"

The Big Deal About Underage Drinking: 10 Facts

1. **Following the 21 MDAL, alcohol-related traffic fatalities involving 16-20 year olds dropped**, while all other traffic fatalities increased (1983-1989) (MADD.org).
2. **The 21 MLDA is associated with a 5-9% decrease in traffic fatalities for drivers ages 18-21** (Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs).
3. **Heavy-drinking rates for college students have steadily decreased since 1988, by which time all 50 States had adopted the age 21 MLDA** (Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs).
4. **Alcohol is the No. 1 drug of choice** for American youth and kills more youth (4,700 each year) than all other illicit drugs combined (NIAAA 2012. CDC 2011).
5. The World Health Organization indicates alcohol is the **world's third largest risk factor for disease burden**.



6. BRAIN DEVELOPMENT: Alcohol damages the developing brain, heart and liver (2013 NIH). Research demonstrates **the brain does not quit developing until the early to mid-20s**.

7. DEPENDENCE: The younger teens drink the more likely they are to become alcohol dependent and drinking drivers (2013 NIH).

8. MEMORY LOSS: 1 in 5 KY 12th-graders have reported blacking out from drinking or drug use (2012 KIP).

9. CONSEQUENCES: Alcohol is implicated in homicide, suicide, unintended pregnancies, crime, violence, and educational failure (PIRE 2011).

10. EVERY THREE MINUTES on average someone under-21 in the U.S. has to go to the ER because they drank underage (SAMHSA 2011).



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