



**Illinois Youth Survey**

**Youth Alcohol  
Use in Illinois**



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# ILLINOIS YOUTH SURVEY

# 01.

## What is the Illinois Youth Survey?

### Overview

The Illinois Youth Survey is a biennial survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students. The IYS is a self-report survey administered in school settings and is designed to gather information about a variety of health and social indicators including substance use patterns and attitudes of Illinois youth. The Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) has funded the administration of the Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) biennially since 1990.

The administration of the IYS has two major goals:

- To supply local data to schools and school districts throughout Illinois.
- To provide a scientific estimate of health and social indicators for the state of Illinois.

### 2018 Data

In 2018, the Illinois Youth survey included over 230,000 youth across more than 970 Illinois schools who were surveyed between January and June of 2018. The data in this paper is based on a statewide randomly drawn, scientifically weighted sample of 11,259 students, selected to represent the state population of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in Illinois' public schools, distributed across the grades as shown below. The sampling design assures that youth in the state sample are representative of the state's diverse community types.

	Weighted Count
8th	3800
10th	3885
12th	3574
Total	11259



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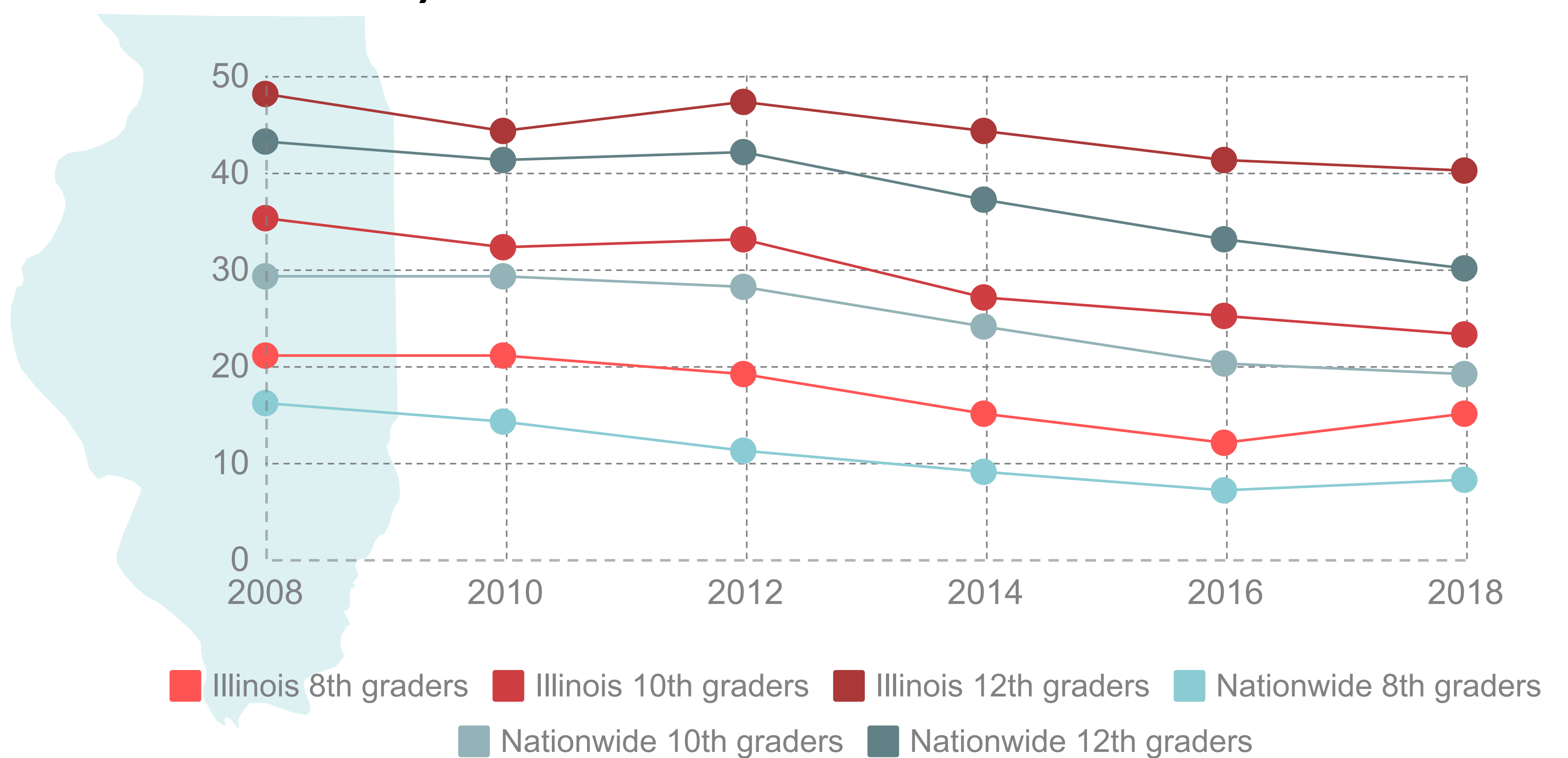
## Why is alcohol important?

Alcohol is the most frequent substance used by teens in Illinois. State policies regarding alcohol and available alcohol products have remained largely unchanged for many years, yet teen use patterns continue to change in a variety of significant ways. This report provides information on alcohol use patterns, including where youth get their alcohol, young persons' perceptions about alcohol use and perceived use among their peers, and consequences of teen alcohol use including drinking and driving. It offers insights on use statistics based on grade, race, gender, community type, and trends. Use this paper to learn the facts about alcohol use among youth in Illinois.

## Illinois vs. National Trends

Since 2008, data have shown that self-reported teen use of alcohol is continuing to trend downwards in the state of Illinois. While this is a positive trend, Illinois' rates of teen alcohol use have been above national measures of the same statistics for many years, and this has not changed. In 2018, while fewer teens used alcohol than in 2016, our state is still above national averages for past year alcohol use and past 30 day alcohol use. In Illinois, over one in four 8th graders has used alcohol in the past year, with over half of those having used it in the past 30 days.

## Past 30 Days Alcohol Use: Illinois & National Trends



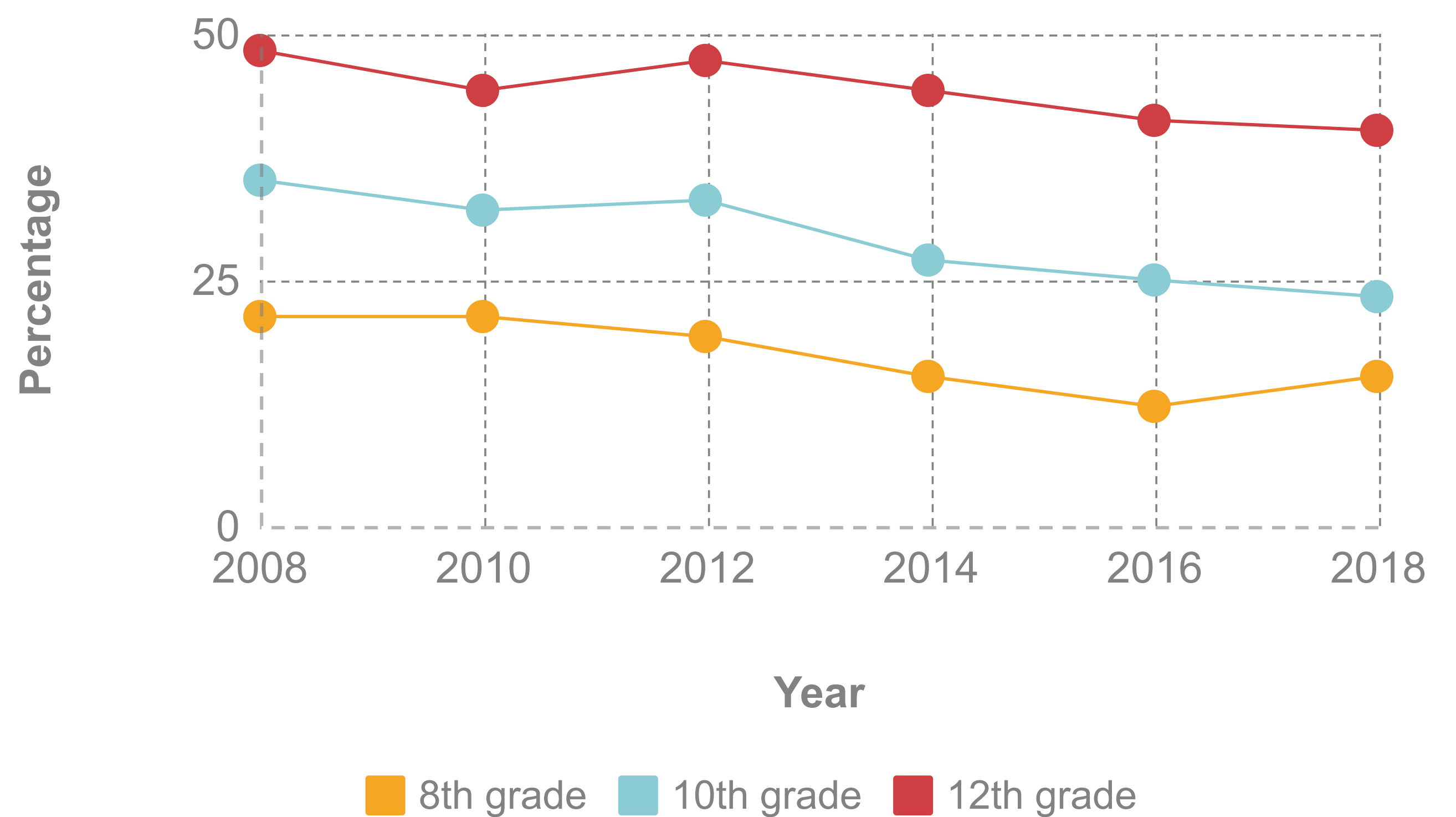
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## Alcohol Use Among Teens in Illinois Overview

