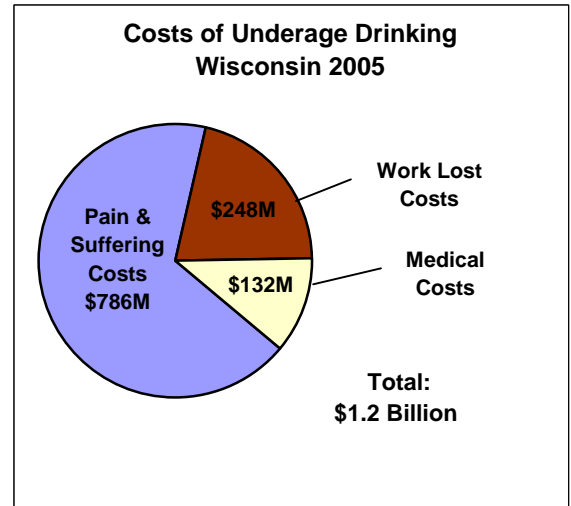


## Underage Drinking in Eau Claire County – *The Costs*

Tragic health, social, and economic problems result from the use of alcohol by youth. Youth alcohol use and abuse is associated with a host of problems, such as suicide, homicide, accidental injury, drowning, violence, sexual assault, high risk sex, teen pregnancy, fetal alcohol syndrome, alcohol poisoning, crime, lowered academic performance, lowered productivity and need for treatment for alcohol abuse and dependence.

**Underage drinking cost the citizens of Eau Claire County \$26.4 million in 2005.**

Underage drinking cost Wisconsin \$1.2 billion. These costs include medical care, work loss (youth and/or their parents), and pain and suffering associated with the multiple problems resulting from the use of alcohol by youth.<sup>1</sup> This translates to a cost of \$2048 per year for each youth in the State.



### Costs of Underage Drinking by Problem, Wisconsin 2005

Problem	Total Costs (in millions)
Youth Violence (including sexual assault)	\$ 570.8
Youth Traffic Crashes	\$ 302.2
High-Risk Sex (including teen pregnancy)	\$ 113.4
Youth Property Crime	\$ 41.7
Youth Injury	\$ 59.7
Poisonings and Psychoses	\$ 12.5
FAS Among Mothers Age 15-20	\$ 17.8
Youth Alcohol Treatment	\$ 46.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,164.9</b>

Youth violence and traffic crashes attributable to alcohol use by underage youth represent the largest costs for the State.

30% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders in Eau Claire County report having driven a car after or while drinking alcohol.<sup>2</sup> 46.2% of our 12<sup>th</sup> grade students report monthly alcohol use.<sup>2</sup>

As Eau Claire County students get older, more students (80%) perceive alcohol as easier to get and fewer (50%) perceive alcohol as harmful – indicating a favorable attitude toward youth alcohol use.<sup>2</sup>

In 2004, 1,409 youth 12-20 years old were admitted for alcohol treatment in Wisconsin, accounting for 8% of all treatment admissions for alcohol abuse in the State.<sup>3</sup> It is estimated that 1,985 young people of our 15,342 12-20 year olds in Eau Claire County have a serious alcohol problem and 85% do not receive treatment.<sup>4</sup>

Produced by the Consortium for Substance Abuse Prevention in Eau Claire County's Reality Check 21 Project 03/07. Information provided by the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). Questions? Call 839-5091.

<sup>1</sup> Miller, TR, Levy, DT, Spicer, RS, & Taylor, DM (2006). Societal costs of underage drinking. Journal of Studies on Alcohol 67(4) 519-528  
<sup>2</sup> PRIDE (Parent's Resource Institute for Drug Education) Questionnaire Report for Eau Claire County Schools, 2004/2005  
<sup>3</sup> Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) (2004)  
<sup>4</sup> Estimates generated by "The Alcohol Cost Calculator for Kids" based on the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) and the National Comorbidity Survey (NCS) [www.alcoholcostcalculator.org/kids](http://www.alcoholcostcalculator.org/kids)