

21 Reasons Portland Parent Survey, 2008 – Summary

21 Reasons commissioned Scientific Marketing & Analysis, a Maine-based independent vendor, to conduct a random phone survey of Portland parents regarding their thoughts and concerns about underage drinking. The baseline phone survey of 380 Portland parents was completed in February of 2006 and a follow-up phone survey of 385 Portland parents was completed in July of 2008 (precision of +5% at 95% confidence level). The survey was designed to help us measure the effectiveness of our community outreach and parent media campaign. The surveys were conducted in coordination with the statewide survey and campaign activities of the Maine Office of Substance Abuse.

Our objectives:

From 2006 to 2008, achieve a 20% increase in the percentage of parents who answer...

	2006 Baseline	2008 Follow-up	Percent Change
“NO” to the question, “Are there any circumstances under which you would allow your teen’s friends to drink in your home?”	72.1%	79.5%	10% increase (<i>Halfway toward target</i>)
Agree with the statement, “As a parent, I feel that I have the ability to influence my teen’s choices about alcohol”	39.5%	55.3%	40% increase (<i>TARGET EXCEEDED</i>)
“Strongly Disagree” with the statement, “My job isn’t to prevent them from drinking. Rather it’s to teach them to drink responsibly”	23.4%	53.8%	130% increase (<i>TARGET EXCEEDED</i>)

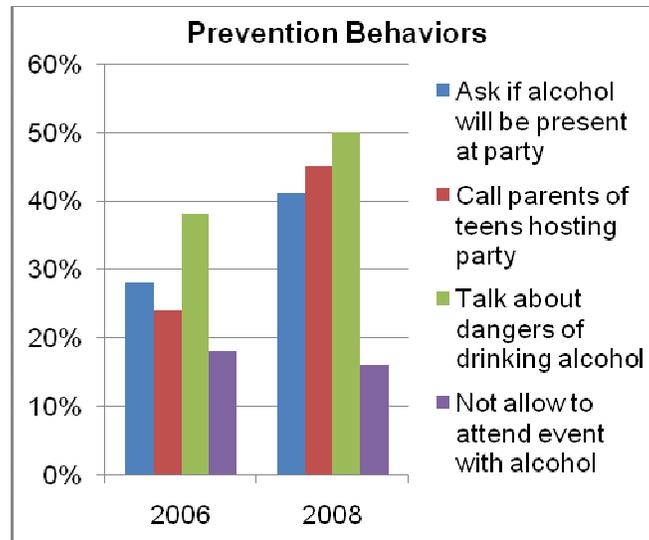
I. Prevention Behaviors

Portland parents surveyed in 2008 showed a dramatic increase in taking regular actions to prevent their teen from drinking alcohol.

In response to the question, “What actions, if any, do you regularly take to prevent your child from drinking alcohol?”:

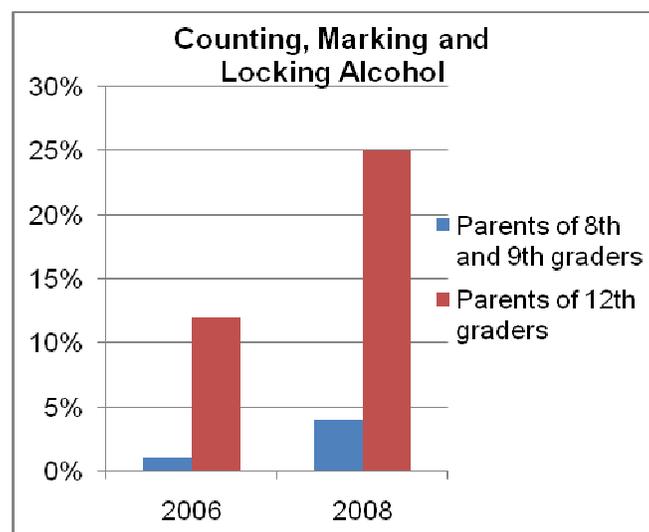
- 41% of parents in 2008 ask their teens if there is going to be alcohol at a party, up from 28% in 2006.
- 45 % of parents in 2008 call to see if parents will be at a party, up from 24% in 2006.

- 50% of parents in 2008 talk to their teens about the dangers of drinking alcohol, up from 38% in 2006.
- The number of parents who would not allow their teen to attend an event with alcohol did decrease slightly in 2008 to 16% of parents, down from 18% in 2006. *(Note: with survey precision at +5%, this change is not significant.)*
- 7% of parents in 2008 stated they “don’t know” what actions they take to prevent their teen from drinking alcohol, down from 20% in 2006.



