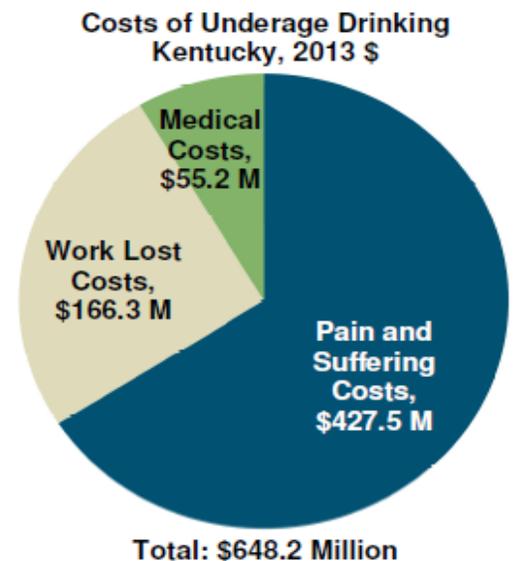


Underage Drinking Costs – Kentucky, 2015

Tragic health, social, and economic problems result from the use of alcohol by youth. Underage drinking is a causal factor in a host of serious problems, including homicide, suicide, traumatic injury, drowning, burns, violent and property crime, high-risk sex, fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol poisoning, and the need for treatment of alcohol abuse and dependence.

Problems and Costs Associated with Underage Drinking in the Kentucky

In 2013, underage drinking cost the citizens of the Kentucky \$648.2 million. These costs include medical care, work loss, and pain and suffering associated with the multiple problems resulting from the use of alcohol by youth.¹ **This translates to \$1,625 per year for each youth in the state** (verses \$1,903 in the U.S.) **or \$2.99 per drink consumed underage** (verses \$3.75 in the U.S.). Excluding pain and suffering from these costs, tangible costs of underage drinking including medical care, criminal justice, property damage, and loss of work in Kentucky totaled \$222.03 million each year or \$1.02 per drink (verses \$1.32 in the U.S.). In contrast, a drink in the Kentucky retails for \$0.78 (verses \$0.93 in the U.S.).



Costs of Underage Drinking by Problem, Kentucky, 2013 \$

Youth violence (homicide, suicide, aggravated assault) and traffic crashes attributable to alcohol use by underage youth in Kentucky represent the largest costs for the state. However, a host of other problems contribute substantially to the overall cost. **Among teen mothers, fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) alone costs Kentucky \$25 million.**

In 2012, 216 youth aged 12 to 20 years were admitted for alcohol treatment in Kentucky, accounting for 4% of all treatment admissions for alcohol abuse in the state.² Young people who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence and are two and a half times more likely to become abusers of alcohol than those who begin drinking at age 21.³ We did not cost these adult problems.

Problem	Total Costs, 2010 \$ (in millions)	Total Costs, 2013 \$ (in millions)
Youth Violence	\$392.0	\$348.4
Youth Traffic Crashes	\$90.7	\$101.0
High-Risk Sex, Ages 14-20	\$69.5	\$60.4
Property and/or public order crime	*\$58.4 <i>(*includes only youth property crime)</i>	**\$2.7 <i>(**includes property & public order crime)</i>
Youth Injury	\$34.3	\$38.4
Poisonings and Psychoses	\$7.5	\$8.1
FAS Among Mothers Age 15-20	\$19.9	\$25.4
Youth Alcohol Treatment	\$15.9	\$8.3
Total	*\$688.2	**\$648.2

Alcohol Consumption by Youth in Kentucky

Underage drinking is widespread in Kentucky. **Approximately 133,000 underage customers drink each year in the Kentucky.** In 2013, Kentucky students in grades 9 to 12 reported the following:⁴

- **62.7% had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during their life** (verses 66.2% in the U.S.).
- **19.0% had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before age 13** (verses 18.6% in the U.S.).
- **30.4% had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more occasions in the past 30 days** (verses 34.9% in the U.S.).
- **19.4% had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (binge drinking) in the past 30 days** (verses 20.8% in the U.S.).

