



Fact Sheet

What parents should know:

- It is illegal for anyone under 21 to drink alcohol.
- Under age 24, the brain is still growing and negatively affected by alcohol.
- Parents can be prosecuted under the law for hosting underage drinking parties.
- It is unsafe and illegal for persons under 21 to drive after consuming alcohol (.02 blood alcohol content or above).
- Don't risk living with the burden of an unnecessary death or accident because you provided or allowed alcohol use by someone under the age of 21.

Things you can do as a parent:

- Call other parents to ensure social events are alcohol free and chaperoned.
- Refuse to supply alcohol to anyone under 21.
- Lock up your alcoholic beverages.
- Make sure that alcohol is not brought into your home or on your property by your teen's friends.
- Report underage drinking parties to police:
703-691-2131, TTY 711.

Translations and other information available at:

www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org

To request this information in an alternate format, call 571-423-4270

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Virginia Underage Drinking Laws

It is a Class 1 misdemeanor for anyone under 21 to buy, consume, or possess any alcoholic beverage. Penalties upon conviction include:

- mandatory minimum fine of \$500 (up to \$2,500) or a minimum of 50 hours of community service
- loss of driver's license for 6 to 12 months
- up to 12 months in jail
- possible expulsion from school if caught on school property, and/or possible loss of participation in all after-school activities even if caught off school property

As of July 1, 2008, the additional penalty for driving after illegally consuming alcohol is **mandatory** loss of a driver's license for one year or a delay in obtaining a first license. For use of a fake ID to purchase an alcoholic beverage, the additional penalty is loss of a driver's license for up to one year.

It is a Class 1 misdemeanor for adults to provide alcoholic beverages to any person under the age of 21.* Penalties upon conviction include:

- a \$2,500 fine per young person provided any alcoholic beverage
- loss of the adult's driver's license for up to one year, and/or up to one year in jail

* A person under 21 must be accompanied by his parent, guardian, or spouse in order to be served alcohol in the home of another. A parent, guardian, or spouse may serve alcohol to a family member under 21 in his own home.

Caution: Serving alcohol to any minor (under age 18) can still be considered as contributing to the delinquency of a minor and prosecuted by local police.

The Fairfax Countywide Initiative to Reduce Underage Drinking
A task force of the Unified Prevention Coalition of FCPS

Parents Who Host, Lose the Most is a program of the
Drug-Free Action Alliance

