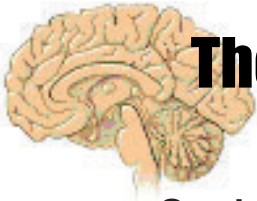


The Brain's Pleasure-Reward System



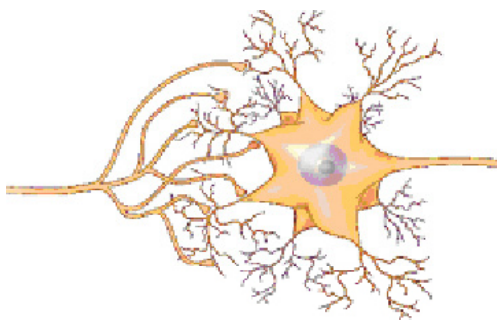
Our brain rewards positive actions – those that are important to the survival of the species – with feelings of pleasure, so we value and want to repeat those actions.

Feelings of pleasure range from an intense emotional high to a happy sense of satisfaction from giving service or doing a job well.

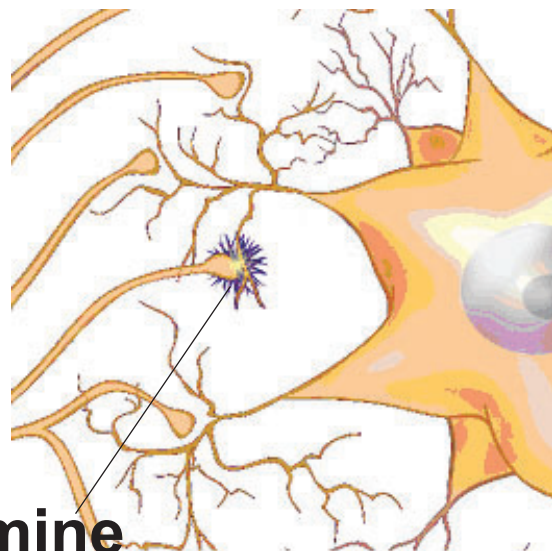


We remember feelings of pleasure from a neurotransmitter called dopamine.

Dopamine sends “feel-good” messages to our brain and body, connecting the pleasure we experienced to the thing we enjoyed.



