



# Accessibility of alcohol, alcohol refusal skills and lifetime alcohol use among early adolescents

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## Background

While there is consistent evidence that early initiation of alcohol consumption is associated with a whole range of future negative outcomes, relatively little attention has been paid directly to the specific refusal skills concerning different people close to young adolescents. This study aimed to explore the relationships between alcohol refusal skills, accessibility of alcohol, and alcohol use among primary school pupils.

## Materials and methods

### Sample

The first wave of an ongoing longitudinal UNPLUGGED study, N=572 early adolescents, (50.1% boys, Mean age=12.49; SD=0.59) from a stratified random sample consisting of pupils from 12 primary Slovak schools

### Measures

**Lifetime prevalence of alcohol use:** „On how many occasions (if any) have you had any alcoholic beverage to drink in your life-time “, possible answers: 0, 1-2,3-5,6-9,10-19,20-39, 40 or more (dichotomised: 1-used, 0 –not used,: N=117 boys, 40,5,1%, N=132 girls, 47%

**Accessibility of alcohol:** „If you wanted, would it be difficult or easy for you to obtain alcohol“, response options: 1-impossible - 5-very easy

**Alcohol refusal skills** (Macaulay, Griffin, Botvin, 2002): were assessed with the questions concerning the ability to refuse alcohol offered by classmates, best friends, parents, siblings, a boy/girl „who is like you“, significant adults with possibilities: 1 Definitely would not refuse; 2 Probably would not refuse; 3 Probably would refuse; 4 Refuse

### Statistical analyses

Univariate and multivariate binary logistic regressions were used for the analysis and were carried out separately for boys and girls. Alcohol use was dichotomized and served as the dependent variable and alcohol refusal skills as well as accessibility of alcohol served as the independent variables.

## Results

The univariate models showed that for both genders there were significant negative associations between alcohol use and refusal skills concerning classmates, best friends, parents, a boy/girl “who is like you”, other significant adults and siblings among girls.

However, after adding accessibility of alcohol to the models, the associations between alcohol use and refusal skills toward significant adults for both genders, classmates and siblings for girls have ceased to be significant. Accessibility of alcohol showed positive significant associations with alcohol use in all the models for both genders.

The univariate models explained 1,3-9,4 % for boys and 2,1-10,8 %, for girls, the multivariate models explained 11,6-17,6% for boys and 23,8-32,9% for girls of the variance.

Alcohol offered by	Univariate model boys	Multivariate model boys	Univariate model girls	Multivariate model girls
Classmates Accessibility of alcohol	0,577 (0,383-0,868)**	0,641 (0,430-0,955)* 1,458(1,221-1,742)***	0,628(0,395 -0,997)*	0,808(0,494 -1,320) 2,295(1,818-2,897)***
Best friend Accessibility of alcohol	0,516(0,360-0,742)***	0,581(0,404-0,835)*** 1,432(1,197-1,712)***	0,404(0,266-0,613)***	0,581(0,404-0,835)*** 1,432(1,197-1,712)***
Parents Accessibility of alcohol	0,493(0,350-0,694)***	0,532(0,377-0,752)*** 1,488(1,238-1,789)***	0,486(0,329-0,716)***	0,652(0,431-0,985)* 2,224(1,758-2,814)***
Siblings Accessibility of alcohol	0,757(0,538-1,065)	0,763(0,539-1,081) 1,474(1,235-1,759)***	0,561(0,388-0,809)***	0,723(0,491-1,063) 2,222(1,759-2,806)***
Someone like you Accessibility of alcohol	0,540(0,388 -0,752)***	0,584(0,416-0,819)*** 1,432(1,197-1,713)***	0,431(0,291-0,639)***	0,584(0,386-0,883)* 2,202(1,736-2,794)***
Significant adults Accessibility of alcohol	0,626(0,397-0,986)*	0,648(0,414-1,013) 1,490(1,247-1,780)***	0,494(0,298-0,819)**	0,667(0,392-1,135) 2,260(1,788-2,856)***

## Conclusion

Implementation of the findings about alcohol accessibility and specific refusal skills towards a variety of people for both genders might be important for effective targeting of prevention programs.

**Main messages:** We stress the general importance of the role of public health policy concerning the issue of alcohol accessibility for this specific group of young adolescents.

**Acknowledgment:** This work was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency under the contract No. APVV-0253-11, APVV-15-0662, KEGA016UPJŠ-4/2017

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