In both 2006 and 2008, parents of older teens took more specific actions in the effort to prevent their teen from drinking alcohol in the home.

- 4% of parents of 8th and 9th graders and 25% of parents of 12th graders reported counting bottles of alcohol, marking alcohol bottles in any way or locking up liquor in 2008, up from 1% of parents of 8th and 9th graders and 12% of parents of 12th graders in 2006.



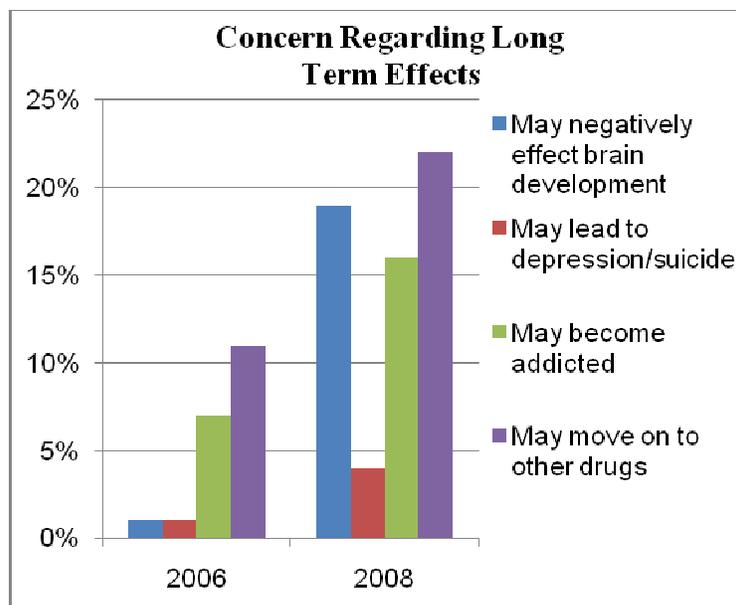
II. Policies Regarding Teen Alcohol Use

Most parents surveyed in 2006 and 2008 reported having a “zero tolerance” policy when it comes to their teen drinking alcohol.

- We saw a slight increase in the percentage of parents answering “no” to the question, “Is it ever okay for your teen to drink alcohol?” 76% of parents said “no” in 2008, up from 73% in 2006. 24% of parents said “yes” in 2008, down from 27% in 2006. (*Note: with survey precision at +-5%, this change is not significant.*)

Parents’ listed a variety of reasons for not wanting their teen to drink alcohol. The most notable changes from 2006 to 2008 were parental concerns regarding potential long term effects of teens drinking alcohol:

- **“It is illegal/My teen might get into trouble.”**
 - This was the most cited reason in both years. 51% of parents provided a version of this reason in 2008, down slightly from 58% in 2006.
- **“My teen is too young to drink.”**
 - 23% of parents cited this reason in 2008, down from 32% of parents in 2006.
- **“My teen might drink and drive.”**
 - 19% of parents in 2008 cited this reason, down from 32% in 2006.
- **“My teen might engage in unwanted or unprotected sexual behavior.”**
 - 16% of parents in 2008 cited this reason, up from 11% in 2006.
- **“My teen’s grades might slip or they might lose a scholarship opportunity”**
 - 10% of parents in 2008 and 9% of parents in 2006 cited this reason.
- **“My teen has a family history of alcoholism.”**
 - 2% of parents in 2008 cited this reason, down from 4% of parents in 2006.
- **“My teen’s brain development could be affected”**
 - 19% of parents in 2008, up from less than 1% in 2006, cited this reason.
- **“Drinking alcohol could lead to depression or suicide.”**
 - 4% of parents in 2008, up from less than 1% in 2006, cited this reason.
- **“My teen might drink to excess or become addicted.”**
 - 16% of parents in 2008, up from 7% in 2006, cited this reason.
- **“My teen might move on to other drugs.”**
 - 22% of parents in 2008, up from 11% in 2006, cited this reason.



In both 2006 and 2008, most parents who did allow their teen to drink alcohol did so under very limited or qualified circumstances.

Of the parents who allowed their teens to drink alcohol...

