



RESEARCH SUMMARY
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Key takeaways from included research:

- Using data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, researchers analyzed responses from 20,005 U.S. adolescents ages 14 to 18 to examine how exposure to neighborhood violence relates to substance use. They found 21.9% of teens reporting alcohol use, 18.6% reporting vaping, and 17.7% reported marijuana use. They also determined that those exposed to neighborhood violence had significantly higher odds of using cigarettes, alcohol, vaping products, marijuana, and misusing prescription opioids. The findings suggest that improving neighborhood safety may help reduce adolescent substance use, although the cross-sectional design does not prove cause and effect.
- A small study of 68 college students showed that those who paid more attention to or chose to watch beer ads were more likely to crave beer and drink more of it in a later taste test. In both cases, craving explained the link between ad bias and drinking, suggesting that alcohol ads may increase consumption by increasing the desire to drink.
- In a survey of 382 Australian teens ages 15–17, researchers found that those who had seen and liked ads for zero-alcohol drinks were more likely to have positive attitudes toward and stronger intentions to drink alcohol from the same parent brands. These associations remained even after accounting for prior alcohol use and other factors. The findings suggest that zero-alcohol ads may act as indirect marketing for alcoholic products and should warrant inclusion in alcohol advertising regulations.
- A new study wanted to examine the extent to which celebrities promote their alcohol brands on Instagram, whether they disclose the content as sponsored, and whether the posts were visible to underage users. Of 112 celebrities who own alcohol brands, they found that most promoted them on Instagram, but only 1.7% of those posts clearly disclosed them as sponsored content. Nearly all alcohol-related posts were visible to a simulated 15-year-old account, raising concerns about youth exposure and the need for stronger social media regulations.

EXPOSURE TO NEIGHBORHOOD VIOLENCE AND SUBSTANCE USE AMONG ADOLESCENTS: FINDINGS FROM A POPULATION-BASED STUDY

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Background and objective: Although research shows that adolescents who are exposed to neighborhood violence (NV) are more likely to use substances to cope with the trauma associated with NV, most of these studies are from small and unrepresentative samples that often lack diversity. Drawing on a large nationally representative sample of adolescents, the objectives of this study were to examine the prevalence of exposure to NV, and the cross-sectional association between exposure to NV and different types of substance use.

Methods: Data for this study were obtained from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey. An analytic sample of 20,005 adolescents aged 14–18 (50.3 % male) was analyzed using binary logistic regression. Outcome variables investigated were current cigarette smoking, alcohol use, electronic vaping products (EVP) use, marijuana use, and prescription opioid misuse (POM). The main explanatory variable was exposure to NV.

Results: Current use of substances among adolescents is as follows: alcohol use (21.9 %), EVP use (18.6 %), marijuana use (17.7 %), POM (5.2 %), and cigarette smoking (4.2 %). In the multivariable logistic regression model, adolescents exposed to NV had higher odds of smoking cigarettes, using alcohol, using EVP, using marijuana, and misusing prescription opioids.

Conclusion: The findings of this study highlight that promoting safer neighborhoods may be effective at reducing both NV and substance use among adolescents. However, given that the study is cross-sectional, we are unable to establish a clear cause-and-effect associations, therefore, longitudinal evidence is warranted.

Source: Baiden, P., Hall, A. J., LaBrenz, C. A., Awua, J., Glikpo, R. M., & Nartey, P. (2026). Exposure to neighborhood violence and substance use among adolescents: Findings from a population-based study. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 394, 120626. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2025.120626>

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN RESILIENCE TO ALCOHOL ADVERTISING: TWO PROCESSING BIASES DURING ADVERT VIEWING PREDICT INTERINDIVIDUAL VARIATION IN POSTVIEWING CRAVING AND CONSUMPTION

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Background: Despite potentially harmful consequences, people routinely encounter alcohol adverts designed to increase consumption of alcohol in preference to safer alternatives. However, individuals differ in the degree to which such adverts elicit preferential alcohol consumption. This study builds upon and extends prior research by testing hypotheses concerning the impact of biased processing during advert viewing on subsequent alcohol craving and consumption.

Method: Sixty-eight undergraduate students viewed beer and soft drink adverts. In some viewing blocks, beer and soft drink adverts played simultaneously to assess participants' attentional bias to beer adverts. In others, participants were asked to choose which type of advert to view, which assessed bias in volitional viewing choice. Participants subsequently rated their craving for beer before completing a taste test designed to yield a behavioral measure of preferential beer consumption.

Results: Attentional bias to alcohol adverts predicted beer craving and preferential beer consumption. The association between attentional bias and preferential beer consumption was mediated by beer craving. An equivalent pattern of prediction was observed when using the viewing choice bias measure as the predictor. Importantly, when variation in either bias measure was statistically

controlled for, the other continued to predict preferential beer consumption in a manner that was mediated by beer craving.

