

Study Links Mothers Who Let Kids Sip Alcohol and Children's Reported Drinking



A new study finds a link between mothers' belief that it is acceptable to let their children sip alcohol, and their children's reported alcohol use.

The study found one-quarter of mothers of young children believed allowing children to sip an alcoholic drink would likely deter them from drinking in the future.

The study of 1,050 pairs of mothers and their third-grade children, who participated in the four-year study, found 33 percent of children reported alcohol use.

"A strong, significant association was found between parental 'prosipping' beliefs and children's reported alcohol use," the researchers report.

The mothers with prosipping attitudes said they believed allowing their children to try alcohol would make children less likely to drink as adolescents and make them better at resisting peer pressure to drink.

Some also said early tasting would discourage future use because of alcohol's taste, or because drinking would become less enticing when the children realized their parents allowed it, according to The Los Angeles Times.

The study found four in 10 mothers said not allowing a child to taste alcohol would increase their desire to try it. In the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, the researchers cite previous studies that conclude that early drinking is a known primary risk factor for problem drinking during the teenage years. They also refer to studies that suggest teens are more likely to imitate their peers' drinking habits than their parents'.

Mothers who were more highly educated, and those who worked outside the home, were more likely to allow their children to sip alcohol.

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