

Parenting Information

1. Tips for communicating With Your Teen

A. Refusal Skills for Parents

Good Reasons for Teens not to Drink

- You want your child to avoid alcohol
- You want your child to maintain self-respect
- You want them to know drinking is illegal
- Drinking at their age can be dangerous
- You may have a family history of alcoholism
- Health reasons
- Higher risk of rape, crimes, assault, drug use, risky situations
- The high risk of crashes due to impaired driving
- Emotional impact of teen alcohol use
- Passengers riding with drunk drivers

B. Forming a strong Parent-Child relationship

Prevention strategies for parents:

- Monitor alcohol use in your home
- Connect with other parents
- