



# WORKBOOK



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **MICHIGAN MIP** court program on underage drinking in Michigan. It is unfortunate you find yourself in this situation today but now it is very important for you to learn how to avoid a repeat of this problem. The new laws in Michigan are very tough and some even consider them unfair. They were enacted, however, because they save lives ... and when young people **know** these laws, they simply **act** differently. The video and workbook are designed to provide straight talk, without exaggeration or hype, about Michigan's new laws and your risks in drinking alcohol before age 21. You will review not only laws and penalties but social and health aspects of underage drinking and why drinking is such a big risk for under 21's.

Most people who complete this course say they wish they had learned this information earlier. Many feel they could have avoided the problems they now face.

There are five sections in the workbook and the video data follows the workbook. There are four review sections, with true/false questions in the workbook to help you prepare for the **final examination** which is **attached to the end of your workbook**. The final exam is designed to be passed only by those people who have viewed the video and read the workbook. **You are advised to read the materials, answer all the review questions and watch the whole video before trying the examination.**



## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Research and studies about alcohol are popular today but when looking specifically for studies about under 21's, there is not a lot of data. After about 2001, significant new data has emerged however, which is quite critical for those people 13 through 20 years of age:

POINT ONE: Alcohol use, even two times weekly, begins to replace a natural chemical in the brain. When we replace that chemical in the brain with any regularity, the person may become dependent on the alcohol very quickly. Scientists used to believe that the brain was fully developed to an adult at age 18 to 20. Now we know it's not completely developed until 21 years of age. The under 21 brain, even at age 20, is quite vulnerable and may be easily changed by alcohol. Drinkers begin to crave alcohol to replace that chemical in the brain and they use more regularly and they have cravings, they have urges, and we are building an addict very often in their teenage years. That addiction can be quite irreversible. It could be there for a lifetime. And, the **earlier one drinks, the higher the risks.**

POINT TWO: We also know that if a person uses (alcohol) before age 21, they are at significantly high risk of developing alcoholism later in their life. A person at 21 is about 9% likely to develop alcoholism and a person (using) at age 15 can reach 50% likelihood of alcoholism in their 40's or 50's. We don't want that! Again, the earlier you use, the higher your risk for alcoholism later in life.

POINT THREE: If you have problem drinkers in your family ... parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts ... you are at particularly high risk for developing an alcohol problem. Even if you tell yourself, "I'll never drink like my old man," or, "I'll never drink like my father," you're called a **sitting duck**. You are at high risk and you are very likely to develop alcoholism and drink the way they did.

## So what's our three points?

- **Point One:** Drinking alcohol, regularly (twice weekly) at an early age can replace a chemical in the brain and builds a dependence that you do not have control over. Willpower has nothing to do with it after that.
- **Point Two:** The earlier or younger you use, the better your likelihood of alcoholism later in life. Wait as long as you can to use alcohol.
- **Point Three:** If you have a parent, grandparent, uncle, aunt, etc., with an alcohol problem, you are at particularly high risk for developing one yourself no matter what you tell yourself.

Now, answer the following five questions, checking the above section data afterwards to see if you were correct.

---

### REVIEW: SECTION I

#### Introduction

---

- |        |   |   |   |
|--------|---|---|---|
| I - 1. | The replacement of brain chemicals by alcohol in the under 21 could cause a 50% risk of alcoholism later in life.                                       | T | F |
| I - 2. | Twice weekly use of alcohol by a teen is simply not frequent enough to lead to an adult alcohol problem.  | T | F |
| I - 3. | Although frequent teen drinking replaces a brain chemical, the young brain is so healthy that there's nothing really to worry about in the long run.    | T | F |
| I - 4. | Although the young drinker's brain may actually be modified by early alcohol use, strong "willpower", not drinking anymore, can always fix the problem. | T | F |
| I - 5. | Simply because your father or uncle or aunt had an alcohol abuse problem, that doesn't mean you necessarily have a higher chance of an alcohol problem. | T | F |

## SECTION II : THE SEVEN PREDICTIVE FACTORS

There are seven predictive factors that are extremely significant in the development of alcoholism. If you display even one of these factors it could mean you are in danger of fighting a lifelong battle against alcohol. Now some of these factors you may have no control over. But others can be taken control of and modified. The important thing here is that you be aware of the risk factors so that you can plan to change your behavior and your attitude toward alcohol before it's too late.

### **FACTOR ONE:**

The first predictive factor is the regular consumption of alcohol. If you are drinking only small amounts of alcohol ... even twice-a-week ... you are considered to be regularly consuming alcohol.