- In 2008, 14% allowed their teen to drink on the weekend in their home, down slightly from 17% in 2006.
- In 2008, 46% reported that they allowed their teen to drink at a “very special family occasion, such as a wedding,” up slightly from 41% in 2006.
- In 2008, 3% of parents reported that it would be okay for their teen to drink alcohol at a less formal family occasion or dinner, down substantially from 19% in 2006.
- The percentage of parents who would allow their teen to drink “on the weekend at someone else’s house” with no qualifiers¹ for that permission decreased 100%, from 5% in 2006 to none in 2008. (*Note: with survey precision at +/-5%, this is not significant.*)
- The number of parents who would allow their teen to drink alcohol “on the weekend at someone else’s house,” *with some qualifiers*, decreased dramatically from 29% in 2006 to 12% in 2008.
 - In both years, there were no parents of 8th or 9th graders who would allow their child to drink on the weekend at someone else’s house with some qualifiers. However, in 2006, the number of parents of students in 10th-12th grade who would allow this increased with the age of the teen. Conversely, in 2008, the trend among parents of 10th-12th graders reversed; the number of parents who would allow their teen to drink alcohol “on the weekend at someone else’s house, with

¹ Qualifiers are conditions that must be met in order for something to happen.

some qualifiers” was highest for 10th graders’ parents and lowest for 12th grader’s parents.

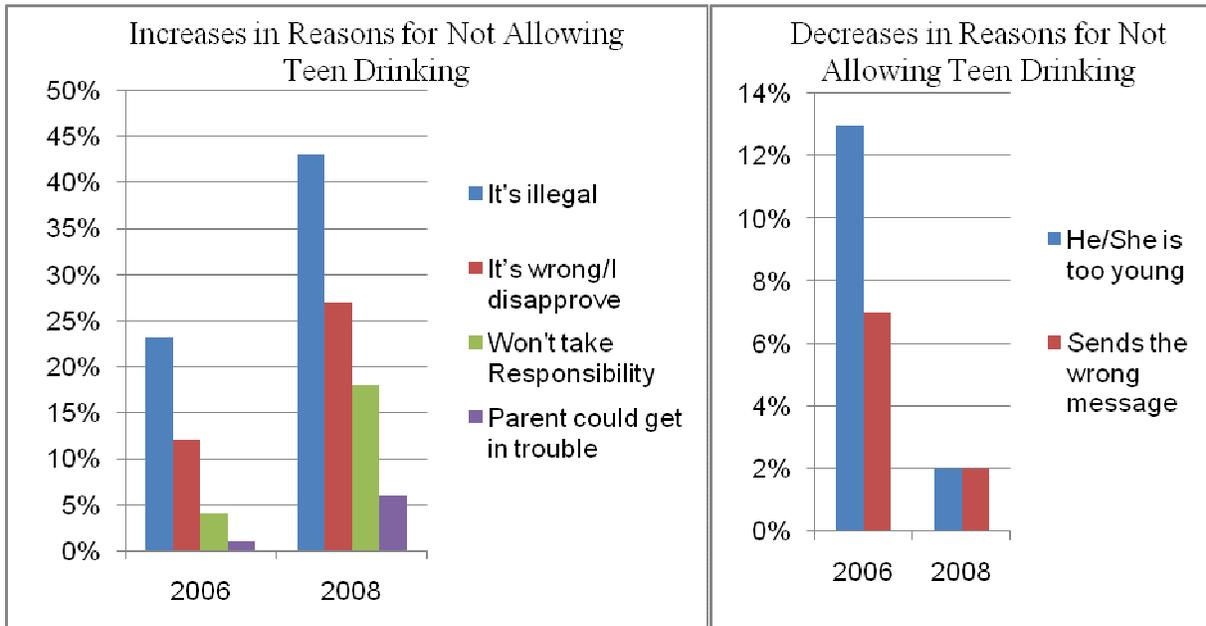
Responded “Weekend at someone else’s house, QUALIFIED” to the question, “Under what circumstances do you allow your teen to drink alcohol?”			
	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
2006 (n=102)	14%	36%	42%
2008 (n=92)	27%	19%	8%

- 10% of parents in 2008 said that they would allow their teen to drink at “any location or occasion” with some qualifiers, down from 21% of parents in 2006.
- Unfortunately, we did see an increase in the percentage of parents who said they would allow their teen to drink at “any location or occasion” with no qualifiers, from 0% in 2006 to 7% in 2008.

