

A Lesson Learned About Alcohol From *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*



The popular story of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by J. K. Rowling is a journey into self amidst a world of magic. The plot of the book is advanced through the consequences of Hagrid's drinking. Hagrid is the Gamekeeper and Keeper of the Keys at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry where Harry Potter attends school and also where the Sorcerer's Stone is kept. The Sorcerer's Stone will turn any metal into pure gold. It also produces the legendary substance, the Elixir of Life, which will make the drinker immortal. Because of these astonishing powers, the stone is highly guarded and it is also highly sought after by those on the evil side. Harry Potter and Hagrid become good friends. One night, Hagrid gets drunk and tells the secret of how to get the Sorcerer's Stone. Hagrid's mistake with alcohol puts Harry and the Stone's safety in jeopardy. A lesson well learned from this story is that alcohol not only affects the one who is using it; it can have harmful effects on people the user loves and cares about. Happily, the story ends with Hagrid [promising](#) never to drink again.

Hagrid's mistake with alcohol is fictional, but in reality alcohol is the most widely used and abused drug in America. According to the [2000 National Household Survey](#), 104 million people (46.6 percent) in the United States are current drinkers and 12.6 million (5.6 percent) are heavy drinkers.

It is also true that one in four children under 18 years old in the United States lives with a chemically dependent parent. These children of substance abusers are the highest risk group for alcohol and illicit drug dependence and are exposed to a variety of ills such as depression, anxiety, problems with cognitive and verbal skills, parent abuse or neglect, and school failure. The [National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign](#) offers help to reach youth with messages and resources that deliver life-coping skills and prevention resources.

The sooner a person realizes that alcohol is being abused, the better the chances of recovery. Several effective treatment methods for alcoholism are available, and what works for one person may not work for another. Many options can be explored when seeking help. Local organizations can be contacted to find treatment alternatives in each community.



For additional information/activities view
The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information Web site
<http://health.org/features/kidsarea/harrypotter>