Conclusions: Two types of processing bias during advert viewing—viewing preference and attentional bias—were independently associated with subsequent preferential alcohol consumption. In both cases, these associations were accounted for by alcohol craving. The theoretical and applied implications of this are discussed.

Source: Mazidi, M., Carver, L., MacLeod, C., Rudaizky, D., Wiers, R., Wiechert, S., ... & Grafton, B. (2026). Individual differences in resilience to alcohol advertising: Two processing biases during advert viewing predict interindividual variation in postviewing craving and consumption. *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 50(2), e70225. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.70225>

ADOLESCENTS' EXPOSURE TO ZERO-ALCOHOL ADVERTISEMENTS AND ATTITUDES AND CONSUMPTION INTENTIONS TOWARDS ALCOHOL: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY **February 2026**

Introduction: Exposure to alcohol advertising is a key influence on adolescent alcohol consumption. Zero-alcohol drinks (< 0.5% alcohol by volume) resemble and often share brands with alcoholic drinks, so may function as surrogate alcohol marketing. We examined whether exposure to zero-alcohol advertising was associated with adolescents' attitudes and consumption intentions towards alcohol.

Methods: N = 382 Australians aged 15–17 years completed a cross-sectional online survey where they viewed zero-alcohol advertisements from four parent alcohol brands and reported past exposure and liking of each advertisement, attitudes and consumption intentions towards alcohol products from the parent brand, general attitudes and consumption intentions towards alcohol, self-reported location-based exposure to zero-alcohol advertising, prior alcohol and zero-alcohol consumption, and demographics. Associations between exposure and liking, attitudes, and consumption intentions were examined using linear mixed effect models and linear regression.

Results: Adjusting for prior zero-alcohol and alcohol consumption, gender and parent presence during survey completion, attitudes towards and intentions to consume alcohol from the parent brand were associated with previous zero-alcohol advertisement exposure (attitudes: $B = 0.22$, $p = 0.005$; intentions: $B = 0.20$, $p = 0.002$) and zero-alcohol advertisement liking (attitudes: $B = 1.42$, $p < 0.001$; intentions: $B = 0.67$, $p < 0.001$). No associations were found between self-reported location-based exposure to zero-alcohol advertising and general attitudes and consumption intentions towards alcohol.

Discussion and Conclusions: Findings that adolescents who see and like zero-alcohol advertisements have more favourable attitudes towards and stronger intentions to consume parent alcohol brands suggest that zero-alcohol advertisements may serve as surrogate alcohol marketing, supporting calls to include them within alcohol advertising regulations.

Source: Bartram, A., Ahad, M. A., Bogomolova, S., Mittinty, M., Dono, J., Brownbill, A. L., ... & Bowden, J. (2026). Adolescents' Exposure to Zero-Alcohol Advertisements and Attitudes and Consumption Intentions Towards Alcohol: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 45(2), e70125. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dar.70125>

CELEBRITY-OWNED ALCOHOL BRANDS PROMOTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Background and Objectives: On social media, people are expected to disclose any sponsored content. However, celebrities who own alcohol brands and make posts promoting their brands may circumvent these disclosure policies, potentially exposing young audiences to alcohol marketing. This study examined the extent to which celebrities promoted their own alcohol brands on Instagram, whether they disclosed the content as sponsored, and whether the posts were visible to underage users.

Methods: Through systematic Google searches, we identified 112 celebrities who own alcohol brands. We retrieved 85 673 of their Instagram posts published between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2023. Alcohol-brand posts were identified through text-pattern matching. We checked the accessibility of alcohol-brand posts to underage users using a simulated 15-year-old account.

Results: Among 112 celebrities (mean age = 50.8 years; 72.3% male), 42 (37.5%) explicitly mentioned their brand in their Instagram bio, and 84 (75%) referenced their own alcohol brand in at least 1 post during the study period. Of the 85 673 total posts, 3.4% mentioned a celebrity's alcohol brand. Concerningly, only 1.7% of these alcohol-brand posts included a clear disclosure in the caption and 98% (646/660) of sampled alcohol-brand posts were visible to a simulated 15-year-old account.

Conclusions: Celebrities' posts about their own alcohol brands were common and accessible to underage users. Policymakers should implement stricter regulations on alcohol promotions on social media to protect adolescents from exposure to alcohol-related content.

Source: Alen, G. D., Cook, M., Anderson-Luxford, D., Kuntsche, E., He, Z., O'Brien, P., ... & Riordan, B. (2026). Celebrity-Owned Alcohol Brands Promoted on Social Media. *Pediatrics*, e2025072753. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2025-072753>