



Alcohol Use Among Adults in Rhode Island, 2016-2020

JULY
2022

Introduction

Alcohol is one of the most commonly used substances in the US. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), excessive alcohol use is linked to serious health and social consequences and is a leading preventable cause of death. Excessive alcohol use includes binge drinking, heavy drinking, and alcohol use by pregnant women or anyone younger than 21.

This data brief highlights alcohol use trends among Rhode Island adults, age 18 years and older, using combined data from the [2016-2020 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey](#).

What is Binge Drinking?¹

Consuming, in a single occasion:



5+ drinks for males



4+ drinks for females

Preventing Excessive Drinking

According to the [2020-2025 US Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), adults can choose not to drink or to drink in moderation by limiting daily intake to:



2 drinks for males in a day



1 drink for females in a day

Drinking more than these amounts increases risk of negative health and social consequences. The *Guidelines* do not recommend that people who do not drink alcohol start drinking for any reason and drinking less is better for health.¹

The Community Preventive Services Task Force recommends several effective alcohol policies for reducing excessive drinking, including **regulating alcohol outlet density** or **increasing alcohol taxes**. For more information, please visit the [CDC's website](#) on preventing excessive alcohol use.

Excessive Alcohol Use Increases Risk of:¹

- Alcohol poisoning
- Alcohol use disorder
- Anxiety or depression
- Certain cancers (e.g., mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, colon, and others)
- High blood pressure, heart disease, or stroke
- Injuries
- Learning and memory problems
- Liver disease
- Social problems
- Violence

17th In 2020, Rhode Island Ranked



as the highest consumer of ethanol (alcohol). Drinking 2.71 gallons of ethanol per capita, higher than the U.S. average of 2.45 gallons of ethanol per capita.²

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Alcohol Use and Your Health. Learn the facts.* Published December 29, 2021. Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm>

² National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2022). *Surveillance Reports: #119 Apparent Per Capital Alcohol Consumption: National, State, and Regional Trends, 1977-2020.* <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/surveillance119/surveillance-report119.pdf>





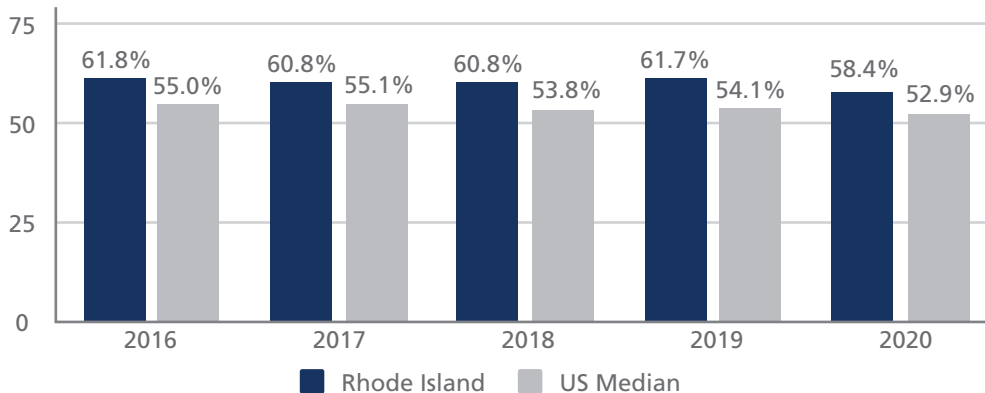
RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF *continued*

Data Highlights

Rhode Island adults consistently reported drinking any alcohol in the past 30 days more often than the median US adult, ranging from 5.5% to 7% higher, depending on the year.



