

The Nebraska Assessment of College Health Behaviors (NACHB) was administered in 2024. 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 2024, 6,235 students from 23 schools participated.



The population and substance use

Three out of five students (62%) who participated in the NACHB were under the age of 21. These students were less likely than older students to use various substances in the past year.

	18-20	21+
Alcohol	50%	83%
Marijuana	20%	25%
Cigarettes	13%	19%
E-cigarettes	10%	14%

About half of underage students (47%) said they had never used alcohol. Those who did use alcohol drank for less time (3.1 hours vs. 3.6 hours) and less often per month (3.8 times vs. 4.9 times) compared to of age students.



Drinking related harms

Four percent of underage students reported that they drove shortly after drinking, less than older students (6%). They were also about half as likely to ride with a drunk driver as older students (5% vs. 9%). Seventeen percent of underage students said they did not use a designated driver – more than older students (14%).

Asked about experiences in the last six months, 25% said they felt they had built up a tolerance to alcohol, compared to about one in five older students (18%). Younger students were more likely to say they had a bad time (32% vs. 28%).

In the past year, 18-20 year olds were less likely than those 21 and older to have done more sexually (8% vs. 10%) or used alcohol or drugs to feel more comfortable with a partner (8% vs. 12%).

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 two questions: 1) what factors contribute to them deciding to drink alcohol and 2) reasons from those who don't drink alcohol.

Reasons for drinking	18-20	21+
To get drunk	30%	25%
Friends are drinking	28%	24%
Like the feel	28%	23%
Doesn't negatively affect academics	22%	18%



Why DON'T use	18-20	21+
Personal beliefs	58%	68%
Against the law	63%	6%
Chance of regrets	56%	43%
Academic responsibilities	52%	43%
Religious/moral reasons	38%	53%
Don't like the taste	27%	37%
Friends don't	23%	17%
Hard to access	10%	4%

How they drink

Nearly three out of ten underage students (29%) have friends over the age of 21 buy alcohol for them. Ten percent have family members who buy for them, and 8% 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 (74% vs. 69%), in residence halls (12% vs. 2%), or in fraternities or sororities (11% vs. 2%). Younger students were less likely than older students to drink where they live (43% vs. 60%), at bars or restaurants (12% vs. 76%), or at sporting events (5% vs. 13%).

Mental health

The largest differences in identified stressors by age included: **time management** was more likely to be reported by students ages 18-20 compared to students 18+ (53% vs. 48%), as was **friends** (24% vs. 17%). Future plans was selected less often by younger students (51% vs. 60%). The largest difference by age in methods to relieve stress was in drinking alcohol – younger students were about half as likely as older students to do this (12% vs. 23%).

Students ages 18-20 were **more likely** than those ages 21+ to be concerned about a friend having suicidal thoughts or exhibiting behaviors (36% vs. 34%).

