Beliefs about Alcohol Use among Youth during Early Adolescence
Karen A. Randolph, Adrian Archuleta, Thomas Smith and Martell Teasley
Beliefs about Alcohol Use among Youth during Early Adolescence

Dr. Karen A. Randolph¹, Dr. Thomas Smith³ & Dr. Martell Teasley⁴
Florida State University College of Social Work
296 Champion’s Way
Tallahassee, FL 32306-2570

Dr. Adrian Archuleta²
University of Louisville Kent School of Social Work
204 Oppenheimer Hall
Louisville, KY 40292

¹ (850) 644-9745
FAX (850) 644-9750
krandolp@fsu.edu

² (850) 850-491-6520
FAX 502-852-0422
ollin77@yahoo.com

³ (850) 644-9599
FAX (850) 644-9750
tsmith@fsu.edu

⁴ (850) 644-9595
FAX (850) 644-9750
mteasley@fsu.edu

Work on this project was supported by a grant from the Florida State University Center for Research Creativity awarded to Dr. Randolph. The authors gratefully acknowledge comments from Dr. Tony Tripodi on earlier drafts. All correspondence should be directed to Dr. Randolph, Florida State University College of Social Work, University Center, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2570, PH (850) 644-9745, FX (850) 644-9750, krandolp@fsu.edu.
Abstract

Understanding alcohol use onset among young adolescents is critical in identifying their perceptions, socialization, and decision-making that will assist in prevention efforts. This study examined children’s beliefs about alcohol. We conducted focus groups with 18 youth in grades 3-8 to explore their views about 1) the risk and protective factors of underage drinking, and 2) the consequences of alcohol use. Findings suggest that youths’ perceptions of media content, use of family members as verbal and behavioral referents, non-family member adults’ alcohol use, and peer factors are concomitant processes that youth consider in formulating beliefs about alcohol use.

Key Words: Alcohol, Consensual Qualitative Research, Early adolescence, Focus group
Underage drinking particularly among youth during early adolescence is a serious concern among parents, health experts, and others who are invested in the well-being of the nation’s youth. Drinking onset at a younger age is related to increased risk of both later alcohol dependence and alcohol abuse (McGue, Iacono, Legrand, Moalone, & Elkins, 2001). As Mason (2004) states, “Serious disorders, including substance abuse, that emerge in adolescence or even adulthood can often be predicted on the basis of risk factors detectable in pre-adolescence and even younger” (p. 68). Alcohol initiation during early adolescence has more immediate consequences as well, including greater sexual-risk taking, decreased school performance, and even damage to cognitive development (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2003).

When do youth begin to experiment with alcohol? Donovan and others (2004) argue that more accurate information is needed to answer this question. As they point out, prevalence data (e.g., Johnston, O'Malley, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2009) as well as studies on underage drinking examine drinking behaviors among youth who are well into their adolescent years. For instance, much of the longitudinal research on risk and protective factors related to age of alcohol onset is based on a data collection schedule that begins when children are in the 7th grade (e.g., Ellickson, Tucker, Klein, & McGuihan, 2001). However, it may be that youth begin to experiment with alcohol prior to this time, toward the end of their elementary school years. Data from a recent independent national survey (Pride Surveys, 2009) showed that, although alcohol experimentation rates remained fairly flat among youth as they moved from 4th to 5th grades, these rates increased dramatically between 5th and 6th grades, just as children entered their early adolescent stage of development. This suggests that more information is needed about the
prevalence of alcohol use onset and the risk and protective factors that prevent these youngsters from pursuing their first drink.

From a prevention perspective, establishing a solid foundation of knowledge on the risk and protective factors related to alcohol use among youth who are at the cusp of early adolescence is critical because this is the time when they start to view alcohol in a more positive light. Children become aware of alcoholic beverages through observational learning as early as age 3 (Noll, Zucker, & Greenberg, 1990) and then develop both positive and negative expectancies related to drinking alcohol as they move through middle childhood, although these beliefs tend to be more negative (Miller, Smith, & Goldman, 1990). Reflecting the development of increased cognitive capacity to process and interpret what is observed during this time, beliefs about both the positive and negative consequences of alcohol use increase from childhood to early adolescence (Gillmore, Wells, Simpson, Morrison, Hoppe, & Wilson, 1998). Important, youth beliefs about the positive aspects of drinking also increase as they get older (Gillmore et al., 1998; Houghton, Carroll, & Odgers, 1998; Schell, Martino, Ellickson, Collins, & McCaffrey, 2005), with a notable jump occurring at about age 10 (Hippwell, White, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, Chung, & Sembower, 2005). This is important because it is also about the time when youth begin to experiment with alcohol (Johnston et al., 2009). Thus, it is during this time that parents and prevention specialists should take proactive steps in shaping these beliefs.

**A Framework for Examining Beliefs about Alcohol Use among Youth during Early Adolescence**

The ecological framework provides a context within which to examine beliefs about alcohol use among young teenagers. Three important aspects of this framework are particularly relevant. First, the main premise of the ecological framework is that individuals and their environments are interconnected. Thus, in order to identify the correlates of behavior as a
precursor in developing strategies for change in intervention research, it is necessary to determine and articulate relationships between relevant environmental risk and protective factors and targeted behaviors. The ecological framework offers a well-known typology within which to separate and organize important components or domains that make up an adolescent’s environment, such as family or peers. The idea here is that risk and protective factors within various domains are likely to affect youth behavior, such as underage drinking.

A second premise in understanding behavior from an ecological perspective is that risk and protective factors in some domains are more relevant than others depending on the developmental stage of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; Zucker, Donovan, Masten, Mattson, & Moss, 2008). What environmental domains are relevant during adolescence? This is a time in which youth begin to separate from their families as they seek to establish their own identities. In essence, their environments expand rapidly. While risk and protective factors within the family domain remain important, risk and protective factors from peer and non-parent adult domains become relevant and may be particularly useful in examining youth beliefs about underage drinking and alcohol use.