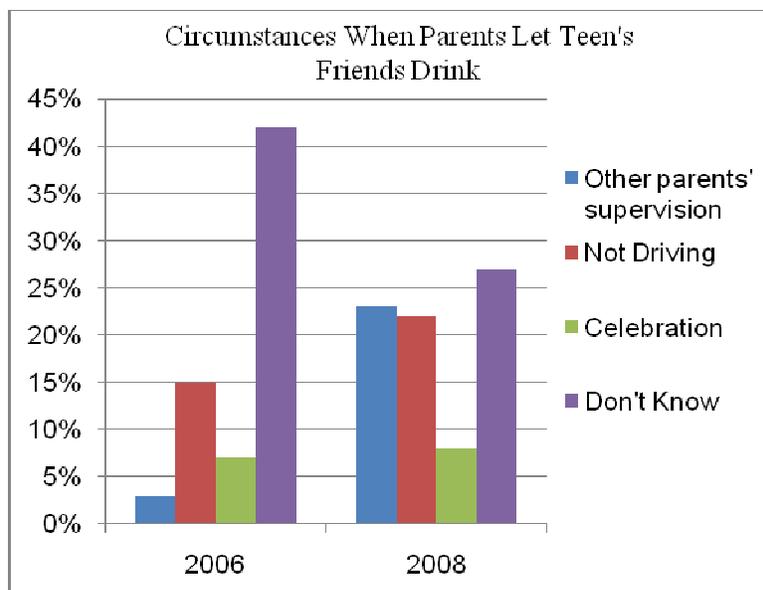
Most parents surveyed in 2006 and 2008 would not allow their teen’s friends to drink alcohol in their home. While those parents who would *not* allow their teen’s friends to drink in their home provided many reasons to explain their choice, those parents who *would* allow their teen’s friends to drink in their home were not as definitive in explaining under what circumstances they would allow it. In fact, the most common answer was “Don’t Know”.

- There was a slight increase in the percentage of parents who would *not* allow their teen’s friends to drink alcohol in their home, from 72% in 2006 to 79% in 2008. The change seems to be among parents who were undecided in 2006. When asked the question, “Are there any circumstances under which you would allow your teen’s friends to drink in your home?” 13% replied that they did not know in 2006, compared to 8% in 2008. Meanwhile, 15% said “yes” in 2006, compared to 13% in 2008.
 - Once again, the age of the teen was a distinguishing factor for how parents responded, with parents indicating “yes” in greater numbers for older teens.
- Of those parents who would *not* allow their teen’s friends to drink in their homes, there were many reasons indicated.
 - **“It’s illegal”** was a reason cited by 23% of parents in 2006. This number nearly doubled in 2008, to 43% of parents.
 - **“It’s wrong/I disapprove/not appropriate”** was cited by 12% of parents in 2006—and more than doubled to 27% of parents in 2008.
 - **“Won’t take responsibility/not responsible”** quadrupled from 4% of parents in 2006 to 18% of parents in 2008.

- **“As a parent I could get into trouble”** increased substantially from 1% of parents in 2006 to 6% of parents in 2008.
- **“He/She is too young”** decreased dramatically from 13% of parents in 2006 to 2% of parents in 2008.
- **“It sets a bad example/sends the wrong message”** dropped dramatically from 7% of parents in 2006 to 2% of parents in 2008.



- Of those parents who *would* allow their teen's friends to drink alcohol in their home the largest answer stated for circumstances under which they would allow it in both 2006 (42%) and 2008 (27%) was **“Don't Know/Unsure”**.
 - **“Only with other parents' supervision”** was cited by 23% of parents in 2008, up substantially from 3% in 2006.
 - **“Not driving/I have the keys”** was cited by 22% of parents in 2008, up from 15% in 2006.
 - **“At a celebration/event/gathering”** was cited by 8% of parents in 2008 and 7% of parents in 2006.