### Youth Usage Summary

- During 2018, nearly one quarter of teens reported some alcohol use in the past 30 days.
- While rates have continued to fall over time, 2018 marked a sharp uptick in usage rates among Illinois 8th Graders.
- Binge drinking is slowly but steadily declining across all age groups in Illinois, most notably among seniors.

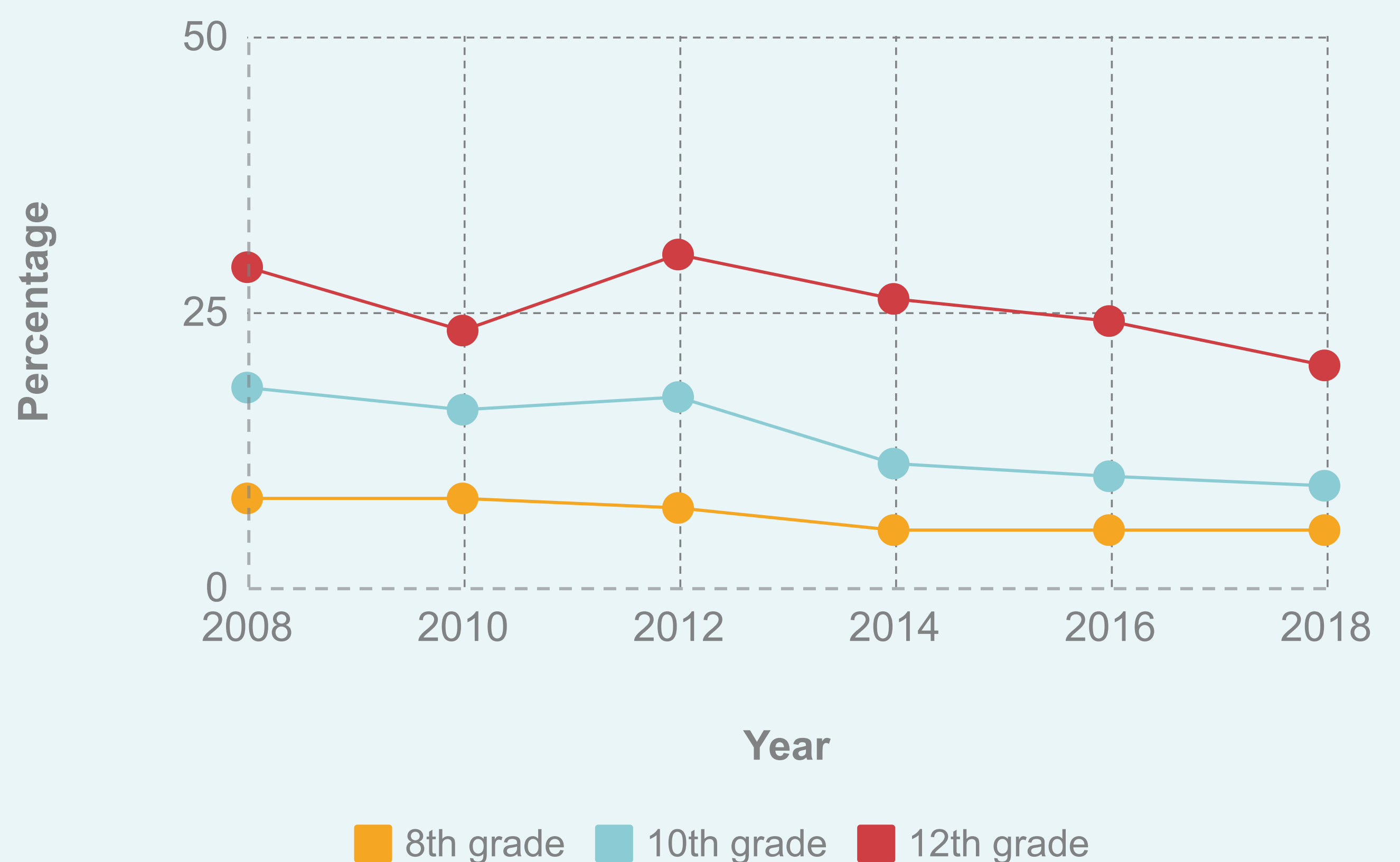
### Past 30 Days Alcohol Use



### Clarer Look: High School Seniors

- Seniors have the highest rates of all types of alcohol use across grades, but reflect similar trends.
- More than half of all seniors reported having ever used alcohol in 2018.
- 1 in 10 seniors reported having been drunk or high during school.

### Past 2 Weeks Binge Drinking



## Why do Teens Use Alcohol?

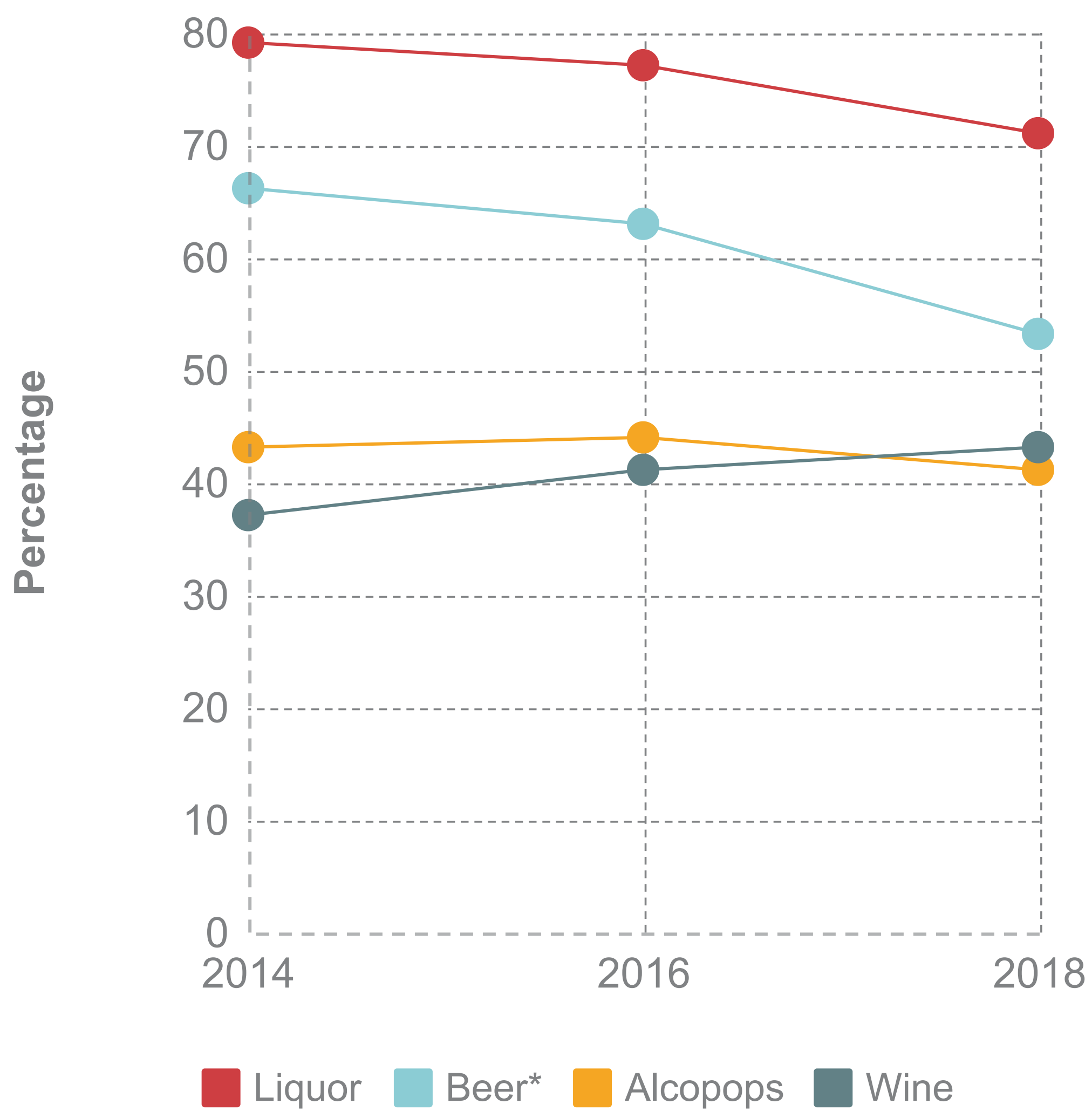
Teens in Illinois may use alcohol for a variety of different reason. Some believe it will make them appear "cooler" to their peers, while some use it to relax or fit in. However, it is important to note that only 15% of high school students reported having used alcohol or drugs by themselves in the past year. In high school, alcohol is primarily used for social reasons. Understanding teen behaviors is only part of the solution to alcohol use. It is also important for adults to understand youth perceptions, access to alcohol, and drinking preferences in order to accurately educate teens about the facts of alcohol use.



