

Navajo County Drug Project

Navajo County Coalition Against Drug Abuse

A Coalition of Concerned Navajo County Residents Joined Together to:

- EDUCATE the Community on the substance abuse crisis
- REHABILITATE those who have fallen into the addiction
- ENFORCE laws pertaining to the spread of substance abuse in our communities



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Teen Drinkers Suffer Nerve Damage to Brain

California researchers who compared the brains of teen drinkers to non-drinkers found that young alcohol users suffered damage to nerve tissues that could cause attention deficits among boys and faulty visual information processing among girls.

Researcher Susan Tapert of the University of California at San Diego and colleagues studied the brains of 12- to 14-year-olds, starting before they began drinking and following them as some began using alcohol. Researchers found that those who binged on alcohol did worse on thinking and memory tests, but that the impairment differed by gender.



Adolescents, whose brains are still developing, are at particular risk from brain damage resulting from alcohol use, the researchers concluded. Taper's research showed that teen drinking negatively affected both the white matter (nerve tissue) and hippocampus region of the brain.

It was further noted that heavy drinking during the critical developmental period of adolescence might lead to direct and indirect changes with effects that extend into adulthood.

The study appears in the December 2009 issue of the journal *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*. For more information on the dangers of underage drinking, go to www.navajocountydrugproject.com

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Mission Statement:

To develop a diverse community representation, coordinate a sustained effort in educating and preventing the substance abuse through a plan for change in local social norms through prevention, treatment and vigorous enforcement of existing laws.