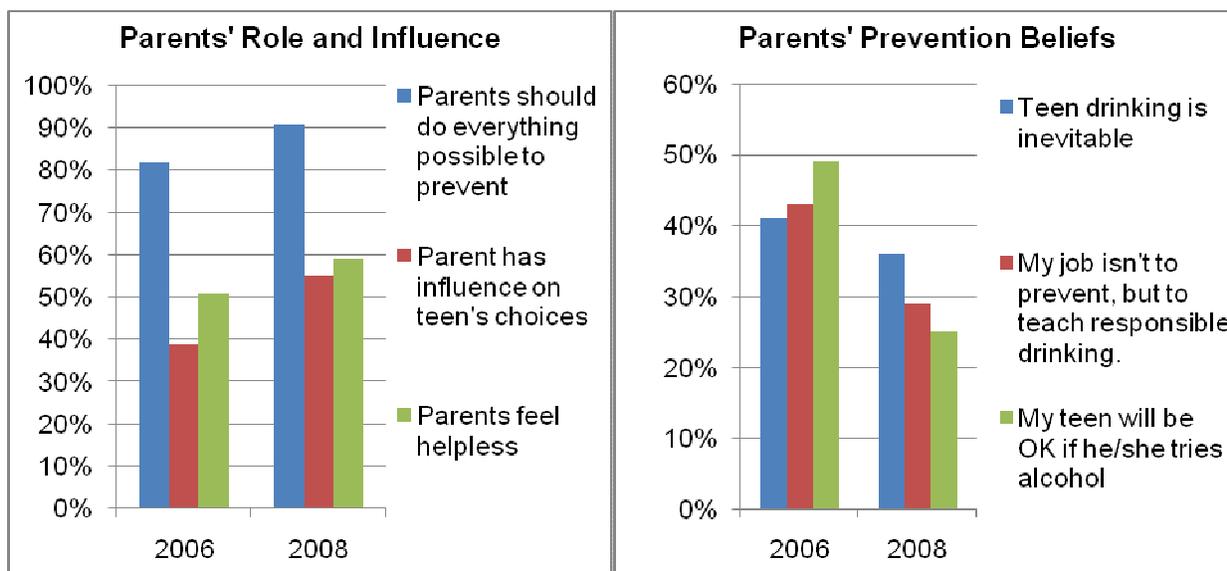
- Two answers were not recorded in 2006, but gained use in 2008. 16% of parents in 2008 said that they would allow teen drinking in their home with other parent's permission, and 8% of parents in 2008 would allow it if the teens, "stay overnight/overnight with parents."

III. Attitudes Regarding Parents' Roles and Influence

While in 2006 parents were somewhat mixed in their perception of their role and degree of influence in underage drinking, in 2008 parents were much more clear and definite in what part they play. However, despite these belief changes, more parents in 2008 reported a feeling of hopelessness in regards to preventing teen drinking.

- 36% of parents in 2008 felt that teen drinking is inevitable, down from 41% in 2006.
- 55% of parents in 2008 felt that they had the ability to influence their teen's choices about alcohol, up from 39% in 2006.
- 91% of parents in 2008 agreed with the statement, "I feel that it is very important for parents to try everything possible to prevent their teens from drinking alcohol", up from 82% of parents in 2006.
- 29% of parents in 2008 agreed with the statement, "My job isn't to prevent them from drinking. Rather it is to teach them to drink responsibly", down from 43% in 2006.
 - The number of parents who disagreed with this statement almost doubled, going from 32% in 2006 to 63% in 2008.
- 25% of parents in 2008 agreed with the statement, "Most people who drink turn out OK. My teen will be OK if he/she tries it too", down from 49% in 2006.
- Interestingly, despite these growing convictions among parents about their role in and the importance of youth alcohol prevention, the number of parents who agreed with the

statement, “I sometimes feel helpless when it comes to preventing my teen from drinking alcohol” increased to 59% of parents in 2008 from 51% in 2006.