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## Drink Preferences Among Alcohol Users

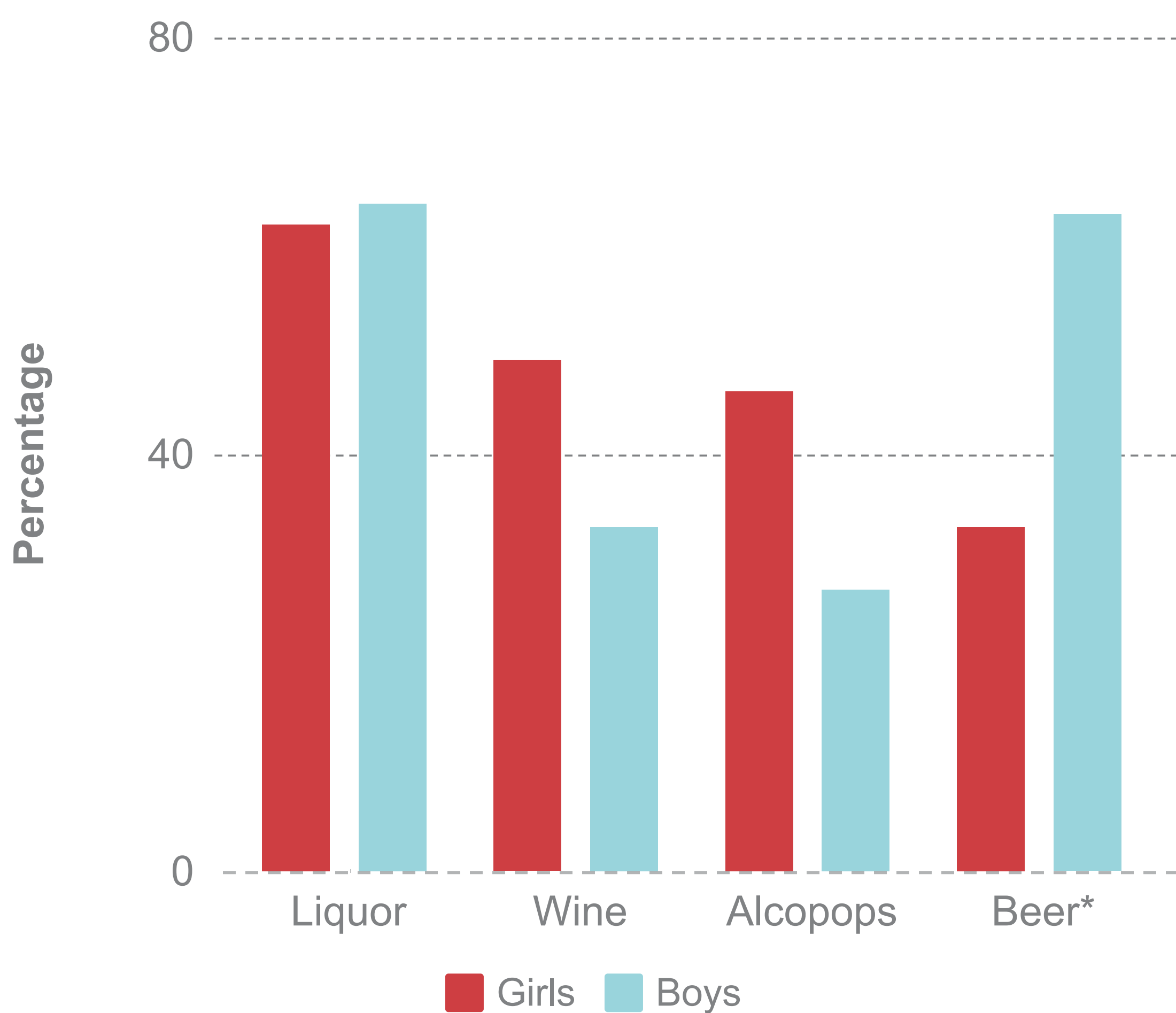
### Senior Alcohol Use by Drink Type



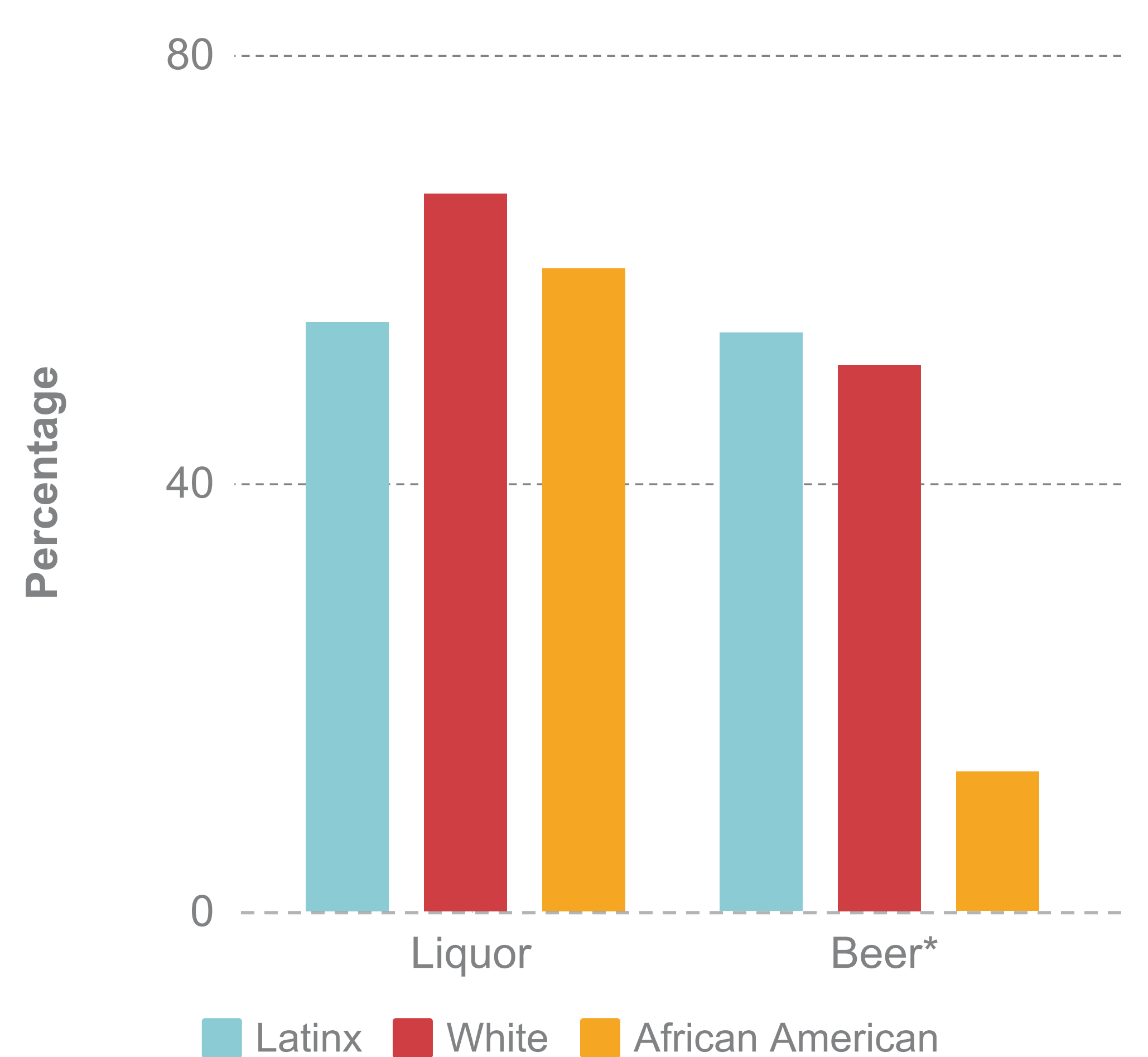
While senior drinkers use multiple varieties of alcohol, these statistics show which types of alcohol are most popular among them. Most notable is the prevalence of liquor among senior users, which has fallen considerably but is still the most popular type of alcohol with all demographics of drinkers. Wine has also become more popular than alcopops (sugary, bottled alternatives to beer) in 2018, and it is the only drink type trending upwards in popularity. Also important to note is that keg use has been declining consistently; less than 5% of teen drinkers reported drinking from a keg in 2018.

