



ALLIANCE
OF COALITIONS
for Healthy Communities



PREVENT Underage Drinking

**Toolkit For
Parents & Caregivers**



ABOUT THE ALLIANCE & THIS TOOLKIT

The Alliance is a network of 21+ community prevention coalitions serving 55+ local communities. The Alliance is comprised of individuals and organizations who share our commitment to building healthy and drug-free communities. This toolkit is a resource to help educate on making healthy choices including how to take preventative measures and reduce risk factors for substance abuse.



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HOW RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS CAN INFLUENCE A TEEN'S SUBSTANCE USE

WHAT ARE RISK FACTORS?

Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes. Risk factors can include lack of adult supervision, mental health problems, abuse, divorce or traumatic events.

WHAT ARE PROTECTIVE FACTORS?

Protective factors are seen as positive events that counter risk factors. Protective factors lower the likelihood of those negative outcomes.

HOW TO BUILD PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR YOUR CHILD

- Provide structure, rules and family rules.
- Create supportive relationships with all family members.
- Set clear expectations for behavior and values.
- Build self-esteem.
- Practice positive coping skills and problem solving.
- Support engagement and connections with others (peers, mentors, coaches and teachers).
- Build on resiliency or the ability to effectively manage life's challenges.

As a parent, it is important to also take care of you. Seek support from other parents, take time for self-care and seek assistance from your community when needed.

RISK FACTORS

Youth that are at the highest risk for alcohol-related problems are those who:

- Begin using alcohol or other drugs before age 15.
- Have a parent who has alcohol related problems.
- Have close friends who use alcohol and/or other drugs.
- Have experienced behavioral problems and/or are failing at school.
- Have parents who do not communicate openly with them, do not set realistic boundaries for them or don't feel supported by their parents.
- Are experiencing anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues.
- Have parents with favorable attitudes toward alcohol and drugs.
- Experiencing a significant transition such as graduating middle school or high school and getting a driver's license.



Source; <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/risk-and-protective-factors>

WARNING SIGNS

Although the following may indicate a problem with alcohol and other drugs, some also reflect normal teenage behaviors. Experts believe that a drinking problem is more likely if you notice several of these signs at the same time, if they occur suddenly and are extreme in nature.

- Mood changes: flare-ups of temper, irritability and defensiveness.
- Problems at school such as low grades, poor attendance, or recent disciplinary action.
- Friend changes: switching friends or a reluctance to have you get to know their friends
- A "nothing matters" attitude: sloppy appearance, lack of involvement in former interests and general low energy.
- Alcohol presence: finding it in your child's room, backpack, car or smelling alcohol on them.
- Being secretive with their phones and where they are going.
- Physical signs such as memory lapses, poor concentration, slurred speech, headaches, bloodshot eyes and lack of coordination.



Source; <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/substance-abuse/warning-signs-adolescent-substance-abuse>

DID YOU KNOW?

- Alcohol is the most commonly used and abused drug among youth in the United States. By the age of 18, more than 70% of teens have had at least one drink.
- It is illegal for a person under the age of 21 to consume alcohol, have any bodily alcohol content or have alcohol in their possession.
- You are legally responsible if you give alcohol to a minor and they, in turn, hurt someone, hurt themselves or damage property.
- Providing alcohol to a minor is a misdemeanor punishable by a fine up to \$1,000 and up to 60 days in jail.
- Providing alcohol to a minor, where the consumption of the alcohol is a direct cause of the person's death is a felony punishable by a fine up to \$5,000 and/or up to 10 years in prison.



- Teens drink less often than adults, but when they do drink, they drink more than adults. On average young people have about 5 drinks on a single occasion. This is called binge drinking, drinking large amounts of alcohol in a short period of time. This can lead to serious problems and even death.
- Each year, approximately 5,000 people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking nationally.
- Teens say that they rely on adults in their lives more than anyone else to help them make tough decisions and to provide good advice.

Source; abovetheinfluence.com/drugs/alcohol/#.facts ; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. *The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking*. Published March 2007. Retrieved October 2011.

