

The Nebraska Assessment of College Health Behaviors (NACHB) was administered in 2022. The NACHB survey is designed to assess students' personal attitudes and behaviors related to alcohol, drugs, mental health issues, and personal violence. The NACHB helps understand individuals' attitudes towards campus and community policies, other student's behavior, and bystander interventions. The data from the survey makes it possible to research trends of these behaviors on campus over time. In 2022, 5,381 students from 19 schools participated.

## The population and substance use

Nearly three out of five students (59%) who participated in the NACHB were under the age of 21. These students were generally less likely than older students to use various substances in the past year. The exception was the use of prescription drugs that had not been prescribed to them.

	18-20	21+
Alcohol	92%	96%
Prescription drugs	7%	4%
Marijuana	77%	71%
Cigarettes	10%	15%
E-cigarettes	14%	18%

Half of underage students (49%) said they had never used alcohol. Those who did use alcohol drank **less** per occasion than older peers (2.7 drinks vs. 3.0), for less time (3 hours vs. 4 hours) but more often per month (5.4 times vs. 4.4. times).



## Drinking related harms

Four percent of underage students reported that they drove shortly after drinking, less than older students (7%). They were also half as likely to ride with a drunk driver as older students (5% vs. 10%). One out of five said they did not use a designated driver – more than older students (17%).

Asked about experiences in the last six months, one out of four underage students (24%) said they felt they had built up a tolerance to alcohol, compared to one in five older students (19%). Younger students were more likely to say they had a bad time (34% vs. 29%).

In the past year, 18-20 year olds were more likely than those 21+ to have had sex with someone after drinking they would not have otherwise (13% vs. 8%), but were less likely to have done more sexually (14% vs. 16%) or used alcohol or drugs to feel more comfortable with a partner (10% vs. 15%).

## Reasons to drink alcohol or not

There were many differences by age for why students chose to drink or not. The tables below show the largest differences by age for three questions: 1) what makes it easier for students to drink, 2) what helps them drink less, and 3) reasons from those who don't drink alcohol

Makes drinking easier	18-20	21+
Like the taste	22%	<b>30%</b>
Doesn't hurt academics	<b>23%</b>	16%
To relax	38%	<b>43%</b>
To get drunk	<b>33%</b>	28%
Like the feel	<b>31%</b>	26%

Makes drinking harder	18-20	21+
Possibly getting caught	<b>35%</b>	5%
Strict law enforcement	<b>22%</b>	6%
High cost	48%	<b>65%</b>
Health/calories	28%	<b>37%</b>
Chance of getting sick	43%	<b>51%</b>

Why DON'T use	18-20	21+
Against the law	<b>64%</b>	4%
Avoid regret	<b>58%</b>	38%
Religious/moral reasons	34%	<b>50%</b>
Academic responsibilities	<b>57%</b>	43%
Dislike taste	31%	<b>42%</b>

Underage students were twice as likely than students age 21+ to say that drinking is never a good thing to do (12% vs. 6%).

## How they drink

Three out of ten underage students (31%) have friends over the age of 21 buy alcohol for them. Twelve percent have family members who buy for them, and one in ten use a friend with a fake ID.

There were many differences in **where** people consumed alcohol by age. Students ages 18-20 were more likely than peers ages 21+ to drink at social gatherings (73% vs. 69%), in residence halls (19% vs. 3%), or in fraternities or sororities (10% vs. 3%). Younger students were less likely than older students to drink where they live (44% vs. 69%), at bars or restaurants (17% vs. 75%), or at sporting events (6% vs. 12%).

## Mental health

The largest differences in identified stressors by age included: **financial concerns** were more likely to be reported by students age 21+ compared to students 18-20 (56% vs. 46%), as was **future plans** (59% vs. 52%). Time management was selected less often by older students (49% vs. 55%). The largest difference by age in methods to relieve stress were in drinking alcohol – younger students were half as likely as older students to do this (16% vs. 32%).

**Underage students were more likely** than older students to report having **suicidal thoughts** in the past year (56% vs. 50%) and were more likely to attempt suicide (4% vs. 3%). Students ages 18-20 were more likely than those ages 21+ to be concerned about a friend having suicidal thoughts or exhibiting behaviors (44% vs. 41%).