

## B. ALCOHOL USE

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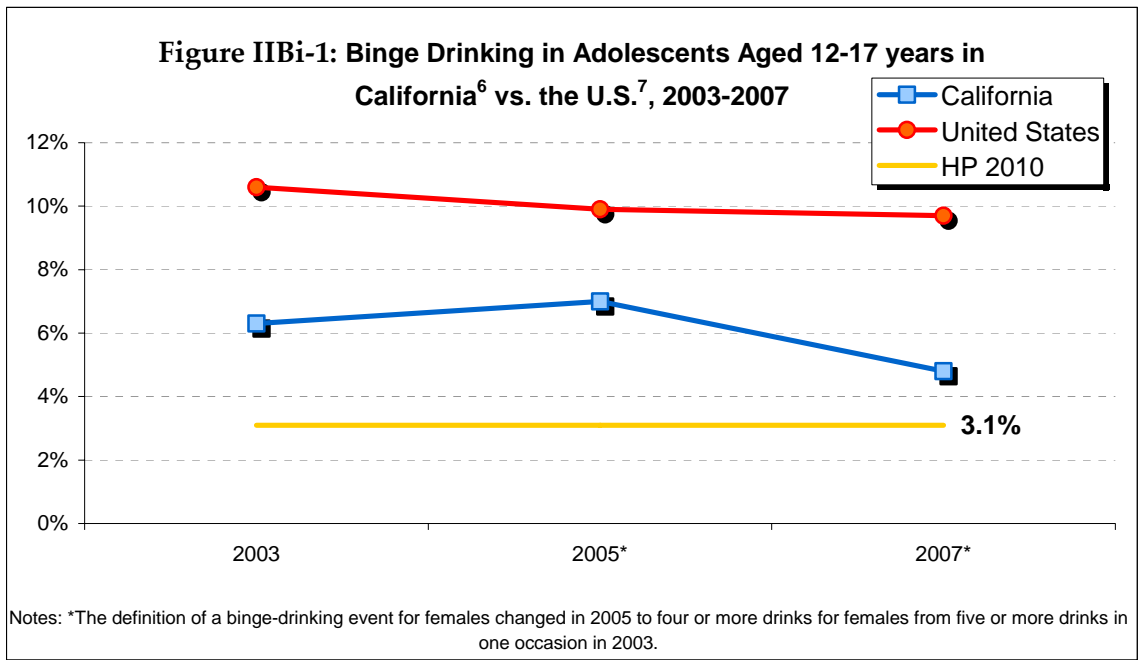
<b>Importance</b>	“[E]xcessive alcohol use is the third leading lifestyle-related cause of death for people in the United States each year.” <sup>1,2</sup> Alcohol-related death or injury can occur during or immediately after use, in incidents such as vehicle collisions, drowning, and alcohol poisoning, or present later in life, often in the form of a chronic illness such as liver disease. “From 2001-2005, there were approximately 79,000 deaths annually in the United States attributable to excessive alcohol use.” <sup>1,3</sup>
<b>Highlights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Between 2005 and 2007, there was <i>no decrease</i> in the percentage of Santa Cruz County adolescents in grades 7, 9, and 11 reporting a binge-drinking event in the past 30 days.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>▪ Santa Cruz County’s motor vehicle accident death rate has been slightly better than the state average, and ranked 12<sup>th</sup> among the 58 California counties.<sup>11</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Definitions</b>	<p><u>Binge Drinking</u>: Drinking five or more drinks on a single occasion for men, or four or more drinks on a single occasion for women.</p> <p><u>Heavy Drinking</u>: Drinking more than two drinks per day for men, or more than one drink per day for women.</p>
<b>Healthy People 2010 Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce adolescent binge drinking in the past month to <b>3.1%</b></li> <li>▪ Reduce adult binge drinking in the past month to <b>13.4%</b></li> </ul>