TALKING TO YOUR KIDS

Conversations can be a powerful tool parents can use to connect with and protect kids. Take advantage of every opportunity to engage, listen and support.

RELATE IT TO WHAT IS HAPPENING AT SCHOOL

- "Do you talk about alcohol at school?"
- "Do you hear of kids at your school drinking alcohol or see anyone drink?"

TELL A STORY FROM YOUR OWN LIFE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONSEQUENCES

- "Did I ever tell you about that time..."
- "I had a friend in high school who..."

PRAISE THEIR GOOD JUDGEMENT AND REINFORCE ALL THE POSITIVE THINGS THEY DO

- "Thanks for being a good friend to _____, they really needed you in that situation"
- "You're a good role model and I'm proud of you"
- "I am really proud of the choices you have been making"

ASK ABOUT THE PARTY OR EVENT THEY ARE ATTENDING AND MAKE SURE TO SET YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- "You're going to your friend's party this weekend? Who will be there and will their parents be home? Let's talk about what you should do if you are in a situation you don't like."
- "Did you have fun at the party? What did you guys do?"

TALK ABOUT NEWS STORIES OR TV SHOWS AND REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

- "Did you hear about what happened to..."
- "Do kids really drink like that in your school?"
- "I heard about _____, what do you think about it?"

GENERAL TIPS

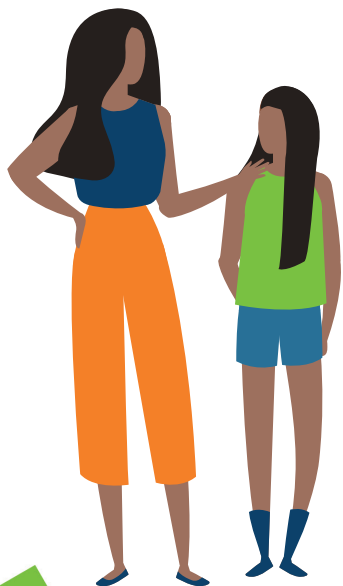
- When you are talking to your children about drinking, listen to them and respect what they say
- Make clear what your expectations are for your child not to drink alcohol

Source; <https://www.talkitoutnc.org/starting-the-conversation/>

WHAT YOU CAN DO/PREVENTION

SET STANDARDS

- Set and enforce clear boundaries around alcohol use.
- Share your expectations with family, friends and parents of your child's friends.
- Secure alcohol in your home and make sure it isn't available at teen parties.
- Do not let your children attend parties where alcohol is being served.
- Let your child know that their brain and body are still developing until the age of 25 and drinking as a teen will put them at greater risk for developing lasting problems.



BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

- If you drink yourself, drink responsibly. Your children are watching, listening and learning from you.
- Stay away from alcohol in high-risk situations. For example, don't drive or go boating when you've been drinking.
- Get help if you think you have an alcohol-related problem.



SUPPORT YOUR CHILDREN AND TEENS AND GIVE THEM SPACE TO GROW

- Be involved in your teens' lives in a loving and caring way. Ask questions about where they've been, what they are doing and who they were with.
- Encourage your teens' growing independence while setting appropriate limits.
- Create a safe space for your teen to share information about their lives.
- Find ways for your teens to be involved in family life, such as by doing chores or caring for a younger sibling.
- Help your teen find ways to have fun without alcohol.
- Help your teen avoid dangerous situations such as riding in a car driven by someone who has been drinking and driving.
- Help your teen get professional help if you are worried about their involvement with alcohol.



Source; <https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources/what-you-can-do-prevent-your-child-drinking>

RESOURCES

OAKLAND COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK

(248) 858-1210 • oaklandchn.org

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE ACCESS SERVICES

(248) 464-6363 • Non-emergency

COMMON GROUND

Resource & Crisis Helpline • (800) 231-1127

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE (NIDA)

drugabuse.gov

TALK SOONER: HELPING PARENTS PREVENT YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE

talksooner.org/drugs/alcohol

NIDA FOR TEENS

teens.drugabuse.gov

STOP UNDERAGE DRINKING

stopalcoholabuse.gov



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(248) 221 -7101 • achcmi.org