Third, ecological theorists posit that risk and protective factors are influenced by larger societal norms and expectations for behavior that exist in the macro environment (Randolph, 2004). Thus, as societal norms change over time, so too do meaningful risk and protective factors that influence individual behavior. We have moved into what developmental theorists refer to as the information age, which is characterized by instant access to information through an expansive number of media sources (e.g., Kraut, Brynin, & Kiesler, 2006). Adolescents are at the forefront of this age. An emerging literature shows that media have an impact on youth behaviors, particularly beliefs about alcohol (e.g., Sargent, Wills, Stoolmiller, Gibson, &
Early Adolescent Beliefs about Alcohol

Gibbons, 2006). Thus, for issues related to adolescence, the traditional ecological typology can be expanded to include risk and protective factors within the media domain. In this study we explore youth beliefs about underage drinking within the context of environmental risk and protective factors in four domains—family, peer, non-family adults, and media.

The research on risk and protective factors for underage drinking supports the usefulness of these domains in investigations of underage drinking. For instance, parental alcohol use (e.g., Dishion, Capaldi, & Yoeger, 1999; Donovan, 2004), peer alcohol use (Dishion et al., 1999; Donovan, 2004; Sobeck, Abbey, Agius, Clinton, & Harrison, 2000), access to alcohol through non-parental adults (SAMHSA, 2008) or exposure to alcohol use in movies or music videos (e.g., Sargent et al., 2006) have been shown to increase the likelihood of underage drinking. However, the ecological perspective does not explain how youths’ beliefs are shaped by family, peer, non-parent adults, and media-based risk and protective factors (Elder et al., 2007). Social Cognitive theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986), can be used to explain this shaping process and is described in the following section.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986) is based on the premise that individual behavior is influenced by environmental and personal factors. Thus, similar to ecological perspective, SCT recognizes the multi-dimensional nature of the environment. SCT goes beyond what is offered through the ecological perspective by introducing personal factors, i.e., factors that exist within individuals, and positing that these factors are important in understanding how people behave in their environment. While several SCT-based personal factors have been studied, we focus on cognitions that attempt to explain how beliefs about environmental risk and protective factors affect individual behavior. One cognitive process is particularly informative in understanding the development of adolescent behavior—outcome expectancies, i.e., developing
Early Adolescent Beliefs about Alcohol

expectations about outcomes associated with particular behaviors that include a qualitative value (good or bad) attributed to these outcomes.

People develop value-based expectations about outcomes based on what they believe to be likely consequences of engaging in certain behaviors. People form values about these expected outcomes by judging them to be negative or positive. In fact, people can develop expectancies about outcomes linked with certain behaviors without ever performing these behaviors (Goldman, Del Boca, & Darkes, 1999). Alcohol-related outcome expectancies are defined as beliefs about the positive and negative consequences of alcohol use.

An Ecological Review of the Research on Alcohol Expectancies and Underage Drinking

Alcohol use among adolescents is believed to be the result of a path in which youth belief systems or expectancies mediate relationships between environmental risk and protective factors and underage drinking (e.g., Scheier & Botvin, 1997). The ecological framework provides a context within which to identify relevant environmental factors that make up these pathways and SCT offers a process (i.e., the development of alcohol-related outcome expectancies) to explain how these pathways are formed. In the following section, we examine the research on the relationship between alcohol expectancies and underage drinking within family, peer, non-family adult, and media domains during early adolescence to identify gaps and establish how this study can contribute to addressing these gaps.

Family factors and underage drinking. In terms of the family, it is well established that youth who are exposed to models of excessive parental drinking behaviors are more likely to develop positive expectancies toward alcohol use (e.g., Brown, Tate, Vik, Haas, & Aarons, 1999), which then increase their risk of drinking (e.g., Ouellette, Gerrard, Gibbons, & Reis-Bergan, 1999). On the other hand, parental attitudes and beliefs about underage drinking may
influence youth alcohol expectancies in a way that dissuades alcohol use through the development of negative alcohol expectancies. However, less is known about this relationship particularly among young teens. In one of the few studies to examine the mediating effects of expectancies on relationships between parent factors and alcohol onset among 6th graders, Simons-Morton (2004) reports that “positive drinking expectancies were significantly associated with drinking initiation only among teens who believed their parents did not hold strong expectations for them not to drink” (p. 299). This study raises an interesting question about the differential impact of parent behavior versus parent attitudes in the formation of youth alcohol expectancies.

Peer factors and underage drinking. Evidence of the mediating effects of positive expectancies on relationships between peer factors and drinking among youth in early adolescence is mixed. Some findings indicate that certain peer factors (e.g., perceived peer alcohol use, positive attitudes about drinking) have a positive effect on alcohol expectancies, which then lead to drinking (e.g., Scheier & Botvin, 1997). In other cases, however, no mediating relationships were found (e.g., Simons-Morton, 2004; Webb, Baer, Francis, & Caid, 1993). In any case, the current consensus is that peer factors are positively related to alcohol use for youth during early adolescence, whether directly or through the development of positive expectancies. However, it may also be that peer factors influence the development of negative expectancies during this time. For instance, Komro and others (2001) found that youth beliefs about peer non-alcohol use functioned as a mediator for decreased alcohol use among young adolescents. While this study did not specifically identify the formation of negative expectancies, it showed that peer factors can discourage youth from using alcohol. This requires further investigation as the peer group is critical during the adolescent stage of development.
Non-family adults and underage drinking. Knowledge about the effects of non-family adults on youth alcohol use, whether direct or indirect, is not as well established as what is known about family and peer factors. Yet, from a developmental perspective non-family adults are likely to have an important role in guiding youth behavior as these youth seek to expand their horizons (Beam, Chen, & Greenberger, 2002). In general, the impact of non-family adults on a broad range of youth outcomes has been conceptualized as protective (e.g., Werner & Smith, 1982). Many studies support this conceptualization (e.g., Rischel, Sales, & Koeske, 2005). For instance, Zimmerman and others (2002) found that youth who had positive relationships with non family adults were less likely to smoke marijuana or be less involved in delinquent activities, and had more positive attitudes toward school relative to those without non-parent adult relationships. Other studies have shown that non-family adult relationship effects may buffer the impact of negative peer relationships on youth outcomes (Rishel, Cottrell, Stanton, Cottrell, & Branstetter, 2008).

With regard to underage drinking however, there is some question about protective effects of non-family adult factors. A recent report from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (Pemberton, Colliver, Robbins, & Gfroerer, 2008) indicated that 40% of underage youth who drank alcohol in the last month got their alcohol from unrelated adults. This likely suggests a level of complexity within which non-family adult factors affect youth behaviors, especially alcohol use, that has not been uncovered yet. Also of note is the question about the indirect effects of non-family adult factors with regard to how youth expectancies are shaped by their interactions with these people. These issues remain unresolved.

Media exposure and underage drinking. One of the areas in research on underage drinking that is getting an increasing amount of attention is the impact of media exposure on
youth alcohol expectancies, and then whether this in turn affects underage drinking. Recent developments in research on adolescent brain development suggest that youth may be particularly vulnerable to media-based messages as a consequence of the rapid changes going on in the adolescent brain during this time. As a result, Pechman, Levine, Loughlin, and Leslie (2005) suggest that “adolescents may be especially attracted to risky branded products that, in their view, provide immediate gratification, thrills, and/or social status” (p. 202).

How does this vulnerability relate to alcohol use? In their ground-breaking study, Grube and Wallack (1994) found a positive relationship between awareness of television beer advertising and the development of positive expectancies about drinking among 5th and 6th grade students. The mediating effects of expectancies between media exposure and actual drinking behavior were not examined. Since then the direct link between alcohol-related media exposure and likelihood of alcohol use among young adolescents has been established (e.g., Anderson, de Bruijn, Angus, Gordon, & Hastings, 2009; Collins, Ellickson, McCaffrey, & Hambarsoomins, 2007).

We located only two studies that investigated the mediating effects of expectancies on the relationship between media exposure and alcohol use, and both studies focused on youth in late adolescence. Fleming, Thorson, and Atkin (2004) found that the relationship between advertising exposure and intentions to drink was mediated by positive expectancies toward alcohol for youth, ages 15-20. With cross-sectional survey data from 578 9th and 12th grade youth, Weintraub-Austin and others (2000) report a path from alcohol advertising to both “pre-drinking” and actual drinking behavior mediated by positive expectancies. Exposure to positive media messages about alcohol appears to lead to actual alcohol use through positive
expectancies, at least for older adolescents. Little is known about these relationships among youth during early adolescence.

Depending on the content, media messages may also condemn the use of alcohol, which may then lead to the development of negative beliefs about alcohol use. A recent report based on data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2009) indicated that youth who were exposed to substance use prevention messages in the past year were less likely used illicit substances, relative to youth who were not exposed to these messages. Media-based exposure to negative messages about underage drinking may affect the development of negative alcohol expectancies among youth that act to prevent or delay their use of alcohol. However, we found no research demonstrating the link between media factors such as awareness of anti-drug campaigns and negative expectancies toward alcohol use.

Conclusion

As this review shows, risk and protective factors for underage drinking among youth during early adolescence exist across family, peer group, non-family adult, and media domains. These risk and protective factors are related to the development of alcohol expectancies, both positive and negative, which then affect drinking behavior. This review also sheds light on important gaps in the knowledge base. First, observations of parent behavior may differentially affect the formation of youth alcohol expectancies, relative to perceptions of parent attitudes about drinking. Second, little is known about the potential positive effects that both peers and the media could have on dissuading youth from engaging in alcohol use through the development of negative alcohol expectancies. Third, knowledge about the nature of the relationship between non-family adults and underage drinking is not well developed and perhaps even mis-
conceptualized as protective such that non-family adults may be viewed as the main sources of alcohol among these youth.

The intention of this study is to respond to these gaps by exploring beliefs among youth during early adolescence about the risk and protective factors related to underage drinking. We investigate youth views on a) the risk and protective processes by which family, peer, non-parent adults, and the media affect early adolescent alcohol use and b) positive and negative consequences of alcohol use. We are interested in understanding youths’ perceptions in these areas in order to inform the development of methods to dissuade youngsters from perpetrating serious and perhaps long-lasting damage to themselves by using alcohol as they move into their adolescent years.

Ecological perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1989) and SCT (Bandura, 1986) provide the basis for this study. Ecological perspective offers a set of domains that are particularly relevant during adolescence, and that can be used to organize and then compare and contrast student comments about risk and protective factors related to underage drinking. Building on this, the first research question is: What are youth perceptions of the risk and protective factors that influence youth alcohol use within the family, peer, non-family adult, and media domains? SCT provides the context for understanding how youth come to view alcohol use and learn how to drink it through the development of alcohol related outcome expectancies. This informs the second research question, which is: What are youth perceptions of the positive and negative consequences of alcohol use? This framework provides the context for our contribution to the gap in knowledge about underage drinking among youth during early adolescence.

Methods

Participants
Purposive sampling procedures were used to recruit students enrolled in a local k-12 charter school. Two steps were employed to recruit participants. First, a description of the project and a parent consent form was sent home with all 3rd-5th, 7th, and 8th grade students requesting parental permission for students to participate in this project. After obtaining parental permission, students were approached individually and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. Those students providing assent were informed of the date and time of the focus group. Prior to recruiting students, all participating or affiliated institutions reviewed the interview protocol and research procedures and granted human subjects approval.

A total of 18 youth participated in three focus group interviews. The three groups were created based on participant age range—3rd-5th graders, 7th graders, and 8th graders. The 3rd-5th grade focus group consisted of seven participants, including three male students and four female students. The 7th grade focus group was made up of five students all of whom were female. Lastly, the 8th grade focus group included six students, two females and four males. Although this sample does not represent the breadth of experiences among this population, the age and development of students represented in this group each grade level captures the intent of the study.