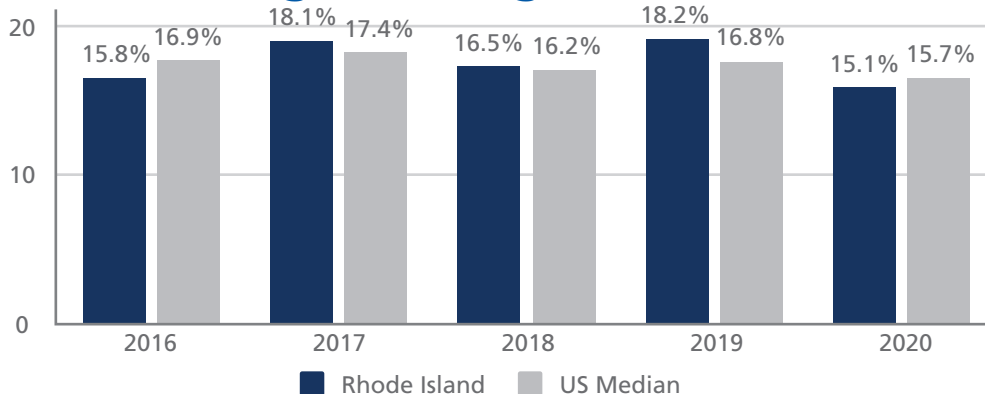
Alcohol Use Prevalence



The percentage of Rhode Island adults who binge drink changed by year, with some years being higher than the US median and other years being lower.



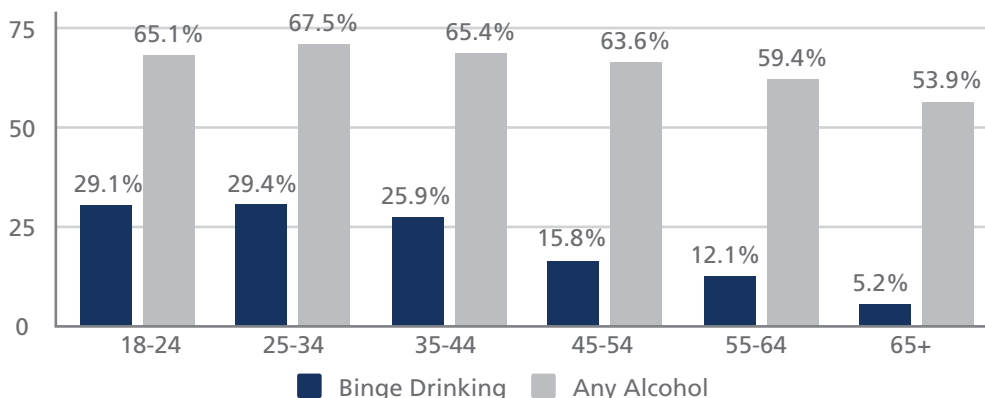
Binge Drinking Prevalence



Overall, binge drinking is most common among Rhode Island adults age 18-34 (about 30% reporting binge drinking in the past 30 days), then rates decrease among adults age 35 and older.

The percentage of Rhode Island adults who reported consuming at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days was highest among adults age 18-54, then declines among those age 55 and older.

Alcohol Use Across the Life Course Among Rhode Island Adults

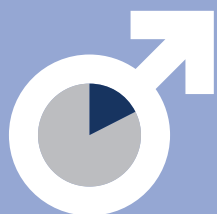




RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF *continued*

Data Highlights

66.2% of Rhode Island adults who identified as male reported drinking any alcohol in the past month, compared to 56.9% of Rhode Island adults who identified as female. Additionally, Rhode Island adults who identified as male reported binge drinking at nearly twice the rate of Rhode Island adults who identified as female.



17.5%

of Rhode Islanders who identify as male reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.

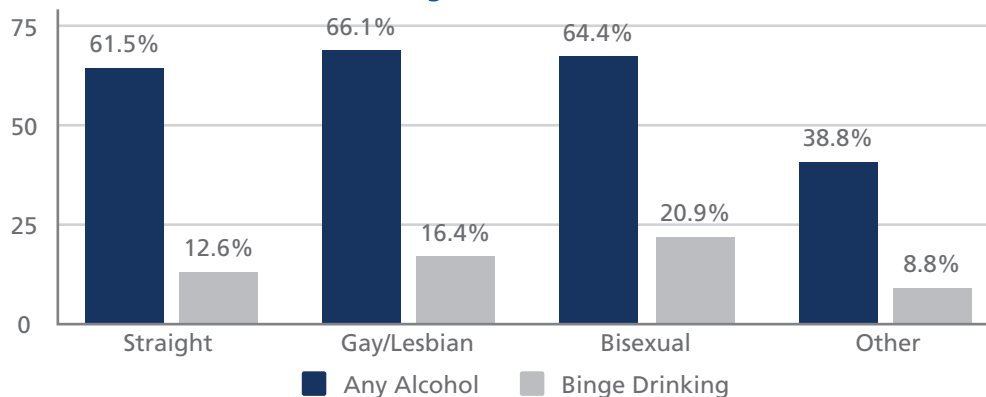


9.4%

of Rhode Islanders who identify as female reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.

