



Teens who live in a caring community may be less likely to abuse alcohol than their peers who report fewer positive experiences in their community, a new study suggests.

Spending time with antisocial peers can increase the risk of alcohol abuse, researchers from Penn State report.

The researchers evaluated risk factors for adolescent alcohol abuse, including antisocial attitudes and behaviors, associating with antisocial peers, and family risk, ScienceDaily reports.

They also looked at positive factors such as community experiences, school experiences and family strengths. They examined results for more than 200,000 students, to determine how these factors predicted alcohol use.

In the American Journal of Public Health, the researchers reported family and school protective factors had less influence than other factors, when all were considered together.

"We found that when you put all of the major risk and protective factors into the same predictive model, certain risk factors, such as antisocial peer risk, tended to be more highly predictive of alcohol use than other factors like positive school experiences," researcher Damon Jones said in a news release.

The study concludes positive experiences in the community can help minimize the link between risk factors and underage drinking.

Helping a friend or family member struggling with alcohol or drugs can be heartbreakingly painful but, with help, it can be remarkably rewarding. Are you concerned about someone? [Click here for more information.](#)