Procedures

Students from the 3rd-5th, 7th, and 8th grade participated in three independent focus groups. The respondents were divided into independent focus groups depending on their age and maturity. Traditionally, primary school students have different experiences (i.e., educational and life) than other students. Although the 7th and 8th students were divided up because of convenience, the resulting grouping was fortuitous. The two groups differed in their responses perhaps reflecting the rapid emotional and physical growth during these years.
A member of the research team conducted focus group interviews in a private, comfortable setting provided by the k-12 charter school attended by participants. Each focus group began with a brief statement by the facilitator explaining the purpose of the research, ground rules for acceptable group behavior, a description of the focus group agenda, and intended outcomes for the project. Focus groups were approximately 45 minutes in length and audio recorded so that researchers could transcribe the interviews for analysis. A co-facilitator participated in each meeting by taking notes and operating the tape recorder.

Measure and Data Collection

Focus group questions were developed from an extensive review of the literature on youth alcohol use. This body of literature is grounded in an ecological framework, with a focus on identifying risk and protective factors across domains that are likely to correlate with underage drinking and other teenage problem behaviors. Traditionally domains that have been considered to be meaningful during adolescence include family, peer group, and schools (e.g., Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992). As described previously, we adapted this framework by also including the media domain, which we argue is more closely aligned with the interpersonal environments that youth of today must confront.

We were interested in learning youth perceptions and beliefs about the nature of the relationship between risk and protective factors within the four domains and underage drinking. As such, we posed a series of open-ended questions that addressed the following topics: a) youth beliefs about the positive and negative consequences of alcohol use and b) the risk and protective factors related to underage drinking within each domain in youth decisions to drink alcohol. Follow-up questions were asked of participants to elicit additional information or clarify their
Early Adolescent Beliefs about Alcohol

responses. Additionally, the co-facilitator provided written observations about students’ responses, the interactions between focus group members, and the environment.

Design and Analysis

The research team utilized a Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) approach (Hill, Thompson, & Nutt Williams, 1997) to organize, analyze, and interpret participants’ responses. CQR allows researchers to ask open-ended questions in a semi-structure format (e.g., interviews) and analyze data utilizing a systematic and consensual approach to coding transcribed interview content (Hill, Knox, Thompson, Nutt Williams, Hess, & Ladany, 2005). Consistent with CQR, the primary research team coded content within each focus group utilizing broader domains initially derived from focus group questions. Team members iteratively examined and consensually agreed on a domain that accurately reflected the content in each excerpt. The research team then developed core ideas that specifically summarized respondent’s statements. Domains and core ideas were then compared across focus groups through a cross-case analysis to develop categories within each domain based upon core ideas (see Table 1 for examples).

These categories identify content across the groups to evaluate the depth of the subject represented within each domain. Domains that were minimally used during the coding of focus group excerpts were reexamined to determine whether other domains more appropriately represented the content reviewed. In instances where the excerpt could not be reclassified, the meaningfulness of that response in relation to the research questions was reviewed and in some cases eliminated. For example, in response to a follow up question about alcohol on TV in the 3rd-5th grade focus group, a participant provided the response, “Yeah, lots of times. . . They have commercials. All of these people are at a party or something and they think it is cool because there are a lot of friends there and people think that it is cool to drink but is really not.” The
research team categorized the excerpt under the broad domain alcohol in the media. A core idea reflecting the specific content of the excerpt was developed by team members, which read, One student talked about how some commercials made drinking at a party look cool, and she disagrees. When this core idea was analyzed with other focus group core ideas, it was placed in the subcategory pro-drinking messages under the category commercials and other forms of advertising. Although the core idea remained relatively consistent over iterations, the domain alcohol in the media underwent several changes including a change from ways in which media influence children about alcohol to its current description. The category also changed from commercials to commercials and other forms of advertising to include related excerpts from under used domains.

Two auditors reviewed the domains, core ideas, and subcategories to evaluate their appropriateness at the end of each CQR data analysis phase: (1) following initial domain and core idea development and (2) following a cross-case analysis. During the initial evaluation, an auditor who is an expert in adolescent substance abuse prevention examined the phrasing of the domains and core ideas to determine whether they accurately reflected these data and provided suggestions to clarify the phrasing. The research team collectively examined the auditor’s feedback to determine whether certain domain names or previously coded data required further revision and refinement (e.g., collapsing several domains into a single domain), and reached consensus about making adjustments based on the recommendations. A second auditor, who has several years of experience in working with adolescents, provided feedback on the results of the cross case analysis. Once again the primary team reviewed the recommendations and came to consensus on modifying the findings.
Following auditor feedback, the data were organized to provide a cohesive description of respondents’ beliefs about the risk and protective processes of underage drinking and the positive and negative consequences of alcohol use. The domains and core ideas were examined to assess the nature of the relationship between domains and core ideas, and each research question. The research team reached consensual agreement regarding domain and core idea classification in relation to each question.

Results

The findings are organized based on the domains that emerged from our analysis. A total of seventeen domains emerged during initial coding efforts. A second round of coding in which duplicate categories and core ideas from various domains were combined resulted in fourteen domains. Four of these domains included core ideas that were unrelated to the focus of the study (e.g., Tobacco and other drugs) and thus were also eliminated from further consideration. Following procedures used in other CQR studies to establish stability (e.g., Hill et al., 1996; Juntunen et al., 2001), two more domains (i.e., Experiences with Drinking and Laws about Drinking) were eliminated because they included three or fewer core ideas. Categories and subcategories that were made up of only one core idea were also dropped from the analysis because of lack of stability. We report on eight remaining domains. Table 1 lists each domain, and the categories and subcategories within domains when applicable. Table 1 also provides examples of core ideas for each category and subcategory, which represent summaries of verbatim focus group participant comments. To differentiate between domains, categories, and subcategories, we apply a numerical system in Table 1 and the following text such that domains are noted using roman numerals, categories within domains are listed by the alphabet, and subcategories within categories are in numerical order.
ADD TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

The following section describes the results of our analysis for each domain. We begin by providing an overview of the domain and its categories and subcategories. We then describe the findings relative to the research questions within the context of our conceptual framework. As such we first report on results within the family, peer, non-family adult, and media domains. This includes two family domains, one peer domain, one non-family adult domain, and for one media domain for a total of five domains. The other three domains that emerged from the analysis (i.e., Consequences from Drinking Alcohol, Prevention Programs, and Reasons to Drink) did not fit into the ecological typology. However, they inform the research questions. Thus, instead of discarding these useful data, we also present these findings.