Drink preference can vary significantly by race and gender. For example, only 13% of African American drinkers reported having drunk beer from a can or bottle in the past 30 days, while this number was over 50% for both White and Latinx drinkers. Male drinkers reported much higher use of beer than females, while females reported drinking more wine and alcopops. For all users regardless of gender, race, or other demographics, rates of liquor use are much higher than other types of alcohol.

### Drink Preferences by Gender



### Drink Preferences by Race



\*Beer from bottles or cans

Pages marked with orange denote statistics that represent only alcohol users, unless otherwise noted. For example, when we show that rates of liquor use are 71%, we mean that 71% of teen alcohol users reported drinking liquor.

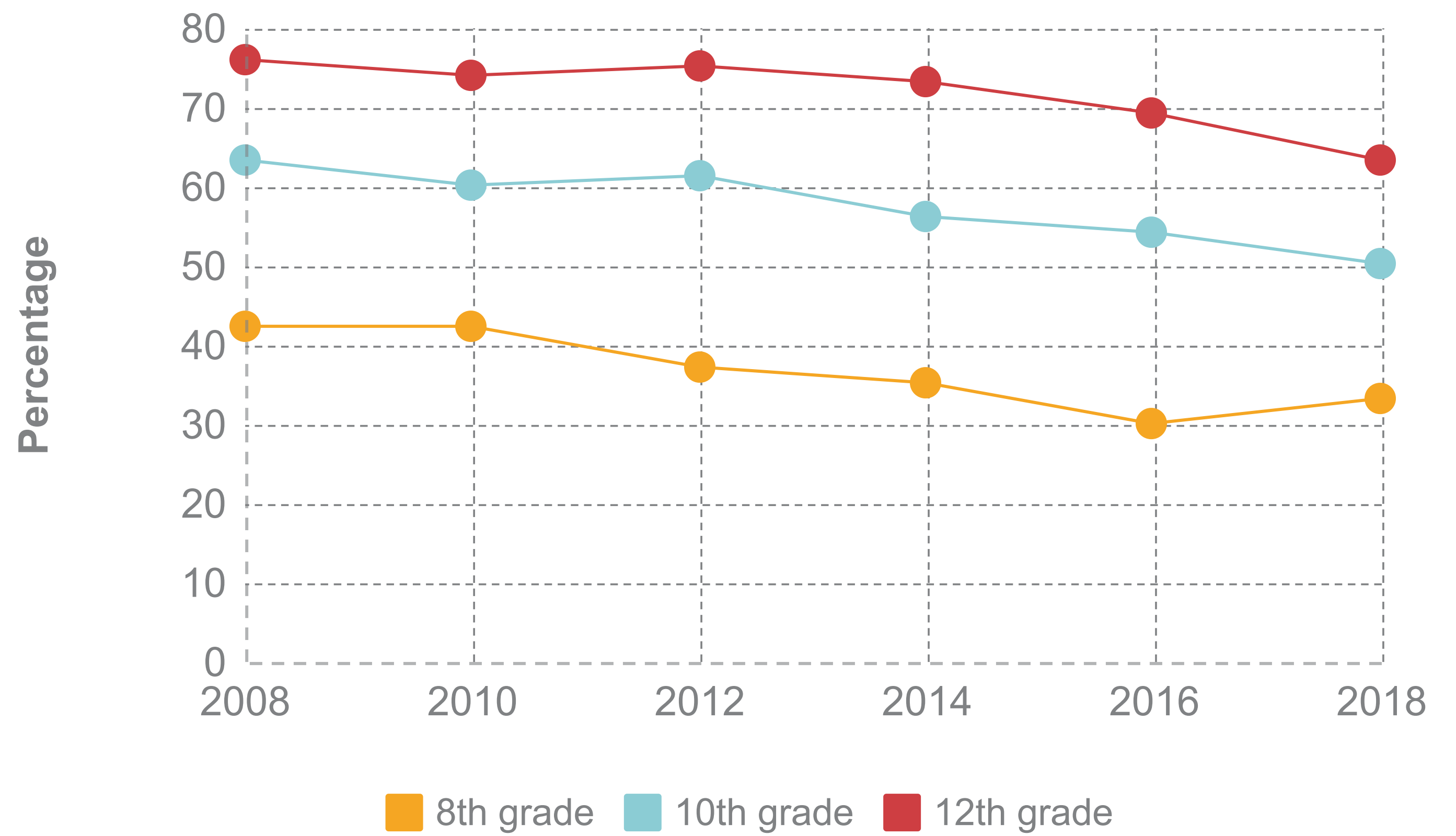


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## Youth Access to Alcohol

### Perceived Ease of Access to Alcohol\*\*

Understanding how teens get access to alcohol is a major part of the prevention puzzle. While it is encouraging that perceived ease of access among teens has generally been trending downwards, the rates are still concerning. In 2018, the majority of high school students responded that it would be at least "sort of easy" to acquire alcohol, with a quarter of high school students indicating that it would be "very easy."



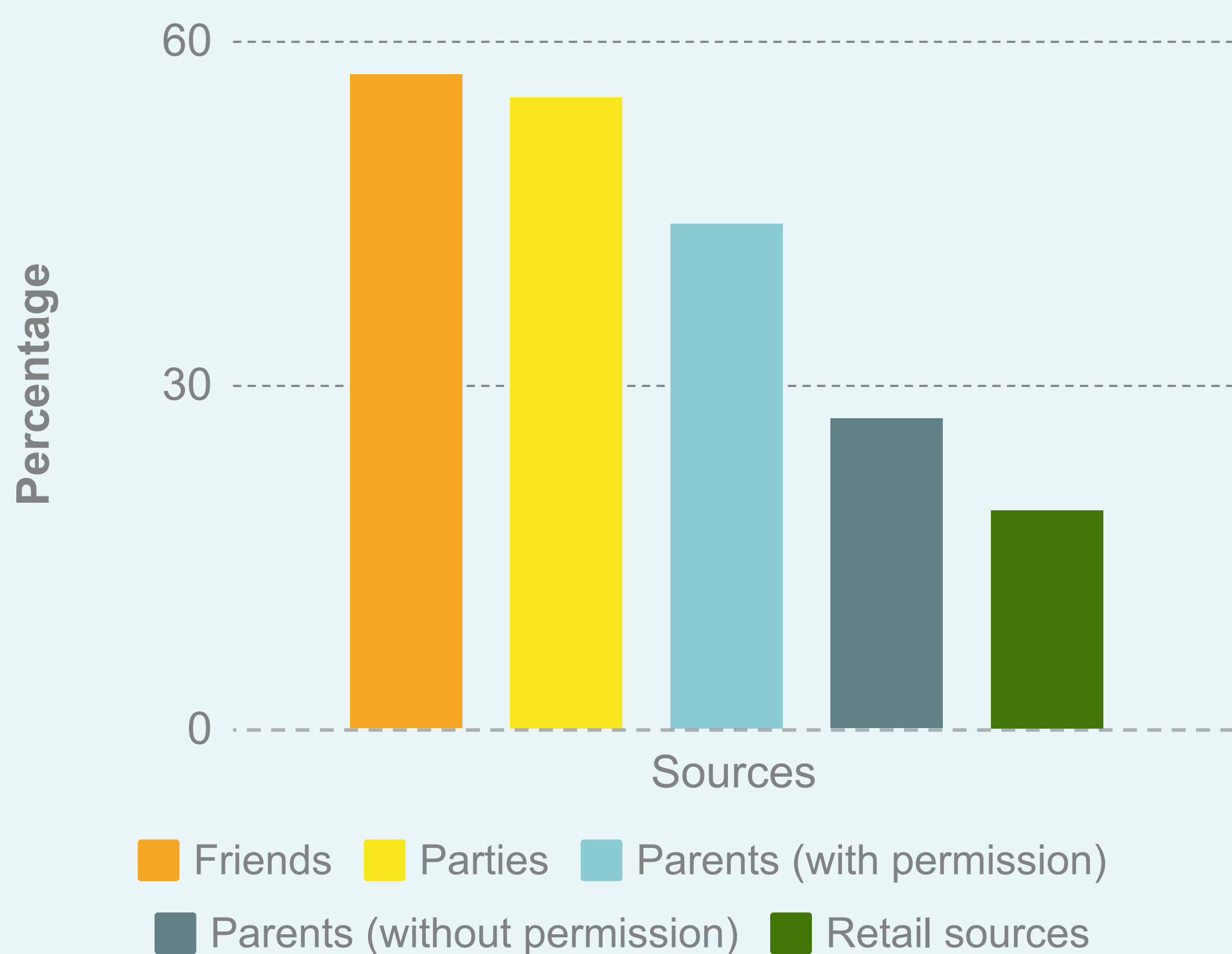
IYS data shows that the vast majority of teens get their alcohol socially. This trend is most distinct in high school seniors, among whom 57% percent of alcohol users have accessed alcohol through their friends.