This type of behavior greatly increases your chances of alcoholism. For instance, studies show that a 15 year old male (regularly consuming alcohol) approaches a 50% chance of lifelong alcoholism later in life. This is because brain synapses are not fully developed until you reach the age of 21-23. Early consumption replaces chemicals in the brain that would have otherwise been produced naturally. Later in life, the brain will fail to accommodate the chemical changes from adolescent alcohol use and will begin to crave the substitution of more and more alcohol.

### **FACTOR TWO:**

The second predictive factor deals with your family's history of alcohol.

Though it has not been genetically proven, every study has shown that your risk of alcoholism is elevated if your family has a history of drinking.

If a parent, grandparent, brother or sister, even an aunt or uncle, have had problems with alcohol, your personal chances of developing a problem are significantly increased.

### **FACTOR THREE:**

Factor three is the development of an increased tolerance to alcohol. You have probably heard someone bragging about how many they can put down. These are the people who need more and more alcohol to achieve the same effect or "buzz" that they are accustomed to.

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. That is a depressant that affects the central nervous system and tolerance can be developed very quickly. Nobody starts with large amounts. They gradually increase consumption. These people need, for instance, four, five, even ten beers, to feel the same effect than a more casual drinker can feel with only one or two. Tolerance to alcohol is easier to increase in adolescence because you're physically in the best shape of your life while your brain is still forming and trying to, "keep up." An **increased tolerance** means you have **changed your brain chemistry** and not for the better. Replacing natural brain chemicals early in life can eventually **replace them completely** and you may become dependent upon alcohol, in the absence of these natural chemicals, **for a lifetime**. This could happen quite quickly.

#### **FACTOR FOUR:**

Factor number four is probably the reason you're in this program right now.

Factor four is simply trouble with the law. This is especially true if you've had two offenses, such as two minor-in-possession charges, truancy problems, or family disputes.

One time offenses or violations can occasionally be accredited to a case of poor judgment. But if you've come to the attention of authorities twice before age 21, you probably have developed an unhealthy bond with alcohol.

#### **FACTOR FIVE:**

Factor number five falls directly on you. It is your personal relationship with drinking. Focusing or talking about your ability to drink, or joking about your experiences with alcohol is a sign that you have formed a fairly close **personal relationship** with alcohol.

Bragging about your ability to drink is a dangerous sign. These are the people who seem almost proud of being the drunken one. Whether it is to magnify their self-worth or to increase their popularity among other underage drinkers, it's an unhealthy attitude towards drinking and it signifies an increased chance of problems later in life. The **selection of one's friendships** plays a **major role** in the way one learns to drink or not drink alcohol.

#### **FACTOR SIX:**

The sixth factor is a good indicator that you have already displayed some sign of factor five. It is when people start identifying your personality with alcohol.

If you have already established a reputation among your friends based on your drinking, you're very likely to develop a very serious drinking problem. It may help to make a list of five things that you think your **friends associate you with**. See if drinking is anywhere on that list. If drinking is **who you are** and **what you do** in your friend's opinion, you are at **high risk**.

### **FACTOR SEVEN:**

The seventh and final factor is that you have begun to replace other activities with drinking. Alcohol typically and predictably replaces earlier and healthier friendships and activities with itself. The chemical "payoffs" of earlier activities and fun is no match for the powerful brain changes which alcohol causes and that alcohol simply and quickly begins to feel better than the earlier, enjoyable activities and friendships.

As your drinking forces your brain to try to replace natural brain chemicals, the synapses begin to change and you'll find that drinking will compete with whatever used to be some of your favorite things to do. If you have ever skipped working-out, called into work, missed a sports practice, changed to heavier drinking friends, or left any project unfinished to **make plans** for drinking, or as a **result** of drinking, you could be headed for a lifelong battle with alcohol.

Now, answer the following five questions, checking the section data afterwards, to see if you were correct.

---

### REVIEW: SECTION II

#### The Seven Factors

---

- |         |  |   |   |
|---------|--|---|---|
| II - 1. | Building a tolerance means you have actually changed your brain's natural chemistry.   | T | F |
| II - 2. | As one builds a tolerance to alcohol, earlier activities, meaningful or enjoyable at one time, and friendships, very strong earlier, can be replaced by alcohol. | T | F |
| II - 3. | The choice of one's friends and associates plays a very small roll in the way one learns to drink alcohol.   | T | F |
| II - 4. | Two alcohol offenses before age 21 almost certainly means you have developed an unhealthy relationship with alcohol.   | T | F |
| II - 5. | A couple of beers, twice a week, is not really any different to the brain at age 17 than it would be at age 21.  | T | F |

### SECTION III: ALCOHOL: THE DRUG

Alcohol is a clear liquid, actually thinner than water and although it has no taste, it is a strong **irritant** that burns the tissues in the mouth and throat. It is **never digested** by people because it is already "digested" by the yeast plant that made it. It's **not a stimulant** at all but a powerful central nervous system **depressant**. However, as it depresses our inhibitions and social controls, we feel some stimulation to talk too much, show anger, say uncharacteristic things, etc. Eventually, like all **sedatives**, it puts us to sleep.