I. Family Member Anti Drinking Messages

The family maintains a high profile during early adolescence in terms of shaping youth beliefs. It is one of the primary domains of the ecological framework. This domain reflects the critical role of the family in shaping youth views on alcohol in our study. Two categories emerged under this domain based on the ways in which youth report they received messages from family members about alcohol use—behavioral and verbal. In both cases youth report that these messages were protective, encouraging youth not to use alcohol. While a couple of students shared what they observed related to family members’ anti-drinking behaviors, the vast majority of students reported what their parents and other family members told them about not drinking alcohol.

II. Family Members’ Alcohol Use

This domain includes student comments about what they observed regarding actual family member drinking behaviors. Three categories emerged from these data including A)
Alcohol Availability, B) Family Members as Role Models, and C) Negative Consequences. Relative to the previous domain i.e., “Family Member Anti Drinking Messages”, this domain provides an alternative picture of the role of the family relative to youth views on underage drinking. Of note is that the “Family Members’ Alcohol Use” domain is made up of 40% more core ideas than the “Family Member Anti Drinking Messages” domain. Also, all core ideas reflected either content with neutral messages (e.g., “One student reports that her dad drinks every three months”) or content reflecting student negative views of alcohol use among family members (e.g., “One student mentioned that his/her grandfather died from drinking and drug use”).

The core ideas that made up the category entitled “Alcohol Availability” described general reflections on the risk processes related to alcohol availability. Youth expressed their beliefs that teenagers are more likely to use alcohol when parents and other family members share alcohol with them. Many of the core ideas in the category entitled, “Family Members as Role Models”, reflected a similar notion in that youth who observe their family members drinking alcohol indicated that they interpret this to mean that alcohol use is acceptable. In the final category, entitled, “Negative Consequences”, youth described several specific events when family members who used alcohol led to negative outcomes for the family member or for the students.

These students tended to report receiving conflicting messages from parents and other family members about drinking. On the one hand, their reports of the verbal messages from family members, particularly parents, were clearly interpreted as protective with the intention to dissuading youth from using alcohol. On the other hand, the nature of student interpretations of their observations of family members’ behaviors with alcohol was not as clear. In many cases the
reports were negative. However, based on the data, we were unable to determine how these observations informed youth beliefs about alcohol use.

III. Peer Pressure

The “Peer Pressure” domain reflects student comments about their views on peer factors related to underage drinking. Four categories emerged from the data to make up this domain, including, A) Competing Messages from Peers and Family Members, B) Nature of the Relationship between Peers and Alcohol Use, C) Positive Peer Pressure, and D) Negative Peer Pressure. Core ideas from the Negative Peer Pressure category were further coded into three sub-categories including, 1) Desire to be Cool, 2) Fear of Being Left Out, and 3) Encouragement.

The core ideas in these categories reflect student views on protective and risk processes by which peers influence youth beliefs about alcohol use. While in most cases core ideas suggest that students perceive peer pressure to be negative, in support of drinking alcohol, this is not always the case. Core ideas in the “Nature of the Relationship between Peers and Alcohol Use” suggest that these students have mixed views about the nature of the relationship between peer pressure and alcohol use (e.g., One student observed that some “cool” youth do drink alcohol while other “cool youth do not drink alcohol). Competing messages from parents about the negative aspects of alcohol is one aspect of how these youth view the nature of peer relations and alcohol. The core ideas in this category reflect these students’ dilemmas about listening to friends versus listening to parents about using alcohol.

Our data also reflect student views that peer pressure about alcohol use can be either positive or negative, although most of the core ideas in this area indicate student perceptions that peer pressure is generally negative. The Negative Peer Pressure category included 14 core ideas whereas the Positive Peer Pressure category included only six core ideas. These data indicate that
negative peer pressure can be experienced in several ways. For instance, youth may fear being left out if they do not succumb to pressure from their peers to use alcohol (e.g., One student thinks that teenagers might drink at a party because they don’t want to look stupid or feel left out). In other cases, youth may be talked into using alcohol through encouragement by peers who suggest that “drinking is fun”. Finally, youth may perceive that drinking alcohol can make them more popular, or “cool” among their peers.

The research on peer factors and underage drinking has generally shown that peer pressure is negative, encouraging youth to use alcohol (e.g., Scheier & Botvin, 1997). Students in our study reported experiencing both types of pressure, although most of the comments reflected student views that peers tend to pressure youth to use alcohol (i.e., negative peer pressure) rather then the other way around. The different types of negative peer pressure suggest that this process is multi-faceted, which is important in measuring its impact on underage drinking.

IV. Others’ Use of Alcohol

This domain includes core ideas about student observations of alcohol use from non-family member adults, both in terms of the processes by which these people may influence youth to drink or not drink, and well as their views on the negative and positive consequences of drinking among non-family member adults. Thus, these data inform both research questions. Student comments were grouped into four categories including, A) Pro-Drinking Influences, B) Anti-Drinking Influences, C) Positive Outcomes, and D) Negative Outcomes. Core ideas that made up the Positive Outcomes category were further grouped into three sub-categories [i.e., 1) Coping, 2) Health, and 3) Social]. The Negative Outcomes category includes the following six sub-categories: 1) Addiction and other Drugs, 2) Behavioral, 3) Financial, 4) Physical, 5) Social, and 6) No Positive Outcomes.
The core ideas that made up the Pro-Drinking and Anti-Drinking categories reflect student views and descriptions about non-family influences on underage drinking. More core ideas reflected anti-drinking messages, relative to number of core ideas in the Pro-Drinking category. The Pro-Drinking category includes only two core ideas. These findings are consistent with previous literature that conceptualizes non-family adults as protective (Werner & Smith, 1982). Students identified particular adults (i.e., adults from church, police officers, and teachers) who they think are likely to provide anti-drinking messages.