### i. BINGE DRINKING

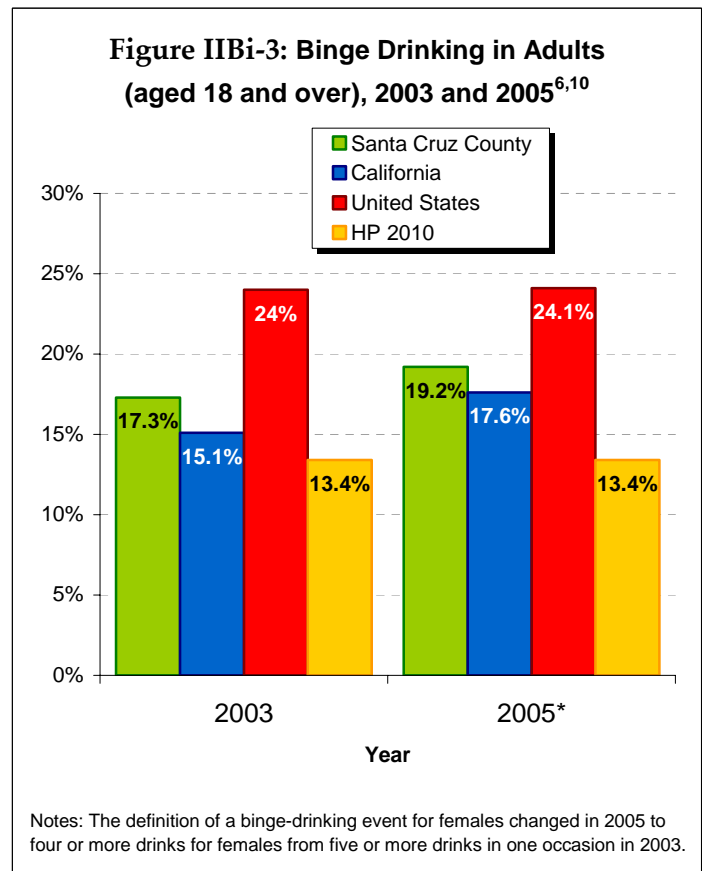
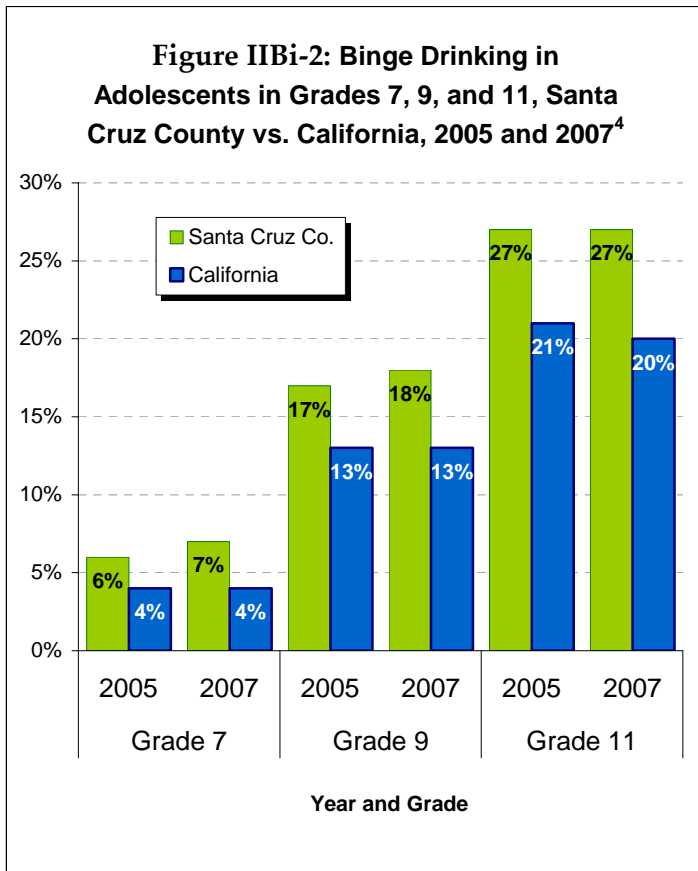
There are two forms of excessive alcohol use: heavy drinking, which is defined as drinking more than two drinks per day for men or more than one drink per day for women, and binge drinking, which is defined as drinking five or more drinks on a single occasion for men or four or more drinks on a single occasion for women.<sup>1</sup> While binge drinking may be most often associated with the immediate negative implications of ingesting alcohol, heavy drinking is also harmful and “can lead to increased risk of liver disease, certain cancers, overweight/obesity, and intentional or unintentional injuries.”<sup>1</sup>

Although the minimum drinking age in California is 21 years, alcohol is still accessible to many adolescents and underage adults. When drinking, many underage drinkers binge drink, which often leads to health and social problems, including alcohol-impaired driving, physical fighting, poor school performance, unprotected sexual activity, and smoking.<sup>5</sup> Binge drinking among adolescents is in a steady downward trend nationwide (Figure IIBi-1).<sup>6,7</sup>

Both in Santa Cruz County and in California, alcohol consumption for adolescents in grades 7, 9, and 11 decreased between 1996 and 2006; however, the prevalence in Santa Cruz County continues to be higher than the state’s.<sup>8</sup> This is highlighted in Figure IIBi-2, which shows that the proportion of 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade adolescents self-reporting binge drinking was higher in Santa Cruz County than California.<sup>4</sup> For both the state of California and the County of Santa Cruz, the proportion of adolescents reporting binge drinking showed little or no indication of decreasing between 2005 and 2007 (Figure IIBi-2).<sup>4</sup>



Most binge drinking occurs among adults aged 26 years and older.<sup>9</sup> Between 2003 and 2005, both California and Santa Cruz County saw increases in binge drinking in adults, including underage drinkers (Figure IIBi-3), though only California's was a significant increase and both increases may be at least partially caused by the change in definition from five drinks to four drinks in a single occasion for women.<sup>6,10</sup>