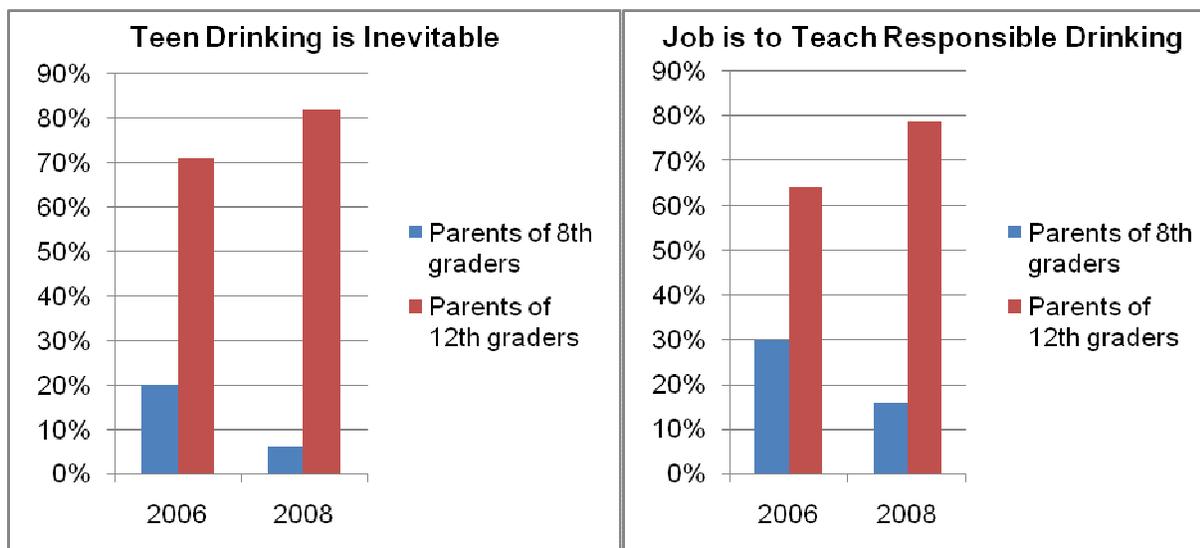


The age of the teen had a direct impact on the opinions of parents when responding to these statements. In comparing the responses of parents of 8th graders and 12th graders, it seems our efforts during the past two years have had a significant impact on middle school parents, but not on parents of older teens.

Several response comparisons revealed in opposite results among parents of 8th graders and parents of 12th graders over the last two years:

- In 2008, the number of parents of 8th graders who agreed with the statement, “It is inevitable that teens will try alcohol” decreased to 6%, down from 20% in 2006. **However, the trend moved in the opposite direction for parents of older teens.** In 2008, the number of parents of 12th graders who agreed with the statement increased to 82%, up from 71% in 2006.
- In 2008 the number of parents of 8th graders who agreed with the statement, “My job isn’t to prevent them from drinking. Rather it is to teach them to drink responsibly,” decreased to 16%, down from 30% in 2006. **Again, this trend moved in the opposite direction for parents of 12th graders.** In 2008, the number of parents of 12th graders who agreed with the statement increased to 79% up from 64% in 2006.

Inverse Trends Breakdown By Age



Some of the results did reveal parallel changes among different teen age groups, but had an inconsistent rate of change from grade to grade:

- In 2008, there was a dramatic rise in parents of 8th graders who agreed with the statement, “I have the ability to influence my teen’s choices about alcohol.” Rates rose to 71% from 49% in 2006. **However, we did not see this dramatic shift among parents of older teens.** Among parents of 12th graders, the rate of agreement was 17% in 2006 and 18% in 2008.
- In 2008, there was a decrease in parents of 8th graders who agreed with the statement, “Most people who drink turn out OK. My teen will be OK if he/she tries it too.” Rates dropped to 12% from 35% in 2006. **However, we did not see this shift among parents of older teens.** Among parents of 12th graders, the rate of agreement was 72% in 2006 and 70% in 2008.
- In 2008, parents of 12th graders had an increase in agreement with the statement, “I sometimes feel helpless when it comes to preventing my teen from drinking alcohol”. Rates rose to 91% from 76% in 2006. **However, we did not see this shift among parents of younger teens.** Among parents of 8th graders the rate of agreement was 25% in 2006 and 29% in 2008.
- In 2008 there was an increase in agreement with the statement, “I feel that it is very important for parents to try everything possible to prevent their teens from drinking alcohol,” among parents of 12th graders. Rates rose to 88% from 66% of parents in 2006.

However, we did not see this shift among parents of younger teens. Among parents of 8th graders, agreement rates were 90% in 2006 and 91% in 2008.

IV. A General Note About Parents' Attitudes around Teen Drinking

In 2008, parents across the board were far less likely to respond “Don’t Know/Unsure” than they were in 2006. This suggests that parents surveyed in 2008 are thinking more and are being more decisive about their thoughts, concerns, and actions in regards to underage drinking. Parents are also giving more thought to and are more aware of the long-term effects that drinking can have on their teen rather than only the short term effects. However, while overall trends go, for the most part, in a beneficial direction, the age breakdown of many responses shows a marked difference between the changes among parents of younger teens versus those among parents of older teens.