The core ideas that make up the Positive and Negative Consequences categories reflect student views of outcomes of alcohol use for non-family member adults. An overwhelming majority of student comments on this topic described negative outcomes. These outcomes were easily classified by the nature of the negative outcome (i.e., Addiction and other Drugs, Behavioral, Financial, Physical, and Social). In some cases student shared their opinions about what is likely to happen when people drink alcohol (e.g., One student believes that drinking is addictive). In other cases students described events that led to negative outcomes involving non-family member adult drinking that they had witnessed (e.g., One student described how his father’s friend acted crazily and yelled at others when he got drunk). Relative to negative outcomes, students identified far fewer positive outcomes when others drink alcohol, with fewer types of positive outcomes (i.e., coping, health, and social benefits). In fact several students expressed their beliefs that others’ use of alcohol does not lead to any positive outcomes (e.g., Some students think that nothing good happens when people drink). These students tended to interpret their observations of others’ use of alcohol in a negative way, which may result in the development of negative alcohol expectancies, thus protecting youth against alcohol use.
The research on non-family adults and underage drinking was inconclusive with regard to the direction in which non-family adults relate to underage drinking. No research has investigated the indirect effects of non-family adults in the form of expectancies on the path to youth alcohol use. These data tended to support the conceptualization of non-family adults as protective in relation to alcohol use.

V. Alcohol in the Media

The “Alcohol in the Media” domain reflects student comments about what they see and hear about alcohol in various media sources. Five categories were generated from the data including, A) Media Outlets with Alcohol Messages, B) Nature of Alcohol Message Content, C) Negative Portrayals of Alcohol Use, D) Celebrities as Role Models, and E) Commercials and Other Forms of Advertisement. Core ideas from the Commercials category were further coded into seven sub-categories including, 1) Pro-Drinking Messages, 2) Anti-Drinking Messages, 3) Corporate Motivations, 4) Sponsorship of Sporting Events, 5) Symbols in the Media, 6) Drinking and Driving, and 7) Alcohol and Other Drugs.

Participants identified a number of media outlets in which they had seen or heard messages about alcohol, including billboards, television shows, movies, music videos, commercials, and radio programs. For instance, in describing commercials, students associated popular symbols with particular alcohol products (e.g., Clydesdale horses and Budweiser beer). Overwhelmingly the students perceive the nature of media messages as supportive of the use of alcohol and identified certain celebrities as pro-drinking role models.

Nonetheless, students do not seem to be “taken in” by these pro-drinking messages. Several students described in vivid detail scenarios from television and movies that portrayed alcohol use in a negative light. Their observations of commercials reflected a belief of corporate
intent to sell products, and how this intent shapes the content that is included in commercials. These results shows that these younger teenagers are well aware of media based messages about alcohol. In general, student comments reflected their perceptions that media sources promote alcohol use.

VI. Consequences from Drinking Alcohol

The theme that linked the seven core ideas in this domain reflected student beliefs about the consequences of alcohol use. All but one core idea focused on the potential negative consequences of drinking (e.g., One student commented that drinking can spread like a chain reaction). Two core ideas represented student beliefs about the potential consequences of underage drinking in general terms (e.g., One student thinks that underage drinking is negative). The other core ideas reflected more specific consequences (e.g., One student noted that youth who get caught drinking and driving could lose their license).

VII. Prevention Programs

The domain, “Prevention Programs” is based on student comments about their experience with the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) drug prevention program. DARE is a classroom-based educational program provided by police officers. The focus is on helping youth avoid involvement in problem behaviors such as drug use and violence. In this domain, two categories emerged from the data including, A) Content and Messages and B) Timing and Refresher Sessions. Core ideas in both categories suggest that students perceive the DARE program to provide a protective influence against underage drinking. In terms of content and messages, students described what they learned about alcohol use which included basic facts about drugs as well as more advanced topics about the consequences of drinking and driving. Students also shared some suggestions for improving the impact of the program by offering it at
the time when youth are likely to confront pro-drinking influences (middle school). These students also expressed a need for ongoing booster sessions throughout middle and high school in order to reinforce the anti-drinking content.

VIII. Reasons to Drink

The two categories that emerged in this domain—relationships and events—reflected student observations about the use of alcohol as a method for coping with problems in relationships or in response to stressful events. Core ideas described student beliefs that people may drink in response to problematic relationship issues either with love interests or with family members. The Events category included core ideas reflecting situations in which students observed their parents drinking alcohol after “a really bad day” or “a bad experience”. In both cases, the core ideas in these categories are thought to represent risk processes that can lead to alcohol use.

Discussion

Summary of Results

Understanding the change in alcohol use between elementary school and older youth is critical to identifying the processes related to youth’s perceptions, socialization, and decision-making that will assist in prevention efforts. The purpose of this study was to examine elementary and middle school age children’s beliefs about alcohol use and the risk and protective processes related to underage drinking. Several major findings emerged from our analysis that may assist in determining the perceived consequences youth associate with alcohol use as well as salient risk and protective processes for this age group. Youth’s perceptions of media content, use of family members as verbal and behavioral referents, non-family member adults’ use of alcohol, and the nature of peer relationships revealed concomitant processes that youth consider
in formulating beliefs about alcohol use. The results from this study have implications for identifying age appropriate strategies that coincide with youth’s socialization and decision-making regarding alcohol use. Additionally, the results indicate how youth may prioritize particular risk and protective processes which may contribute to our understanding of elementary students’ perceptions of alcohol use.

