

# Always growing. Always learning.

Every day I'm evolving and discovering new things. I know my brain is still developing well until my 20s, and alcohol can affect how it develops. Alcohol slows down the functioning of the brain. It can make it harder to learn new things, concentrate, or make decisions that affect my everyday life.

With so much left to learn, I can't jeopardize my brain like that. I'm choosing to keep my mind and memory sharp by not underage drinking.

## I had no idea!

- The fingernails of an average human being grow about 0.5 to 4 inches per year.
- Ninety-nine percent of the DNA is the same in all human beings.
- A sneeze can travel with a speed of more than 100 miles per hour.

MY  
LIFE  
BY  
DESIGN

#### Resources

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2017). Facing addiction in America: The Surgeon General's report on alcohol, drugs, and health. Retrieved from <https://addiction.surgeongeneral.gov/surgeon-generals-report.pdf>

Funded in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery through a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration.

# ALWAYS LOOKING FORWARD.

My life design is about always growing and learning things. I know I've got big goals ahead of me. Underage drinking can jeopardize my dreams by increasing my chances of risky behavior that I wouldn't normally engage in, such as using drugs or fighting. It can also increase my chances of injuries and accidents, which could put me in the emergency room. Like other drugs, alcohol can change my ability to think, speak and see things as they really are.

***My life doesn't include underage drinking...  
It's too bright!***

## WORDS FROM THE WISE...

- "When I look at the future, it's so bright it burns my eyes." - Oprah Winfrey
- "Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." - Warren Buffett
- "We all have dreams. In order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline and effort." - Jesse Owens
- "All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them." - Walt Disney

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# *Sticking with the facts.*

**There's a lot of information out there. That's why I make sure to have the right information when it comes to underage drinking.**

Not only does alcohol put my health at risk, but it can also get in the way of my relationships, school performance, and mental health. Alcohol increases the risk for diseases, and can slow down the functioning of my brain, leading to accidents, injuries, or fights. Young people who drink are more likely to get bad grades and have issues such as depression and anxiety disorders.

***With so much on the line, I'm listening to the facts and deciding not to drink underage.***

## **I had no idea!**

- There are 12 times more trees on Earth than stars in the Milky Way.
- Cows and horses sleep standing up.
- Butterflies taste with their feet.
- Most high schoolers in Illinois don't drink.

**MY LIFE.  
BY DESIGN.**

#### Resources

[https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/consequences-of\\_underage\\_0.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/consequences-of_underage_0.pdf)

[https://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_178052/File/state-reports/2018/Freq18\\_IYS\\_Statewide.pdf](https://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/UserFiles/Servers/Server_178052/File/state-reports/2018/Freq18_IYS_Statewide.pdf)

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# STAYING FOCUSED. KEEPING BUSY.

I like to keep myself busy, but having a full schedule means I have to stay sharp and motivated. Drinking alcohol can interfere with my memory and make it harder to concentrate. Alcohol is a depressant, which means it's a drug that slows down or depresses the brain. This negative effect lasts far longer in a teenager's brain than an adult's - up to two weeks.

The last thing I need is something slowing me down. I'm not giving up the good things in my life to drink underage.

## TIPS ON HOW TO FOCUS

- *Calm your brain before a task. Take a couple of minutes to sit in a comfortable position and breathe deeply into your stomach.*
- *Turn off your phone completely or put a lock on social media while you're working on something important.*
- *Have an accountability partner. Find someone who can check in on you and provide extra motivation.*



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