

Mental Health &
Recovery Services
Board of Allen,
Auglaize, and
Hardin Counties

April 2022 School Newsletter

Alcohol Awareness Month

Underage drinking is common and can have harmful consequences.

19% of youth ages 12 to 20 drank alcohol in the past month. 11% of all alcohol consumed in the US is by youth ages 12-20 despite the legal drinking age being 21. Youth who drink are more likely to develop an alcohol use disorder later in life. Also, the younger a person is when they start drinking, the higher their odds of having alcohol use disorder later in life.

1 in 6 parents allowed their kids to drink at home during the pandemic. Most of these instances were during family meals or for special occasions. All of the parents in [this study](#) had previously not allowed their children to drink. It might seem harmless to allow an occasional drink at home, but alcohol has toxic effects on young adolescents' brains.

Alcohol significantly harms learning and memory in teens. 90% of teen drinking is binge drinking which brings the blood alcohol concentration to 0.8% or above. This puts them at risk of drunk driving, violent behavior, being a victim of sexual assault, transmitted diseases, and more.

Maintaining alcohol-free childhoods will help them lead healthier lives.

Parents are the key to preventing alcohol use in children's lives. They have more influence over their child than friends, music, TV, social media, and celebrities. Prevent drinking by talking to your child about the dangers of alcohol.

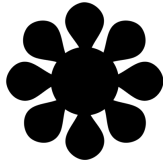
The earlier you begin to talk to your child about the dangers of drugs, the easier it will be to continue to reinforce this with them through their adolescent years, and the more likely they will be to talk to you when there is a problem. You can start as early as ages 3-5. Kids are drinking at younger ages now, so don't wait to talk to your eight or nine-year-old.

For teens, it is important to let them know they can talk to you no matter what.

- Show concern and interest. "I'm worried about you." "Tell me about the pep rally yesterday."
- Show your teens you love them. "I love you." Give them a hug.
- Be direct. "I've noticed beer cans in the car." "Your grades have dropped."
- Give lots of praise. They need to hear the "good stuff," too.

Learn more about how to talk to your child about substances like alcohol at letstalk.care.

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board also has a newer program for parents worried about their child's substance use. Is your child drinking or vaping? Not sure what to do? IMind helps youth prevent substance use disorders. It is a voluntary one-day weekend program.



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IMind also helps students return to school or after-school programs as quickly as possible after discipline measures. Learn more at wecarepeople.org/imindprogram.

For more local recovery resources, call 211. For immediate emergency help, call 911.