

# 21: Why is Age so Important?

*Plenty of youth and many adults wonder why drinking alcohol is not allowed until age 21. Share the facts so they can understand the importance of that age requirement. It's not about keeping them controlled. It's to keep their brains and bodies strong so they can fully develop.*

*Know that anyone can develop an alcohol problem, even a teen. Alcohol use should be delayed as long as possible. Someone who begins drinking as a young teen is four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than another who waits until adulthood.*

*If this information is new to you, don't sweat it. When we know better, we can do better.*

- ★ *Alcohol can slow reaction time and impair judgment, vision, and coordination.*
- ★ *The brain has been shown to develop well into a person's twenties. Teens are far from that age, and alcohol use could cause changes in their brains while they're still developing.*
- ★ *School performance difficulties and other risky behaviors such as smoking, drug misuse, and risky sexual behaviors are some of the reasons to abstain.*

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/minimum-legal-drinking-age>

**KEEP  
SHOWING  
UP**

**They're Still Growing Up**

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