**General Implications**

Identifying developmentally appropriate strategies for addressing alcohol use that consider youth’s decision-making and socialization challenge researchers to look beyond strategies that consider solely behavioral outcomes (Weintraub-Austin & Johnson, 1997). Understanding the interplay between one’s socialization (e.g., personal, environmental, and behavioral factors), and decision-making may reveal how youth’s perceptions and risk for alcohol use change with their development. Therefore, identifying the most salient risk and protective processes while youth are still formulating their belief systems about alcohol use may aid in developing targeted interventions to intervene at the most critical junctions for prevention. Results from this study demonstrate that youth formulate attitudes, observe outcomes, and prioritize sources of influence related to alcohol use prior to and during early adolescence.

Family members and peers played an important role as referents in youth’s perceptions of alcohol use compared to media sources and non-family member adults. Youth’s proximal and distal relationship to family, peers, the media, and non-family member adults may play an important role in how youth perceive alcohol use and its associated consequences. Using the multidimensional ecological model, Wen and others (2009) observed that risk and protective factors associated with higher smoking among youth relate to the time spent with close peers who smoke and child-parent closeness. Similarly, the proximal relationship between youth, their
peers, and family contextualize youth’s earlier perceptions of alcohol use, its outcomes, and how their socialization translate to risk and protective processes. Recognizing how youth prioritize and make sense of alcohol related attitudes and behaviors could be integral in understanding how their own perceptions of alcohol use change with their development. Considering development in conjunction with the immediate social context, provide cohesive and holistic models for understanding how youth construct alcohol use beliefs.

In this study, family members provided youth with anti-drinking messages but were often a source for youth to observe the negative consequences associated with alcohol use. This perhaps indicates how parents’ attempts to guide youth toward negative outcome expectancies may be disconnected from the observational learning opportunities they provide. Youths’ interaction with their peers revealed an equally complex process. Youths often expressed competing messages, positive and negative peer pressure and differences in the nature of youth relationships related to alcohol use. Non-family member adults also promoted anti-drinking messages (e.g., police or teachers) or demonstrated the negative outcomes associated with their alcohol use (e.g., peer’s family members). However, non-family member adults and the media’s messages appear to affect students’ expectancies and expectations for alcohol use less than family and peers. For example, students easily recalled messages about alcohol use in the media, but seemed aware of alcohol companies’ intentions to sell a product using pro-social images (e.g., celebrities). Given these results, it appears family and peers establish the most salient social context that assists youth in developing outcome expectations and expectancies. Family and peers help to contextualize youths’ environment with their own alcohol use experiences and expectations allowing youth to formulate their beliefs about alcohol use. Consequently, how
youth make sense of their immediate social context and distal sources of influence (e.g., media) may begin to change as their negative perceptions of alcohol use weaken.

Students tended to emphasize the negative outcomes (e.g., addiction to other drugs and financial, behavioral, and physical) that may result from alcohol use while fewer students peripherally discussed the positive outcomes. In examining children’s attitudes and intentions toward alcohol and cocaine use, Bridges and others (2003) found negative intentions to use alcohol and negative attitudes towards alcohol weakened as children got older. Additionally, the authors observed that as youth got older they became more familiar with alcohol and were more inclined to hold positive expectancies toward alcohol use. As they state, "Across grade levels, children strongly believed that use of alcohol was unlikely to lead to positive short term outcomes and was likely to lead to negative short term outcomes" (p. 32). This suggests that youth within these age groups may have difficulties identifying positive outcomes associated with alcohol use but may become more receptive to positive alcohol use images from both proximal and distal sources as they develop. These findings may be instrumental in creating and instituting developmentally appropriate intervention and employing prevention efforts to address alcohol use among youth.

Implications for Future Research

Our results have important implications for future research regarding youth’s perceptions of alcohol use and the risk and protective processes that may contribute to such use. The value and need for conducting age-related research that incorporates elementary school children emerged from this research indicating youth begin to make sense of alcohol related information and others’ alcohol use as early as the 3rd-5th grade. Further research should examine how the proximal and distal social context for youth’s decision-making and associated risk and protective
processes changes as youth age and develop. Identifying when positive expectancies toward alcohol use emerge for youth, will be critical in understanding how youth prioritize the role of family and non-family member relationships, positive and negative peer pressure, and the media in their decisions to use or abstain from alcohol. For example, further research might focus on why youth develop relationships with particular peer groups and how these close peer groups establish norms concerning the appropriateness of alcohol use within and across age groups.

These youth easily identified and discussed negative expectancies and outcomes from alcohol use. However, most youth had difficulties identifying and discussing positive outcomes that may be associated with family, peers, or non-family member adults’ alcohol use. Positive outcomes related to alcohol use may seem opaque to youth within this age group, which may indicate that youth’s modeling of alcohol use behaviors may emerge before they can firmly formulate positive expectancies for alcohol use. These inferences require additional research; however, the results from this study may help to interpret findings about no positive outcomes for using alcohol for youth within this age group.

Study Limitations

Several limitations arose during the course of this study, which qualify the usefulness of these results. A purposive sampling strategy was utilized to recruit participants from a charter school with a history of participating in research activities. Charter schools with a history of participating in research activities may have students whose responses significantly differ from students in other schools that lack similar research opportunities. Related, participants (with the consent of their parents) self-selected into the study. Therefore, participants’ responses cannot be generalized to other groups. Additionally, the research team did not reach theoretical saturation with these narrative data or conduct follow-up focus groups to clarify students’ responses.
Consequently, other students’ perspectives on alcohol use and its associated risk and protective processes may not be represented. A lack of theoretical saturation may also mean that weakly represented domains or core ideas in this study may be more strongly represented in other groups not included in the sample.