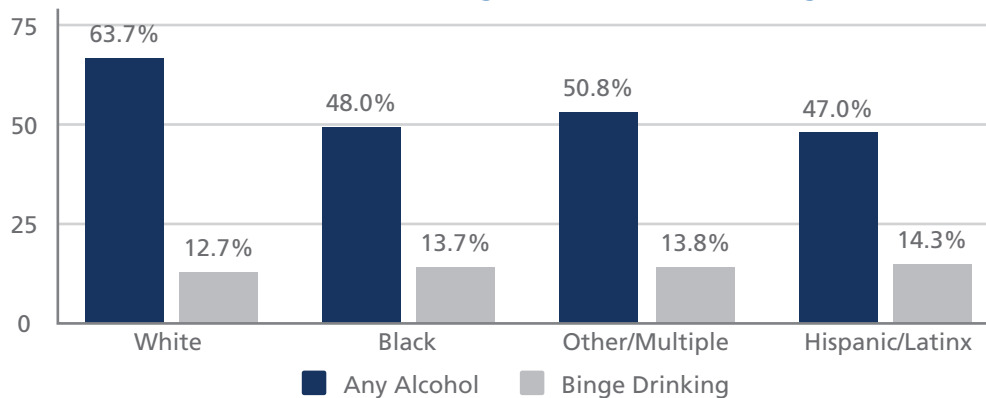
Drinking alcohol differed by sexual orientation among Rhode Island adults. Drinking any alcohol was most common among Rhode Islanders who identified as gay or lesbian (66.1%) or bisexual (64.4%) compared to those who identified as straight or heterosexual (61.5%). Binge drinking was also most common among self-identified bisexual (20.9%) and gay or lesbian (16.4%) compared to self-identified straight or heterosexual people (12.6%).

Alcohol Use by Sexual Orientation



63.7% of Rhode Island adults who identified as non-Hispanic white reported drinking any alcohol in the past 30 days, compared to about 50% of Rhode Island adults who identified as non-Hispanic Black, non-Hispanic other/multiple races, and Hispanic/Latinx. Rates of binge drinking were slightly higher among Rhode Islanders who identified as non-Hispanic Black (13.7%), non-Hispanic other/multiple races (13.8%), and Hispanic/Latinx (14.3%).

Alcohol Use by Race/Ethnicity





RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF *continued*

Data Highlights

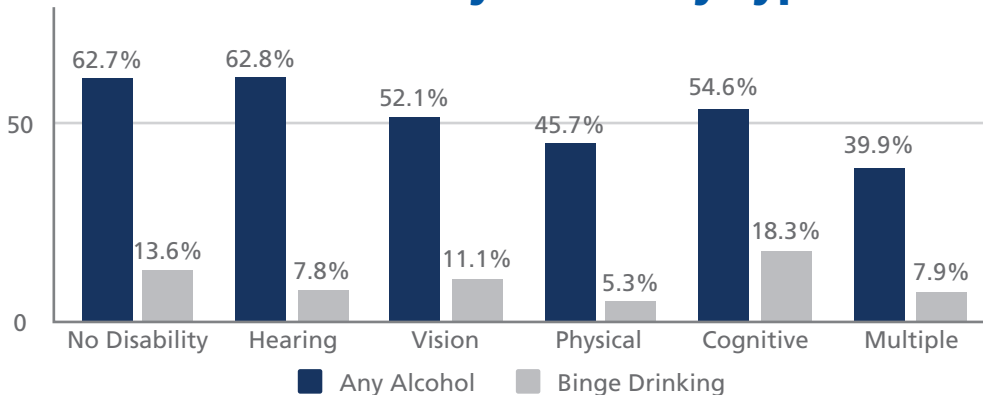
Rhode Island adults without a disability (62.7%) and adults with a hearing disability (62.8%) reported any alcohol consumption in the past 30 days more often compared to adults with cognitive (54.6%), vision (52.1%), or physical (45.7%) disabilities.

