Alcohol Facts

- In 1994-1996, 20 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 reported using alcohol in the past month. Rates of past-month alcohol use were highest among older adolescents aged 16 to 17; 36 percent of males and 31 percent of females reported past month use.

- Past-month alcohol use was nearly twice as likely for adolescents with serious emotional problems than for adolescents with low levels of emotional problems.

- Adolescents with serious behavioral problems were nearly three times as likely to use alcohol in the past month than adolescents with low levels of behavioral problems.

- In 1994-1996, 6 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 reported dependence on alcohol or illicit drugs. Rates were highest among older adolescents; approximately 10 to 11 percent of adolescents aged 16 to 17 reported alcohol or illicit drug dependence.

- Adolescents with serious emotional problems were nearly four times more likely to be dependent on alcohol or illicit drugs than adolescents with low levels of emotional problems.

- Alcohol or illicit drug dependence was more than seven times more likely among adolescents with serious behavioral problems than a month adolescents with lower levels of behavioral problems.

- Parental influence has been found to be of critical importance in studies of risk factors for adolescent substance use.

- Adolescents living with both biological parents are less likely to use alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, or other illicit substances; family structures consisting of the biological father and the absence of the biological mother are associated with the greatest risk.

- "This product contains alcohol. Alcohol is a dangerous drug" is the stark warning which may soon appear on all bottles and cans of alcohol. The proposal is being examined by the Australian and New Zealand Food authority (ANZFA).