In 2012, underage customers consumed 12.6% of all alcohol sold in Kentucky (verses 9.90% in the U.S.), totaling \$168 million in sales (in 2013 dollars). These sales provided profits of \$82 million to the alcohol industry.¹

Ranking states based on the percentage of alcohol consumed underage, with 1 the highest, Kentucky ranked number 7. This percentage is affected by adult and youth drinking levels.

Annual sales of alcohol consumed by youth in Kentucky averaged \$1266 per underage customer (verses \$1,349 in the U.S.). Underage customers were heavier consumers than adults. Youth drank an average of 4.5 drinks per day (verses 4 drinks per day in the U.S.); in contrast, legal customers consumed only 1.3 (verses 1.6 drinks per day in the U.S.).

Harm Associated with Underage Drinking in Kentucky

Underage drinking in Kentucky leads to substantial harm due to traffic crashes, violent crime, property crime, unintentional injury, and high-risk sex.

Harm Associated with Underage Drinking in Kentucky	Estimated Incidents Attributable to Underage Drinking (year incidents occurred)	
	Based on PIRE Underage Drinking Costs in KY Report, published Sept. 2011	Based on PIRE Underage Drinking Costs in KY Report, published March 2015
Traffic Fatalities (driving after underage drinking)	18 (2009)	20 (2012)
Nonfatal Traffic Injuries (driving after underage drinking)	575 (2009)	639 (2012)
Homicides	22 (2009)	12 (2012)
Nonfatal Violent Crimes (rape, robbery, assault)	9,100 (2009)	4,700 (2012)
Property Crimes (burglary, larceny, car theft)	21,500 (2009)	10,500 (2012)
Public Order Crimes (vandalism, disorderly conduct, loitering, and curfew violations)	NA	197,000 (2012)
Fatal Burns, Drownings, and Suicides (alcohol-involved)	7 (2007)	4 (2012)
Teen Pregnancies	498 (2009)	549 (2013)
Teens having high-risk sex	12,457 (2009)	11,592 (2013)

- During 2012, an estimated 20 traffic fatalities and 639 nonfatal traffic injuries were attributable to driving after underage drinking.
- In 2012, an estimated 12 homicides; 4,700 nonfatal violent crimes such as rape, robbery, and assault; 10,500 property crimes including burglary, larceny, and car theft; and 197,000 public order crimes including vandalism, disorderly conduct, loitering, and curfew violations were attributable to underage drinking.
- In 2011, an estimated 4 alcohol-involved fatal burns, drownings, and suicides were attributable to underage drinking.
- In 2013, an estimated 549 teen pregnancies and 11,592 teens having high-risk sex were attributable to underage drinking.

For comparison with other states, in U.S. rather than state prices, the harm from underage drinking per youth in Kentucky averages \$1,060 (verses \$1,728 on average in the U.S.). Such comparisons require caution. In part, they may reflect differences in crime and crash rates, problem-reporting to police, and co-occurring drug use.

Produced by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) with funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), March 2015. Available [Online]: www.udetc.org/UnderageDrinkingCosts.asp.

1 Taylor DM, Miller TR. (2015). Methodology: Underage Drinking Fact Sheets. Calverton, MD: PIRE, <http://www.udetc.org/documents/Underage-Cost-Methods-082807.pdf>

2 Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Treatment Episode Data Set. (2013). Substance Abuse Treatment by Primary Substance of Abuse, According to Sex, Age, Race, and Ethnicity, 2011. Available [Online]: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/SAMHDA/studies/30462>

3 Grant, B.F., & Dawson, D.A. (1997). Age at onset of alcohol use and its association with DSM-IV alcohol abuse and dependence: Results from the National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey. *Journal of Substance Abuse* 9: 103-110.

4 Centers for Disease Control (CDC). (2013). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). Available [Online]: <http://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx>. Or an equivalent state data system.

For more information, contact the Kentucky Alcohol Prevention Enhancement Site (PES) at tkmcguire@bluegrass.org or 859-225-3296, or visit www.kyprevention.com.