Rhode Island adults with a cognitive disability had higher rates of binge drinking (18.3%) compared to those without disabilities (13.6%) and compared to Rhode Island adults with a vision (11.1%), multiple (7.9%), hearing (7.8%), or physical (5.3%) disability.

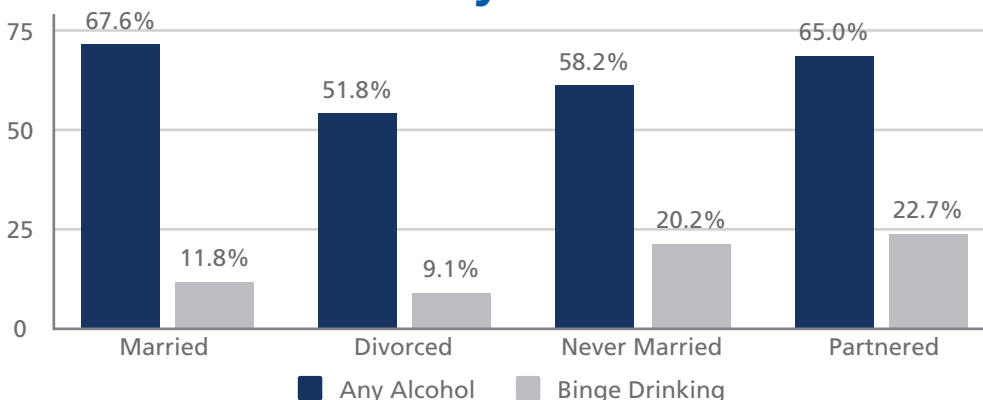
Any alcohol use was more common among married or partnered Rhode Islanders and less common among divorced Rhode Islanders. People who reported being in an unmarried partnership most commonly reported binge drinking.

Rhode Island adults who currently smoke cigarettes some days (24.3%) or every day (22.9%) reported binge drinking at twice the rate of Rhode Islanders who formerly (12.9%) or never smoked (10.5%). Rhode Island adults who reported smoking cigarettes every day reported drinking alcohol less often (55.1%) than those who currently smoke some days (64.3%), formerly (63.0%), or never smoked (60.5%).

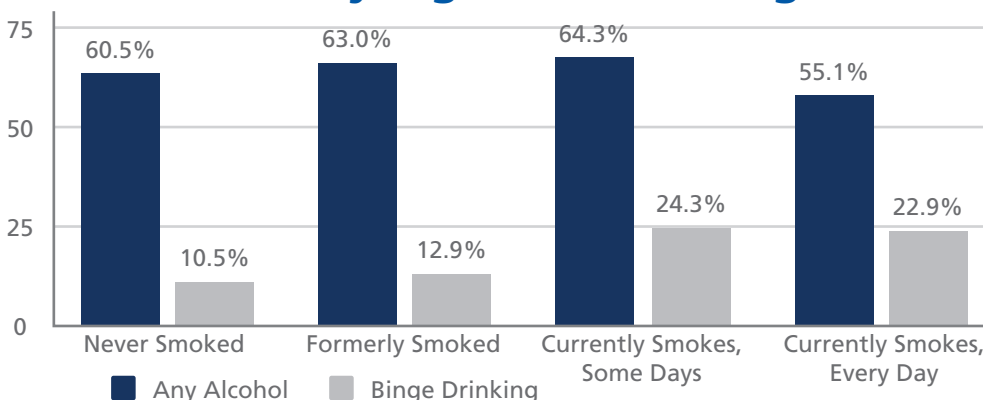
Alcohol Use by Disability Type



Alcohol Use by Marital Status



Alcohol Use by Cigarette Smoking Status



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More Rhode Island Department of Health Substance Use Data: https://health.ri.gov/programs/detail.php?pgm_id=156693