2008 PARENT SURVEY 21 Reasons

Hello, my name is _____ from Scientific Marketing and Analysis, a Maine based market research firm. We're conducting a survey about parenting issues and would like to include your opinions. I assure you that this study is strictly confidential and answers to these questions will be reported in aggregate form only.

[INTERVIEWERS: Once you are speaking with the head or joint head of household, continue.]

CRITERIA QUESTIONS

Q1. [C1] Do you, or does anyone in your immediate family, work for a market research, advertising, or media firm?

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------|
| No | 1 | CONTINUE |
| Yes | 2 | THANK PERSON AND TERMINATE CALL |

Q2. [C2] For the purposes of this survey, we are interested in speaking with parents who have a child who is in 8th to 12th grade in Portland. Do you have a child or children in any of these grades living in your household?

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------|
| Yes | 1 | CONTINUE |
| No | 2 | THANK PERSON AND TERMINATE CALL |

"Think of the child whose birthday is closest to today, and focus your answers for the questions in this survey for that child only." **[INTERVIEWERS: Refer to the child as "she or he" and/or by her/his age throughout the survey so that the parent can focus on that child specifically.]**

What is the age, grade, and gender of this child?

Q3. [1a] Age:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 11 years old | 1 |
| 12 years old | 2 |
| 13 years old | 3 |
| 14 years old | 4 |
| 15 years old | 5 |
| 16 years old | 6 |
| 17 years old | 7 |
| 18 years old | 8 |
| 19 years old | 9 |

Q4. [1b] Grade: [MUST BE IN GRADE 8 THRU 12]

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 8th Grade | 1 |
| 9th Grade | 2 |

10th Grade	3
11th Grade	4
12th Grade	5
Not in school	6

Q5. [1c] Gender:

Male	1
Female	2

Q6. [2] What actions, if any, do you regularly take to prevent your child from drinking alcohol? [*Open-Ended. Do NOT read the choices, but use this list for coding the responses.*]

1. Talk to my child about the potential dangers of drinking alcohol
2. Call to check to see if parents will be present at a party or other social gathering
3. Ask if alcohol is going to be present at a party or other social gathering
4. Not allow child to attend an event if alcohol is going to be present
5. Count bottles of beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages in the home
6. Mark bottles of beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages in the home
7. Lock the liquor cabinet or make alcohol in the home inaccessible
8. Ask the neighbors to check in when there are no parents in the house
9. Do not leave child home alone overnight
10. Other (specify in 'Open End' Box Q7)_____
11. Don't know [DO NOT READ]
12. None [DO NOT READ]

Q7. [Record Open End answer #10 from Question 6 (if any)]_____

Q8. [3] Which of the following two statements most closely reflects your point of view on teenage drinking?

- 1 It is inevitable that teens are going to try alcohol. There's not much I can do to stop it.
- 2 As a parent, I feel that I have the ability to influence my teen's choices about alcohol.
- 3 Don't know [Do not read]

Q9. Is it ever okay for your teen to drink alcohol?

- 1 Yes SKIP TO Q12
- 2 No CONTINUE WITH Q10

Q10. [4a] What are your primary reasons why you don't want your teen to drink alcohol? [*Open-Ended. Do NOT read the choices, but use this list for coding the responses.*]

- 1 It's illegal and/or your teen might get in trouble with the police
- 2 Your teen might drink to excess or become addicted to alcohol
- 3 Your teen might drink and drive
- 4 Your teen's brain development might be adversely affected
- 5 Your teen might be involved in unwanted or unprotected sexual behavior
- 6 Your teen's drinking could lead to depression or suicide
- 7 Your teen could lose out on a scholarship or some other opportunity
- 8 Your teen's grades might slip
- 9 Your teen might move on to other drugs
- 10 Your teen is too young to drink
- 11 Your teen has a family history of alcoholism
- 12 Other (specify in 'Open End' Box Q11) _____
- 13 Don't know [DO NOT READ]

Q11. [Open End answer #12 from Question 10 (if any)] _____

SKIP TO Q14

Q12. [5] Under what circumstances do you allow your teen to drink alcohol?
[Open-Ended. Do NOT read the choices, but use this list for coding the responses.]