## ii. MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH DEATH RATE

Alcohol is a major contributor to motor vehicle accidents. About 17,000 Americans are killed each year in motor vehicle crashes involving alcohol – about 40% of all motor vehicle fatalities. The motor vehicle crash death rate is strongly associated with excessive drinking. In Santa Cruz County, from 2004 to 2008, there were an average of 9.2 fatalities and 217 injuries per year due to motor vehicle collisions involving alcohol.<sup>12</sup>

CDC's National Center for Health Statistics calculated the annual crash death rate for each county in the United States for the years 2000-2006.<sup>11</sup> California's statewide rate was 12 deaths per 100,000 persons. Santa Cruz County's rate was 11 per 100,000, ranking 12<sup>th</sup> lowest among the 58 California counties. In California, motor vehicle crash death rates are lower in counties with large, dense populations, and much higher in counties with small, dispersed populations.<sup>11</sup>

<p><b>Primary Prevention Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Santa Cruz County Friday Night Live Partnership</b> comprises the Friday Night Live (FNL) and Club Live (CL) programs. These programs are multi-cultural and youth-driven and led, designed to prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among middle school and high school students.</li> <li>▪ Locally, <b>Project CURB</b> (Communities United to Reduce Bingeing) has been working to reduce binge drinking among the youth of Santa Cruz County.<sup>13</sup> Project CURB is led by Together for Youth/Unidos Para Nuestros Jovenes (TYF/UPNJ), a United Way of Santa Cruz County-led initiative. The goal of Project CURB was to reduce underage binge drinking rates by 50% by the year 2009.</li> <li>▪ The University of California, Santa Cruz runs a campaign called "<b>Just Say Gnome: Party Small,</b>" which offers information from how to drink responsibly to how to be a responsible party host.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Sources</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Alcohol &amp; Public Health." 19 Apr 2010. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Health Resources and Services Administration. Accessed 21 April 2010. <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/">http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/</a>.</li> <li>2. Mokdad AH, Marks JS, Stroup DF, Gerberding JL. "<a href="#">Actual causes of death in the United States, 2000.</a>" <i>JAMA</i> 2004; 291(10):1238–1245</li> <li>3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Alcohol-Related Disease Impact (ARDI). Atlanta, GA: CDC. Accessed March 28, 2008. <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/ardi.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/ardi.htm</a>.</li> <li>4. "Santa Cruz County Technical Report 2006-2008." <i>West Ed / Healthy Kids</i>. 31 Mar 2010. California Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office. Accessed 12 April 2010. <a href="http://www.wested.org/cs/chks/print/docs/chks_home.html">http://www.wested.org/cs/chks/print/docs/chks_home.html</a>.</li> <li>5. Miller JW, Naimi TS, Brewer RD, Jones SE. "Binge drinking and associated health risk behaviors among high school students." <i>Pediatrics</i> 2006;119:76-85. Via CDC Alcohol webpage. Accessed 5 May 2010.</li> <li>6. California Health Interview Survey. AskCHIS. 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. Accessed April-May 2010 at <a href="http://www.chis.ucla.edu">http://www.chis.ucla.edu</a>.</li> <li>7. "Trends in the Prevalence of Alcohol Use," National YRBSS: 1991-2007, YRBSS, CDC, NCCDPHP, Accessed 12 April 2010.</li> <li>8. Applied Survey Research. <a href="#">Life in Santa Cruz County, Year 13, 2007: Community Assessment Project: Comprehensive Report 13</a>. San Jose, CA: United Way of Santa Cruz, 2007.</li> <li>9. Naimi T, Brewer RD, Mokdad A, Serdula M, Denny C, Marks J. "Binge drinking among U.S. adults." <i>JAMA</i> 2003;289:70–5. via CDC Alcohol webpage. Accessed 5 May 2010.</li> <li>10. National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), SAMHSA. <a href="http://oas.samhsa.gov/">http://oas.samhsa.gov/</a>.</li> <li>11. University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. <i>County Health Rankings 2010</i>. <a href="http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/">http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/</a>.</li> <li>12. "2008 Annual Report of Fatal and Injury Motor Vehicle Traffic Collisions," Table 5D. <a href="#">Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS)</a>. California Highway Patrol. Accessed 3 September 2010. <a href="http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/index.html">http://www.chp.ca.gov/switrs/index.html</a>.</li> <li>13. Applied Survey Research. "The Status of Youth Drinking in Santa Cruz County, 2007." Accessed 29 May 2008. Project CURB <a href="http://www.projectcurb.com">http://www.projectcurb.com</a>. <a href="http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/www/products/Final_CURB_Evaluation_Report_2007.pdf">http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/www/products/Final_CURB_Evaluation_Report_2007.pdf</a>.</li> </ol>
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