Only a minority of teen alcohol users reported accessing alcohol from retail sources (bars, restaurants, stores, and gas stations). However, the rate of teen access to alcohol via these providers has increased by approximately 30% in the past two years. Among high school seniors, it is now at 19%.

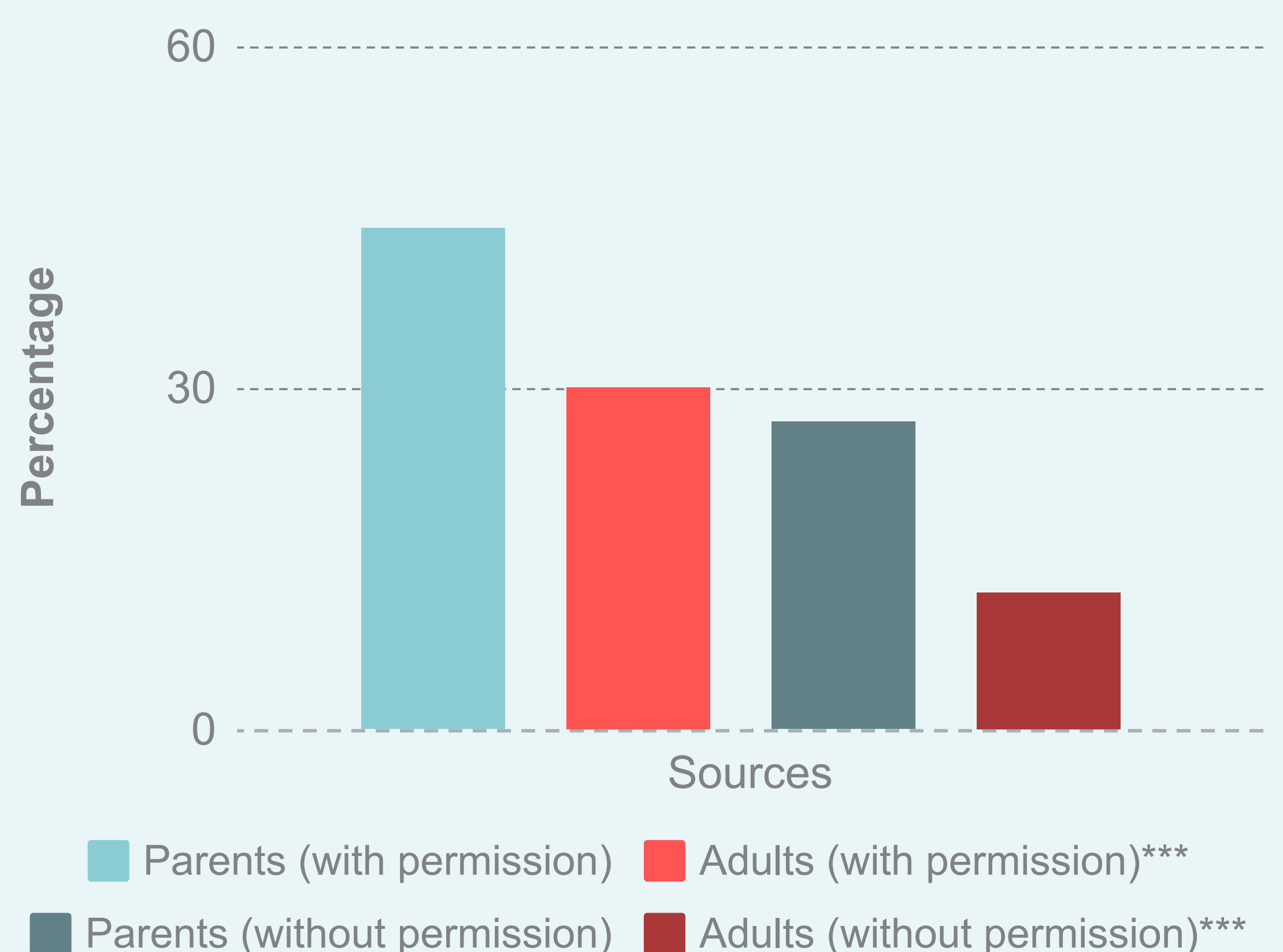


### Closer Look: High School Seniors

#### Alcohol Sources for Senior Drinkers



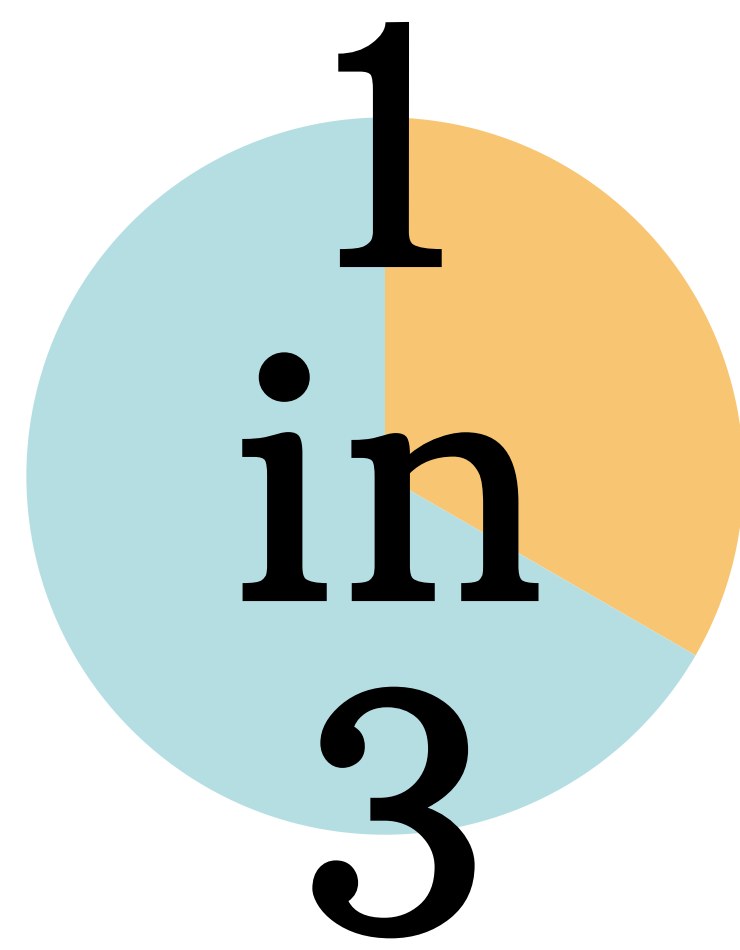
#### Adults as Sources for Senior Drinkers



\*\*Among user and non-users.  
\*\*\*Adults besides own Parents.