Whether the drink is rum, gin, wine, whiskey, or beer, the alcohol is all identical. All ethyl alcohol (ethanol), the kind we drink, is the exact same drug. Generally, women metabolize (get rid of) alcohol at a **slower rate than do men** and also, it can take them considerably longer to get rid of a drink because they're generally smaller. Smaller people in general reach much higher blood alcohol levels for the same amount of drinks. People weighing 150 pounds, drinking about two drinks an hour, can easily surpass the legally impaired level in slightly over **two hours** or **three to four drinks**. Some will reach that level **much faster**. Smaller persons, drinking about two drinks per hour, can be legally impaired in only **one hour**, after **less than two drinks**.

Metabolic rates vary dramatically and even healthy, young people, over 21, can get rid of alcohol very slowly, allowing it to build in their bloodstream to illegal levels within very short periods.

If you choose to drink after age 21, it is important to never drink a number of drinks which could produce an illegal blood alcohol level. Regardless of your metabolic rates or the times you wait, you seldom really know how fast you actually get rid of the drug.

And remember, above all considerations, **any** alcohol in your system, **any detectable alcohol at all**, if you're under 21, is **illegal!** For many people, that's only a few **sips of beer!**

One drink of alcohol is the equivalent of one 12 ounce regular beer (not an ice beer or malt liquor, they're stronger), one shot of liquor, one glass of wine, one wine cooler or one novelty drink (Zima, hard lemonade, ciders, etc.). Some prepared drinks, like Long Island Ice Tea or martinis, are much higher in alcohol, most containing the alcohol equivalent of **three drinks!**

One drink, for a person over 150 pounds, provides a blood alcohol level of about .020%. The average person metabolizes, or gets rid of one drink in about **one and a half hours** (1 1/2 hours). Only **through the liver** do we get rid of nearly all the alcohol we drink, **not** through breathing, urination or sweating.



A small person, one weighing about 110 pounds, can reach .040% from one **regular drink** and could take **two and a half hours** (2 1/2 hours) for their body to get rid of that **one drink**. Four drinks could actually take them **ten to twelve hours** to metabolize completely.

In summary, alcohol is a popular but powerful drug which comes in one standard dose (a 12 ounce beer, one shot of liquor, 4-5 ounces wine, etc.) for all sizes of people. This requires that all users monitor their alcohol intakes very carefully once they reach age 21, and that we never forget that **any alcohol whatsoever**, before age 21 is **illegal**. That means **NONE! ZIP! ZERO! ZILCH!**

## GET USED TO IT!

Now, answer the following ten questions, checking the data section afterwards, to see if you were correct.

---

### REVIEW: SECTION III

#### Alcohol: The Drug

---

- |           |   |   |   |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| III - 1.  | Most peoples' bodies get rid of one drink an hour.  | T | F |
| III - 2.  | Women generally metabolize, or get rid of, alcohol at a faster rate than do men.                  | T | F |
| III - 3.  | Gin, rum, whiskey, wine and beer all contain the same kind of alcohol.                            | T | F |
| III - 4.  | A smaller person will keep the same amount of drinks in their system longer than a larger person. | T | F |
| III - 5.  | Alcohol is a stimulant.   | T | F |
| III - 6.  | A 12-ounce beer has the same amount of alcohol as a 12 ounce wine.                                | T | F |
| III - 7.  | A person over 21, weighing 150 pounds, can reach legal impairment after less than four drinks.    | T | F |
| III - 8.  | A person over 21, weighing 100 pounds can reach legal impairment after less than two drinks.      | T | F |
| III - 9.  | The body gets rid of most alcohol through breathing.  | T | F |
| III - 10. | A person under age 21 is legally permitted <b>one drink</b> in their system.                      | T | F |

We hope you have learned about Michigan's Under 21 drinking laws, the penalties associated with these laws, and facts about the drug called alcohol.

Remember, if you're under 21 in Michigan, even a day under 21, there's **NO alcohol permitted** in your vehicle, your body, or your possession.

**NONE! ZIP! ZERO! ZILCH! GET USED TO IT!**