

Alcohol in Movies Can Nudge Teens Toward Drinking



Want to keep your teen from becoming a drinker? Keep an eye on what movies she's watching — and the clothes she's wearing, too.

Research published online at bmj.com finds a correlation between the amount of time a kid spends watching movie scenes that depict drinking and his likelihood to drink himself — and to engage in binge drinking. The study also found that teens' owning clothing and other items bearing logos for alcohol products were more likely to begin drinking and to then become binge drinkers.

Researchers interviewed more than 6,500 U.S. teens ages 10 to 14 four times over two years about a number of factors in their lives, including parental behaviors, peer interactions, their own rebellious attitudes and behaviors and the movies they'd watched. Having tabulated the amount of screen time involving alcohol consumption in each of the 100 top box-office hit movies from the previous five years and 32 top-grossing movies from the year when the kids were first surveyed, the researchers determined that the typical kid had seen about 4.5 hours of such material. Some teens had seen more than 8 hours' worth of on-screen drinking.

The study found that teens who saw the most on-screen alcohol use were twice as likely to start drinking themselves than those who had seen the least. And those heavy viewers were 63 percent more likely than those who'd seen less to move on to binge drinking. Other key factors associated with starting to drink in the first place included having parents who drank at home and having alcohol available to themselves at home.

Movie exposure to alcohol-drinking scenes, owning merchandise with alcohol brand names or logos, having friends who drank and personal rebelliousness were linked to both beginning to drink and moving to binge drinking. The tally of alcohol movie moments included not only depictions of characters drinking but also instances of product placement. The authors suggest that perhaps regulating the uses of alcohol in movies could have an impact on teen drinking behaviors.

To learn more about alcohol and alcoholism, [click here](#).

Alcohol in Movies Can Nudge Teens Toward Drinking

Source: Washington Post, The CheckUp blog, By Jennifer LaRue Huget, Posted 02/22/2012