The research team found it necessary to modify the CQR approach to resolve problems encountered during the analytic process. For example, the stability check and division of the sample into homogeneous groups were analytic steps omitted from the CQR approach. The use of focus group data limited the number of available cases and therefore such procedures did not align with data available from this study. The research team felt that withholding data from one focus group or dividing the sample would not yield meaningful information about the saturation or stability of our analysis. However, these deviations may have influenced how the data were organized and interpreted. Lastly, a different research team may have interpreted and organized participants’ responses differently resulting in an alternative understanding of these data.

Conclusion

Understanding how youth formulate their beliefs about alcohol use will remain an important area of concern given that youth’s perceptions evolve with their development. Utilizing frameworks that recognize youth’s decision-making processes and socialization will be imperative in understanding which risk and protective processes are most salient in determining current and future alcohol use. Family and peers continued to play a prominent role in youth’s immediate social context. However, understanding how youth organize family and peers in their immediate social context and interlace competing and often conflict messages with their own beliefs will prove invaluable for parents, health professionals, and others concerned about the wellbeing of this vulnerable population.
Early Adolescent Beliefs about Alcohol

References


Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (December 14, 2009). "Teen marijuana use tilts up, while some drugs decline in use." University of Michigan News Service: Ann Arbor, MI. Retrieved May 10, 2010 from

[http://www.monitoringthefuture.org](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org)


### Table 1

*Domains, Categories, Subcategories, and Illustrative Core Ideas of Youth Beliefs about Alcohol*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains, Categories, and Subcategories</th>
<th>Illustrative Core Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Family Members Anti Drinking Messages</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Behavioral</td>
<td>One student learned about drinking from his or her father, who tries not to drink but does drink if he has a bad experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Verbal</td>
<td>One student said her parents tell her not to drink at all or least until she is 21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Family Members Alcohol Use</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Alcohol Availability</td>
<td>One student thinks that teens might drink when their parents offer them alcohol when they are having a party and after they have had something to drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Family Members as Role Models</td>
<td>One student believes that teenagers could be tempted to drink and get addicted when they see their parents drinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Negative Consequences</td>
<td>One student described how her Dad danced with her weirdly and yelled at her when drunk. She thought it was scary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Peer Pressure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Competing Messages from Peers &amp; Family Members</td>
<td>One student commented that youth are more likely to listen to their friends rather than their parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Nature of Relationship between Peers &amp; Alcohol Use</td>
<td>A couple of students think that it is not hard to be ‘cool’ and not drink alcohol. The students also commented that in high school it might be harder to be ‘cool’ and not drink alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Positive Peer Pressure</td>
<td>One student described how one of her older best friends does not drink or smoke and tells her not to do it either.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Negative Peer Pressure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Desire to “Be Cool”</td>
<td>One student thinks that teenagers might drink to look cool and be popular because popular teenagers drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fear of Being Left Out</td>
<td>One student said that teens drink with their friends to avoid looking like an outcast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Encouragement</td>
<td>One student said that teens might drink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### IV. Others Use of Alcohol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Pro-Drinking Influence</strong></td>
<td>One student believes that adults who are not family members might influence teens to drink alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Anti-Drinking Influence</strong></td>
<td>One student thinks that other adults from church might influence teens not to drink alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Positive Outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Coping</td>
<td>One student said that people think that problems are solved or will go away when they drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Health</td>
<td>One student believes that drinking red wine moderately is good for peoples’ hearts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social</td>
<td>One student said that people have more fun sometimes when they drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. Negative Outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Addiction and Other Drug Use</td>
<td>Students believe that people could get addicted to drinking, to the point where they can’t stop drinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Behavioral</td>
<td>One student believes that people who drink could get arrested or go to jail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Financial</td>
<td>One student believes that drinking can lead to losing your money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Physical</td>
<td>One student believes that drinking can lead to smelling bad and believes that no one would want to be around a smelly or drunk person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Social</td>
<td>One student believes that drinking could cause people to hurt others, physically and emotionally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. No Positive Outcomes</td>
<td>Some students think that nothing good happens when people drink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V. Alcohol in the Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Media Outlets with Alcohol Messages</strong></td>
<td>One student said Simpson’s, Family Guy also contained drinking scenes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Nature of Alcohol Message Content</strong></td>
<td>Most students agree that the media provides more influences to drink than influences not to drink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. Negative Portrayals of Alcohol Use</strong></td>
<td>One student described a movie in which a teenage girl passed out after drinking too much and then was pushed by the people around her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D. Celebrities as Role Models</strong></td>
<td>One student thinks that teens might drink when they admire superstars in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### E. Commercials and Other Forms of Advertisement

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Pro Drinking Messages</strong></td>
<td>One student thinks that commercials include words like rich and smooth to make drinking seem attractive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Anti-Drinking Messages</strong></td>
<td>One student observed commercials that provide helpful information about the bad effects of drinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Corporate Motivations</strong></td>
<td>Student believe that commercials provide bad information about drinking very fast or place the information at the bottom of the screen in smaller letters because they just want to sell their product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Sponsorship of Sporting Events</strong></td>
<td>One student observed that NASCAR winners also spray champagne and have lots of beer advertisements on their cars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Symbols in the Media</strong></td>
<td>One student noted the connection between Clydesdale horses and Budweiser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Drinking and Driving</strong></td>
<td>One student observed that radio commercials often say don’t drink and drive but they usually do not say don’t drink in general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Alcohol and Other Drugs</strong></td>
<td>One student noted that there are anti-drug commercials but no anti drinking commercials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VI. Consequences from Drinking Alcohol

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Another student said one sip of alcohol will not get people addicted.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VII. Prevention Programs

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Content and Messages</strong></td>
<td>One student said that the DARE program provides information about the side effects of drinking and encourages students not to drink at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Timing and Refresher Sessions</strong></td>
<td>One student said that the DARE program should be in high school to refresh student knowledge about the side effects of drinking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VIII. Reasons to Drink

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Events</strong></td>
<td>One student said her Mom would drink when she had a really bad day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Relationships</strong></td>
<td>The student thinks that some teenagers drink because of a bad relationship with a girlfriend or boyfriend.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>