[NOTE: If a respondent qualifies option #4 or #6 (for example, saying something like "only if they won't be driving", or "only if they don't drink too much" or "only if there will be adult supervision", please circle the appropriate option #5 or #7]

1. A very special family occasion, such as a wedding
2. A less formal family occasion, such as a holiday dinner
3. On the weekend at your house
4. On the weekend at someone else's house
5. On the weekend at someone else's house WITH QUALIFICATIONS
6. Any location or occasion
7. Any location or occasion WITH QUALIFICATIONS
8. Other (specify in 'Open End' Box Q13) _____
9. Don't know [DO NOT READ]

Q13. (Open End answer #8 from Question 12 (if any)) _____

Q14. [6] Are there any circumstances under which you would allow your teen's friends to drink in your home?

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| Yes | 1 | ASK Q15 & Q16 |
| No | 2 | SKIP TO Q16 |
| Don't know (do not read) | 3 | ASK Q15 AND Q16 |

Q15. [6a] Under what circumstances would you allow your teen's friends to drink in your home?
 (Open-Ended... include Don't Know if appropriate)

Q16. [6b] What are your primary reasons for NOT allowing your teen's friends to drink in your home? (Open-Ended... include Don't Know if appropriate)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [READ STATEMENTS. READ AND ROTATE.]

Q17. [7a] I sometimes feel helpless when it comes to preventing my teen from drinking alcohol.

Strongly disagree	1
Somewhat disagree	2
Somewhat agree	3
Strongly agree	4
Don t know	5

Q18. [7b] I feel that it is very important for parents to try everything possible to prevent their teens from drinking alcohol.

Strongly disagree	1
Somewhat disagree	2
Somewhat agree	3
Strongly agree	4
Don t know	5

Q19. [7c] Most people who drink turn out OK. My teen will be OK if he/she tries it too.

Strongly disagree	1
Somewhat disagree	2
Somewhat agree	3
Strongly agree	4
Don t know	5

Q20. [7d] My job isn't to prevent them from drinking. Rather it s to teach them to drink responsibly.

Strongly disagree	1
Somewhat disagree	2
Somewhat agree	3
Strongly agree	4
Don t know	5

Q21. [8] Have you seen or heard any local advertising or marketing materials this year regarding teenage drinking in Portland?

Yes	1	CONTINUE WITH Q22
No	2	SKIP TO Q26
Don t know (don't read)	3	SKIP TO Q26

Q22. [8a] Where did you see or hear this advertisement?

- | | | |
|----------------|---|----------------------|
| TV | 1 | |
| Radio | 2 | |
| Internet | 3 | |
| Newspaper | 4 | |
| Brochure | 5 | |
| Other | 6 | (Keep a list in Q23) |
| Don't remember | 7 | (don't read) |

Q23. [8c] (Open End answer #6 from Question 22 (if any) _____)

Q24. [8b] What was the core message of the advertisement? [Open-Ended]

[ASK Q25 ONLY IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED 'YES' TO Q21]

Q25. [9.] What specific actions, if any, have you taken or will you take as a result of this advertising? [Open-Ended]

Enter Don't know or None if appropriate [DO NOT READ]

[Ask Q26 thru Q30 of ALL]

Q26. [10.] What agencies, organizations, or coalitions are you aware of in Portland that deal with underage drinking and related issues? [Open-Ended]

Enter Don't know or None if appropriate [DO NOT READ]

DEMOGRAPHICS

The last set of questions will be used for statistical purposes only, enabling us to analyze the data we have gathered ensuring that we have a representative sample of Maine citizens. First of all ...

Q27. Into which of the following categories does your age fall?

1. 18-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-44
4. 45-54
5. 55-64
6. 65 or older

7. Refused (Don t read)

Q28. What is the highest grade of education you have completed?

1. Less than high school graduate
2. High school graduate
3. Vocational/Trade school
4. Some college/Two year college graduate
5. Four year college graduate
6. Post-graduate work
7. Refused [DO NOT READ]

Q29. For tabulation purposes only, please tell me which of the following income categories includes your total household income in 2007 before taxes? Just stop me when I read the correct category:

1. Less than \$15,000
2. \$15,000 to \$24,999
3. \$25,000 to \$34,999
4. \$35,000 to \$44,999
5. \$45,000 to \$54,999
6. \$55,000 or \$64,999
7. \$65,000 or more
8. Refused (do not read)

Those are all of my questions. If you would like more information regarding teenage drinking, you may call the Office of Substance Abuse at 800-499-0027 or visit their website at www.maineosa.org. Thank you very much for your time.

Q30. Length of interview: _____ minutes [Open-Ended]