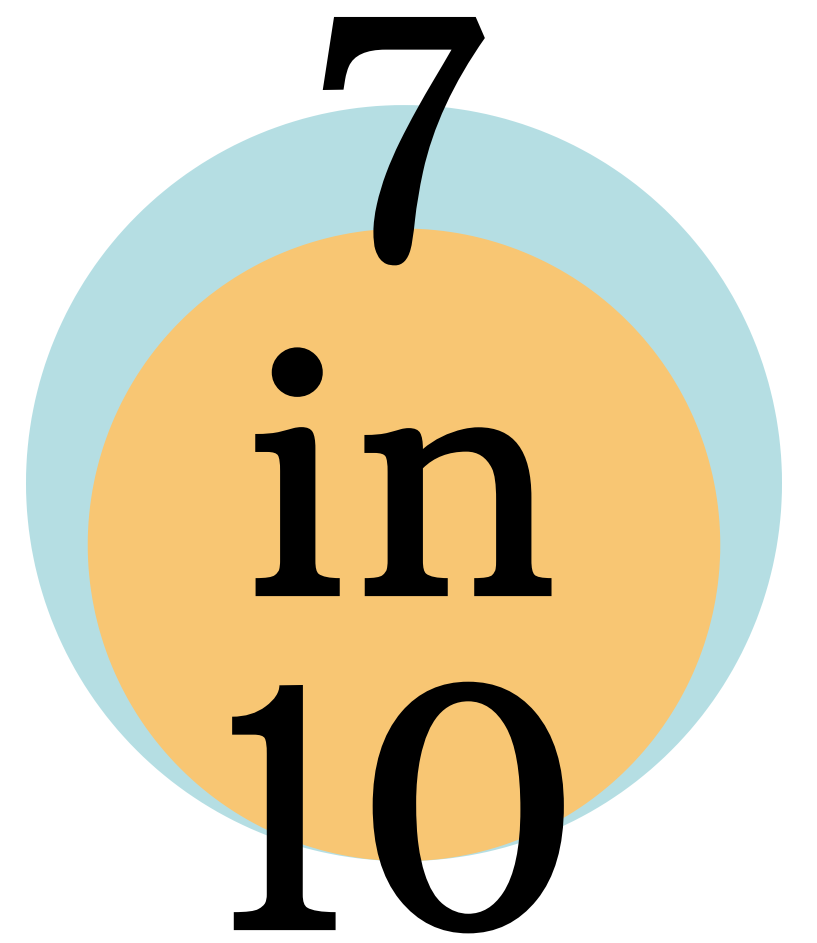
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## Youth Perceptions of Alcohol Use



teens believe there is at least some chance they will be seen as cooler if they begin drinking regularly.

seniors overestimate the percentage of their classmates who used alcohol in the past month.



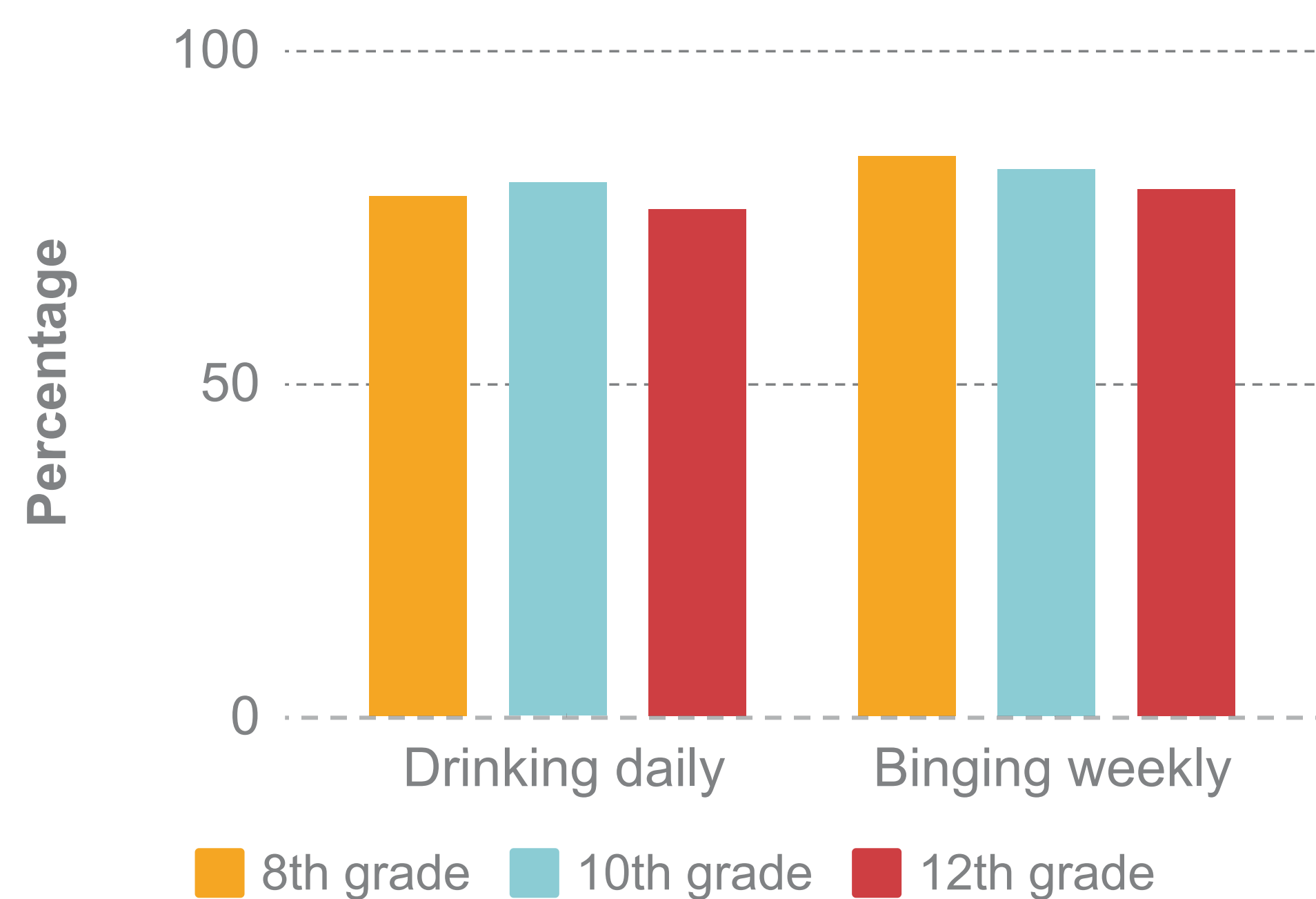
### Why do these numbers matter?

Teens' perceptions have a deep impact on their actions. When teens believe that more of their friends are using substances such as alcohol, it can effect their decision making and choices about whether or not to use it as well. Between all surveyed grades, social sources were the most common type of access to alcohol for teens. The most popular single source of alcohol for all teens was reported as "A friend gave it to me." For these reasons, it is critical to understand what youth believe about the risks, norms, and consequences of teenage alcohol use.

### What else do teens believe?

It is important for teens to understand the risks that alcohol poses not only to their bodies but to their actions and their futures. While the majority of teens believe there is at least a moderate risk of drinking regularly or bingeing, many of these teens choose to use alcohol anyway.

### Perceived Risk of Drinking Regularly



As represented here, a large majority of teens understand that drinking daily and bingeing can pose significant risks to one's wellbeing, either physically or otherwise. Despite this, the majority of high school seniors reported having used alcohol.





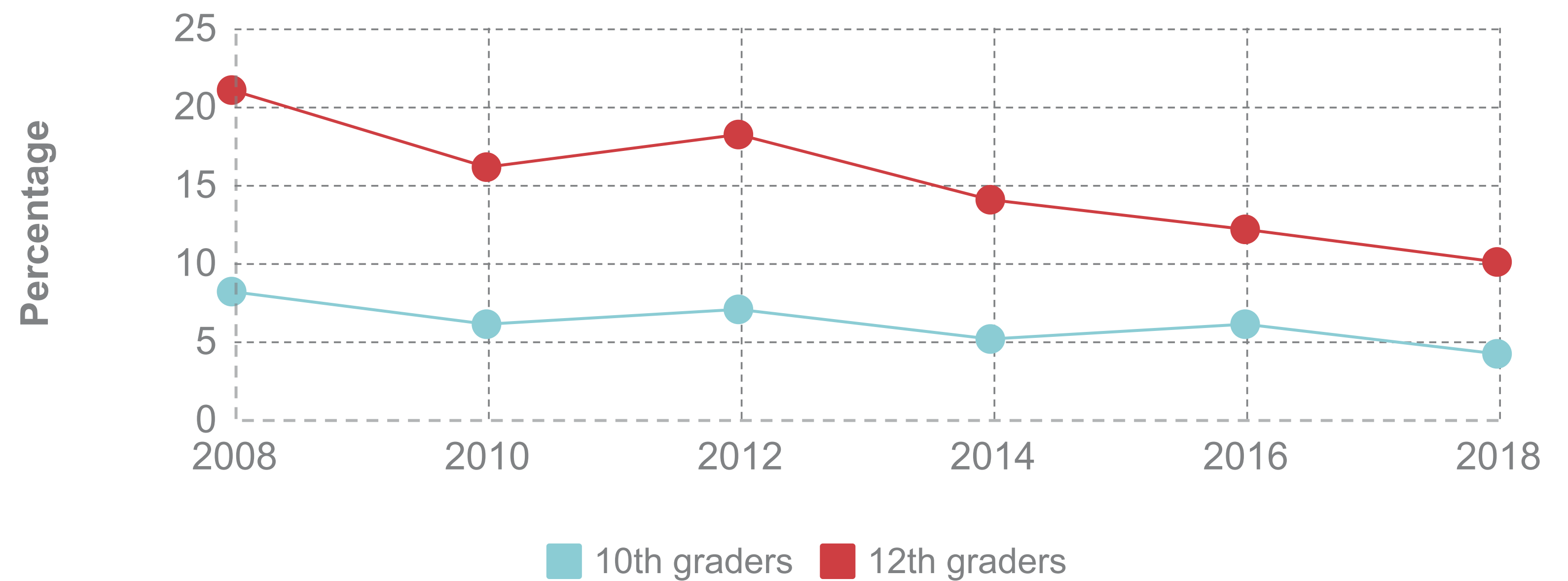
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## Drinking and Driving