**Normal
view**



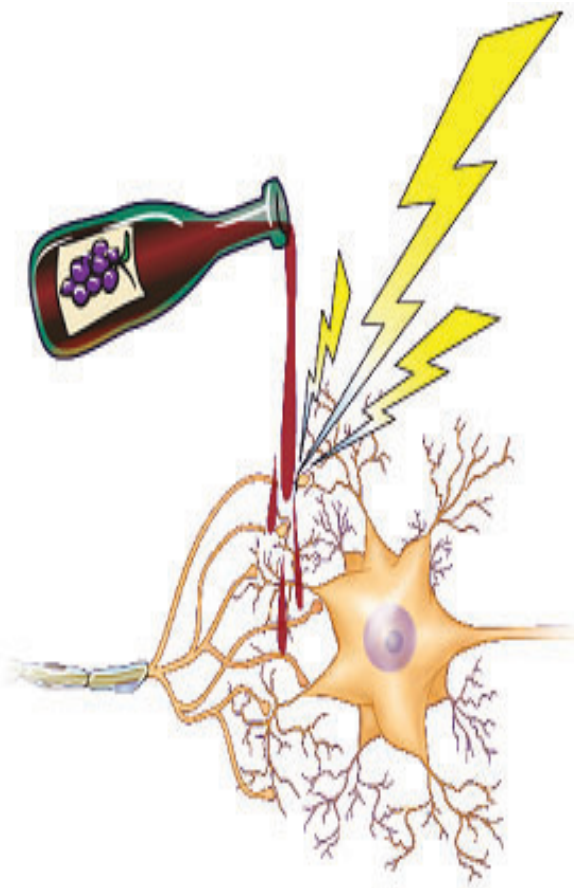
Dopamine





Alcohol Hijacks Our Brain's Pleasure-Reward System

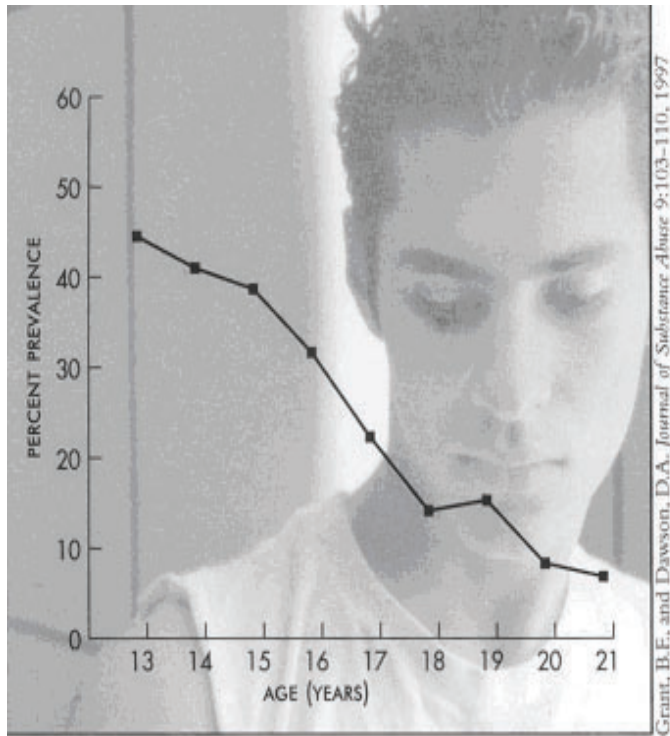
Alcohol pretends to be a neurotransmitter. It tricks your brain into generating pleasure-reward feelings from a harmful chemical instead of a real experience.



Alcohol also damages the ability to sense pleasure from real things and experiences – leaving a young person feeling “flat” about things he or she previously enjoyed.

Drinking under the age of 21 can program your brain to crave the fake pleasure alcohol gives.

Teen Alcohol Use Can “Wire” The Brain for Early Addiction



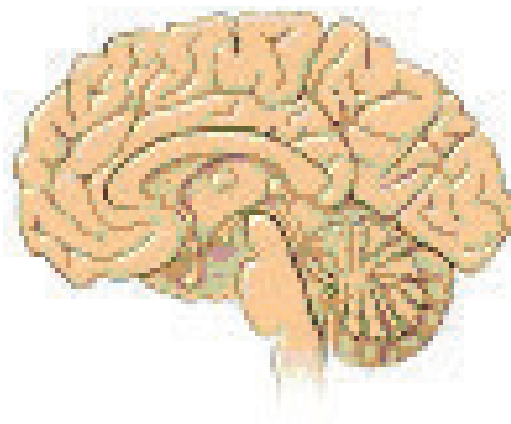
Graph courtesy of NIAAA and MADD

40% of kids who begin drinking at age 15 will become alcoholics.

Only 7% of those who begin drinking at age 21 become alcoholics.

Drinking underage is a D.U.M.B. decision!

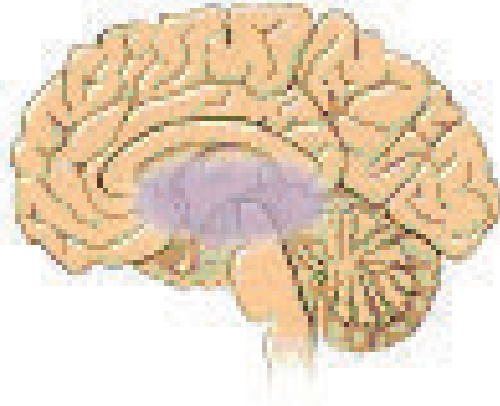
(DrinkUnderage Maims the Brain!)



PD

Alcohol Poisoning:

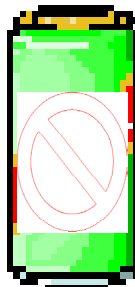
A Real Risk



Because most teen brains have not yet developed the “shut-off” switch that causes a person to become sleepy or pass out from drinking too much alcohol, many young people can drink dangerous quantities of alcohol without realizing the harm it is causing until it is too late.

This is referred to as alcohol poisoning.

“Binge drinking contests” cause adolescent brain damage and can cause death.



Beer? No thanks. I'll keep my brain cells.

PD