

Alcopops: Alcohol in Disguise

Alcopops
Are
NOT
Beer!

Alcopops ARE:

- Sweet, fruit-flavored drinks that look and taste like soda pop, tea, lemonade & punch.
- An alcohol product that contains distilled spirits.
- Also known as “flavored malt beverages.”
- A bridge from pop to liquor.

Get the Facts!

Alcopops are classified as beer in Ohio, even though they are an alcohol product that contains distilled spirits. This misclassification contributes to the underage drinking problem in Ohio.

FACT #1 – Alcopops are starter drinks for kids.

Everyday, more than 7,970 kids ages 12 to 17 take their first drink of alcohol.¹

Alcopops are sweet, fizzy drinks with bright & flashy packaging that appeal to youth.

Of the 8th graders that drink, 77% report they consume Alcopops, compared to only 30% of drinkers aged 25 – 30.²

Research shows teens are more likely than adults to recall brand names of Alcopops.³

FACT #2 – Underage drinking is a serious problem.

Ohio ranks fourth in the nation in deaths, injuries and financial costs related to underage alcopop consumption.⁴

21.1% of all alcohol sold in Ohio is consumed by underage drinkers.⁵

In a survey of 18 to 24 year current drinkers who failed to complete high school, nearly 60% had begun to drink before age 16.⁶

Alcohol is the # 1 youth drug problem; it kills 6.5 times more people under 21 than all other illicit drugs combined.⁷

FACT #3 – Reclassifying Alcopops Makes \$ense.

Underage drinking cost Ohioans an estimated \$2.9 billion in 2008.

More than 110 studies conclude that higher prices reduce underage drinking.

Beer is taxed at 18¢ per gallon, while mixed beverage taxes are \$1.20 per gallon – a six times higher rate.

Ohio taxpayers lose approximately \$4-5 million in tax revenue annually based on the misclassification of alcopops.



¹ 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

² Calculated by Jim Mosher using 2006 Monitoring the Future. Based on Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2007). *Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use, 1975-2006. Volume I: Secondary school students* (NIH Publication No. 07-6205). Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, Table 2-3. And Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2007). *Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use, 1975-2006. Volume II: College students and adults ages 19-45* (NIH Publication No. 07-6206). Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, Table 4-4.

³ Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates. (2001) What Teens and Adults are Saying About "Alcopops:" Major Findings. Center for Science in the Public Interest.

⁴ Marin Institute. Underage Alcopop Consumption Costs. From http://www.marininstitute.org/site/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=104:underage-consumption-cost-&catid=6:stop-alcopops&Itemid=6 Retrieved February 13, 2009. Calculations are based on: Miller, T.R, Levy, D.T., Spicer, R.S., Taylor, D.M., Societal Costs of Underage Drinking. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 67: 519-528, 2006. Miller, T.R, Levy, D.T., Spicer, R.S., Taylor, D.M., State Underage Drinking Costs Factsheets Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation , 2007. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Epidemiological Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions. 2002.

⁵ Miller, TR, Levy, DT, Spicer, RS & Taylor, DM. (2006) Societal costs of underage drinking. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 67(4) 519-528.

⁶ NIAAA, 1998. Drinking in the U.S.: Main Findings from the 1992 National Longitudinal Alcohol Epidemiologic Survey (NLAES) US Alcohol Epidemiologic Data Reference Manual, Vol 6. Rockville MD *How Does Alcohol Affect the World of a Child?* NIH Pub. No. 99-4670 Updated July 2006.

⁷ CSAP 1996 and PIRE, Ted Miller.