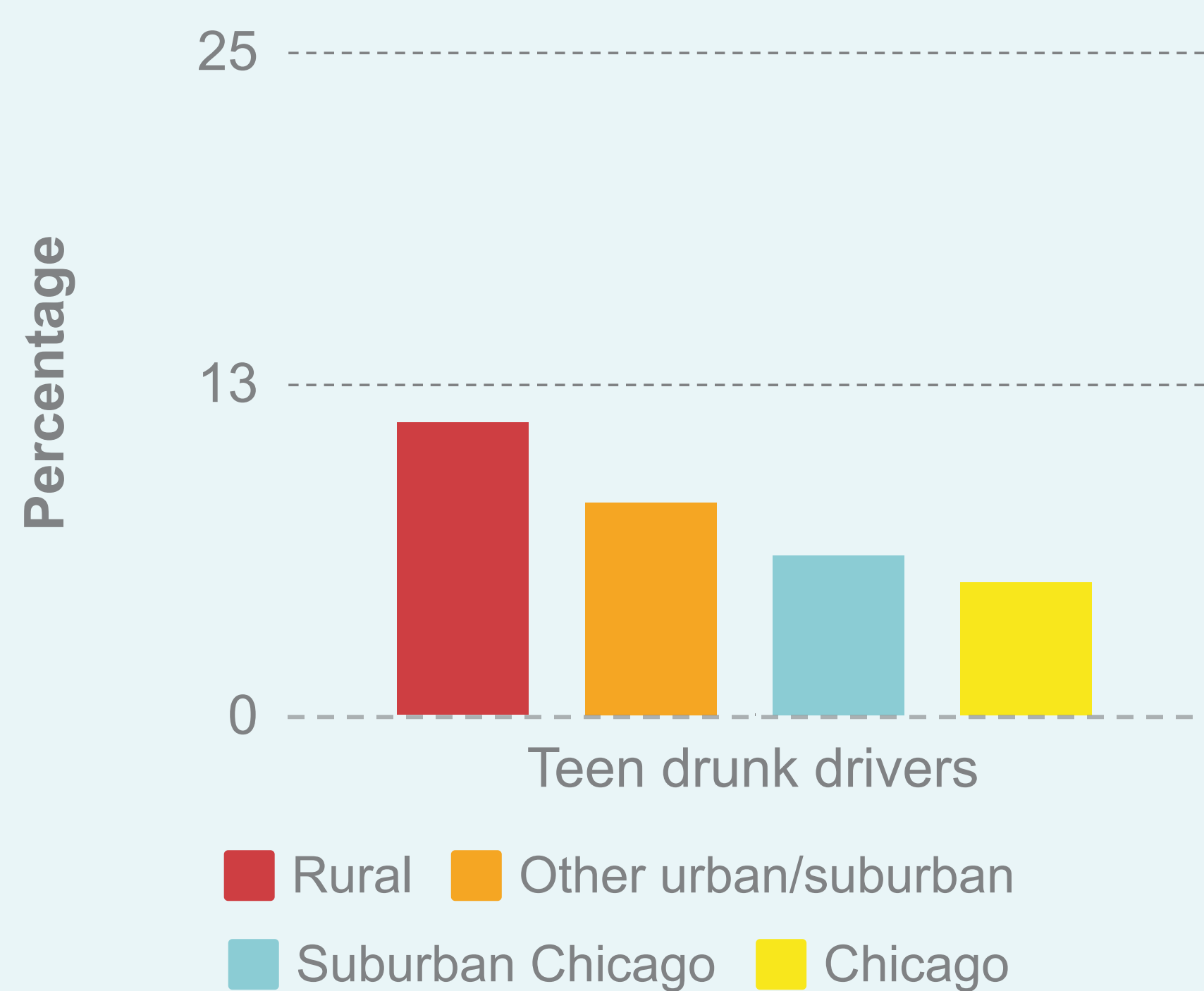
### Teens who Reported Drinking and Driving



Drinking and Driving is the most deadly and pervasive consequence of alcohol use, as it can injure or kill not only those responsible but others in the car and innocent drivers as well. In Illinois, teen rates of drinking and driving has declined over the last decade, with only 6% of high school students reporting to have driven drunk in the past year. However, a more significant number of teens reported being in a car with an intoxicated driver. In 2018, over a quarter of high school seniors reported riding with a drunk driver (including themselves). This means that **one in four high school seniors is at direct risk of drunk driving accidents.**



### Closer Look: Rural Communities



Rates of Drinking and Driving in Illinois vary significantly by region. Chicago claims the lowest rate of teen drunk driving at 5%, while rural areas show the highest rates, at 11%. This may be due to the fact that alternative modes of transportation are much more available in cities like Chicago, and teen drinkers in rural areas may be more likely to drive long distances to access alcohol.

### Other Direct Consequences

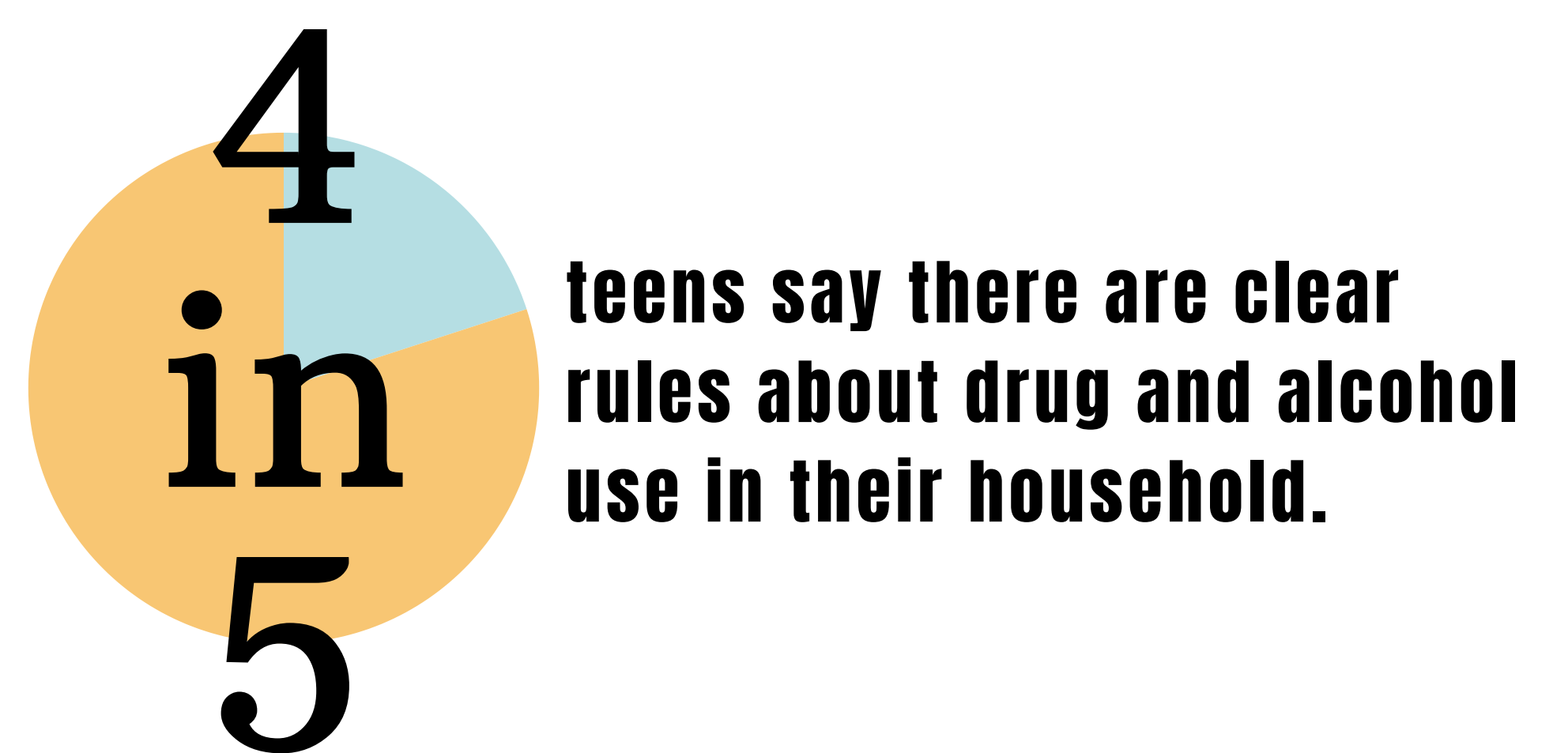
Other immediate consequences of teen alcohol use in Illinois for 2018 were relatively insignificant and only reported by small percentages of teens. The most significant statistic showed that 9% of high school seniors reported getting into an argument or fight while using alcohol during the past year.



