

# FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG MALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CENTRAL THAILAND

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**Abstract.** A cross-sectional study was conducted to explore factors associated with alcohol consumption among male high school students in central Thailand. Five thousand one hundred eighty-four male students from central Thailand were classified into 2 groups according to alcohol consumption during the past year (yes = 916, no = 4,268). Data were collected by an anonymous self-reporting questionnaire which consisted of 2 parts: socio-demographic factors and alcohol drinking behavior during the previous year from December 2007 to February 2008. Descriptive statistics, a chi-square test and multiple logistic regression were used to analyze the data. Seventeen point seven percent of male high school students in this study reported consuming alcohol. Most of the students (73.4%) were 15 years old or younger. Univariate analysis revealed socio-demographic factors, such as age, educational level, residence, cohabitants, grade point average (GPA), having a job earning money and having family members with alcohol/drug problems were significantly associated with alcohol consumption ( $p < 0.05$ ). Multiple logistic regression analysis, after adjusting for age, revealed five factors were associated with alcohol consumption: the educational level (OR MS3 = 2.69, 95% CI 2.07-3.49; OR MS5 = 5.50, 95% CI 4.25-7.13), cohabitants (OR Friends = 3.09, 95% CI 1.38-6.93), having a job earning money (OR = 1.37, 95% CI 1.13-1.66), having family members with alcohol/drug problems (OR = 1.33, 95% CI 1.11-1.60), and GPA (OR  $< 2$  = 1.31, 95% CI 1.01-1.71; OR  $> 3$  = 0.62, 95% CI 0.51-0.75). Approximately 38% drank more than 2 times a month, 35% drank more than 4 drinks each time, 60% experienced binge drinking, and 43% experienced drunkenness. These results suggest alcohol abuse preventive measures among male high school students should take into account education level, cohabitants, having a job earning money, family members with alcohol/drug problems and GPA. Education regarding the disadvantages of alcohol to risk groups could reduce the proportion of new and current drinkers.

**Key words:** alcohol consumption, high school students, associated factors, Thailand

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