

Some of the world's largest alcohol companies are facing a US lawsuit from angry parents worried that adverts are aimed at teenagers.

Diageo, Heineken, Bacardi and Coors are among seven producers named in a lawsuit that accuses them of deliberately targeting young drinkers.

The companies, which produce drinks including Bacardi Breezer, Guinness and Smirnoff vodka, deny the claims.

Health groups link a surge in underage drinking to aggressive advertising.

10 **Legal age**

Analysts are cautious, if not sceptical, about the lawsuit's chances of success.

15 Earlier this year a US judge dismissed an action claiming McDonald's had contributed to obesity in children by hiding the health risks of its food.

There would be far reaching implications for the alcohol industry should the case succeed.

20 Companies have been concerned that the European Union may target booze in the same way it has tobacco, limiting adverts and requiring bottles to carry health warnings.

Responsible behaviour?

The US Federal Trade Commission said in a September report that it "found no evidence of targeting underage consumers" in the alcopop market.

25 That hasn't deterred the parents and guardians who are demanding the companies pay damages and return profits.

Drinks makers say they are not to blame and are responsible when it comes to media campaigns.

30 Almost 30% of those aged between 12 and 20 in the US used alcohol during a month, according to the US Department of Health and Human Services.

Stronger stuff

35 About a fifth of those under 21, the legal drinking age, said they binged on alcohol. A binge is defined as consuming five or more drinks on the same occasion

In the UK, the number of young people who use alcohol by the age of 13 outnumber those who don't, according to pressure group Alcohol Concern.

40 One of the greatest concerns is that many youths are turning from sweet, fizzy, alcopops to stronger tipples such as cider, strong beers, fruit wines and vodka.

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