

DRINK SMART!

Make sure what your teen is drinking doesn't contain alcohol!

FACT: A third of all girls older than 12 have tried a popular new alcoholic beverage. Known as "girlie drinks" or "alcopops," their sweet fruity flavor can't conceal their negative health consequences. *(American Medical Association)*

What are alcopops? *(Marin Institute)*

Prevention advocates use the term "alcopops" for sweetened alcoholic beverages that are usually sold in single serving bottles or cans. They are often bubbly and/or fruit-flavored, and resemble soda or other soft drinks. Alcopops contain about the same amount of alcohol as beer (roughly 5%, sometimes higher). However, up to half the alcohol in alcopops is derived from distilled spirits. Alcopops are also known in the industry as "flavored malt beverages, (FMBs)" "malternatives," and "flavored alcoholic beverages."

Who is drinking alcopops?

Underage girls drink alcopops more than any other type of alcoholic beverage. While the industry says the drinks are intended for adults, women 21 and older rank alcopops as their least consumed alcoholic beverage. About one-third of teenage girls ages 12 to 18 and one-fifth of teenage boys have tried alcopops. Young people call alcopops "cheerleader beer" and "chick beer."

Why are alcopops of such great concern?

- Alcopops fuel the epidemic of underage drinking. Because they don't taste, smell, or look like alcohol, alcopops serve as a transition or bridge from soft drinks to alcohol, especially for young girls.
- The packaging and promotion of alcopops has led to a misperception these products are "lighter" than similar products.
- Young people report drinking alcopops because they are easier to conceal and "go down easy."
- Confusing labeling makes it difficult for store clerks to discriminate between non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks being purchased by underage persons.
- Parents and other adults are also unaware of the differences between these drinks and can unwittingly, supply their teens with alcoholic drinks.
- Since these alcoholic drinks often contain stimulants as well as alcohol, they produce effects such as feelings that one can drink more and/or that one's level of intoxication is less than it really is.



Alcopops are marketed to kids as being fun, sexy and cool – and significantly contributes to underage drinking.

Can you pick the drinks that won't get you drunk?

ANSWERS:

Don't contain alcohol: 3-Monster Assault, 5-Red Bull, 8-O'Douls [contains .5% alcohol], 10-Rockstar Juice

Contain alcohol: 1- Smirnoff Twisted Green Apple, 2-Magic Hat, 4-Sparks, 6-Mikes Hard Lemonade, 7-Jack Daniels Hard Cola, 9-Twisted Tea, 11- Premium 3 Sum Tropical



So, what can I do about alcopops?

Stay educated! Learn which drinks contain alcohol and which do not.

Read carefully! Closely look at the labels of products you're not familiar with. The alcohol content label might be small and hard to find, but it should be on there.

Talk! Talk to your children about alcohol use and consequences. Make sure they know how you feel about them drinking alcohol.

Monitor! Monitor what your children are drinking, and ask them what their friends are drinking. Lock up your alcohol.

Share your opinion! Feel strongly about alcopops?... Then call your legislators and let them know how you feel!

DRINK SMART! Know what you're drinking and only drink beverages that are healthy for you!



Promoting Safe and Healthy Communities

P.O. Box 588, Bennington, VT 05201

(802) 442-5491

www.southshirecoalition.org