## Parent Actions in Youth Alcohol Use

### How Can Parents Make a Difference?

Parents can affect their teens' alcohol use both positively and negatively. Some parents may choose to have lax rules or even provide alcohol to their teens, while others enforce clear rules and choose to educate their teens on the risks and facts about using alcohol underage. However, more and more parents are choosing to have responsible conversations with their teens about using alcohol, including the dangers that come with driving under the influence.

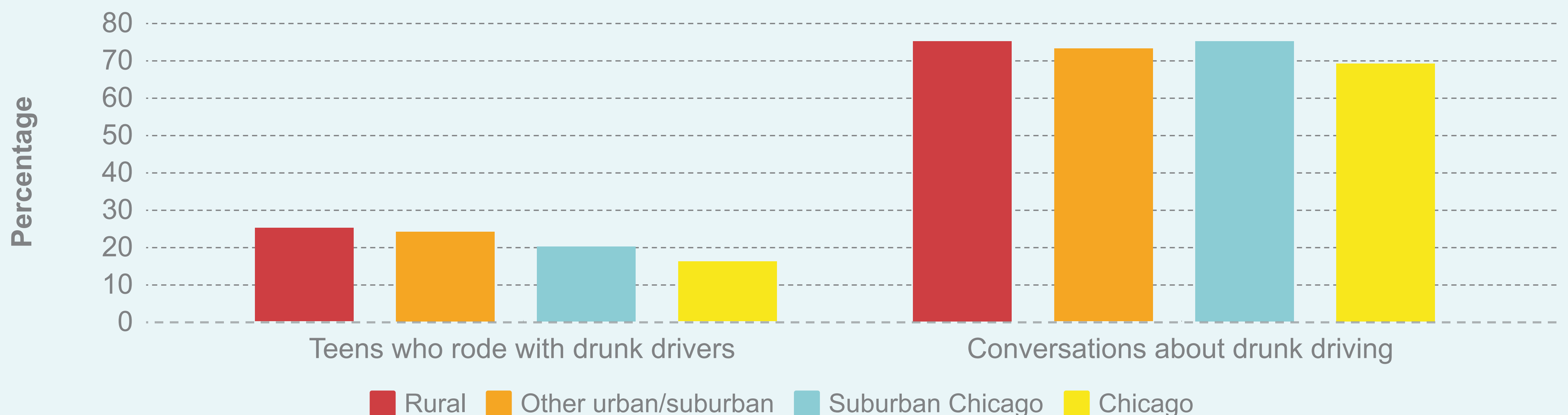


While this trend is positive, there is always room for improvement. Despite these promising statistics, only about half of teens reported that their parents talked with them about not using alcohol in the past year. Having conversations with your teens can help to reaffirm household attitudes against drinking. Additionally, it is important to remember that while some parents may choose to allow their teens to use alcohol in a "safe" environment at home, it is illegal for any adults to provide alcohol to minors in Illinois.



### Closer Look: Drunk Driving by Region

#### Parent Influence in Drunk Driving



While the number of students who reported having conversations with their parents about driving drunk was lowest in Chicago and highest in rural areas, those who reported riding with drunk drivers was highest in rural areas and lowest in Chicago. This is most likely related to the lack of alternative modes of transport in rural areas. Unfortunately, parents cannot solve the problems of teen alcohol use alone - but every conversation helps. Furthermore, while drinking underage should not be condoned, it is always safer for students to feel they can call their parents than to try and drive home if they have been drinking, or to ride with a drunk driver.



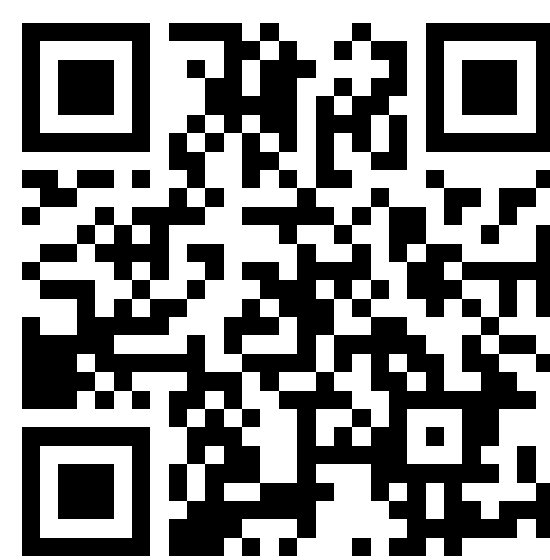


## To Sum Up: Takeaways for Youth and Alcohol Use in Illinois

- While youth alcohol use in Illinois is declining, it is still higher than national trends across all grades surveyed.
- Drink preferences may vary demographically, but liquor is the number one choice for teen drinkers.
- Teens perceive alcohol as easy to obtain, and are able to get it from a variety of sources including friends, parties, and parents.
- Alcohol is used primarily for social reasons among youth.
- Most teens overestimate the number of their classmates who are using alcohol.
- The number of teens who reported driving drunk in the past year has continued to decline, however, over 25% of high school seniors have been in a car with a drunk driver in the past year.
- Parents can help by setting rules and educating their teens on the facts about underage alcohol use.

## Illinois State Report

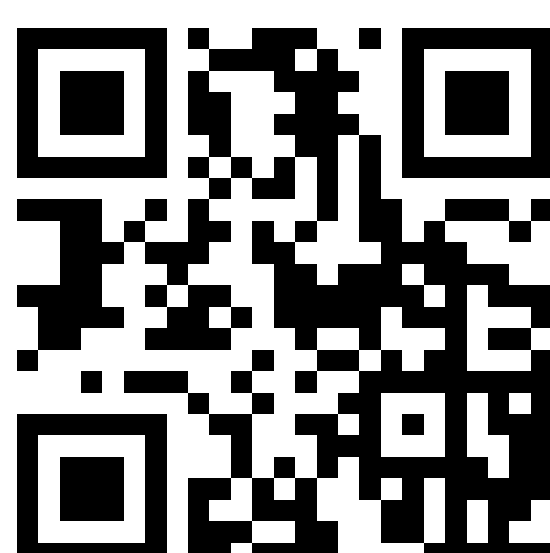
This report provides an overview of Illinois Youth Survey data relevant to teen alcohol use. If you are interested in the full data for alcohol use and other teen behaviors, please refer to the Illinois State Report.



<https://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/results/state>

## Illinois Youth Survey

To find out more information about Illinois Youth Survey, to see if your school participated, or to access your County report, please follow our QR code:



<https://iys.cprd.illinois.edu/>



## Now What?

It's a great time to open a dialogue with youth in your life regarding these issues. To learn more about the risks of alcohol use for youth and tips for having that discussion, visit the resources below.

DrugFree:  
How to  
Address  
Underage  
Drinking:



<https://drugfree.org/article/how-to-address-underage-drinking/>

APRC:  
Social Host  
Fast Facts



<https://www.prevention.org/Resources/5ae402c8-6753-4d65-adcb-13eccd4fc1da/APCSocialHost.pdf>

Prevention First:  
Underage  
Drinking  
Infographic



<https://www.prevention.org/Virtual-Clearinghouse/Underage-Drinking-Infographic/>

## Center for Prevention Research and Development

As part of the School of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, CPRD concentrates its efforts in the areas of school reform and after-school evaluation, health and human service reform, and prevention science.

