PREVALENCE OF PARENTAL SUPPLY OF ALCOHOL TO CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

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Introduction and Aims: Parental supply of alcohol to minors (i.e. those under the legal drinking age) is often perceived as protective, despite evidence linking it with adverse alcohol-related outcomes. This systematic review describes the prevalence of parental supply of alcohol, as reported in the international literature.

Design and Methods: The review was registered with PROSPERO (CRD42020218754). We searched seven online databases (Medline, Embase, PsycINFO, CINAHL, Scopus, Web of Science and Public Health Database) and grey literature for studies from January 2011 to December 2021 and assessed risk of bias with the JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist.

Results: Among 56 articles included in narrative synthesis from 28 unique datasets, there was substantial variation in the definition and measurement of parental supply of alcohol. Overall prevalence rates therefore ranged from 7.3% to 60.1% for adolescent-report samples, and from 24.4% to 48% for parent-report samples. Data reported indicate that parental supply prevalence is generally proportionately higher for older adolescents/later-stage school students, and appears to have increased over time.

Discussion and Conclusions: Population subgroups identified with higher prevalence rates should be prioritised for future interventions, including those to increase parents' awareness of supply outcomes. Greater consistency in defining and measuring parental supply would improve the comparability of future prevalence studies, including between adolescent- and parent-report data.

Implications for Practice or Policy: Despite links between parental alcohol supply and adverse alcohol-related outcomes for adolescents, this systematic review of international prevalence data describes a considerable proportion of parents providing alcohol to underage minors, and population differences in reported rates of supply. Health promotion strategies aimed at reducing parental supply are required.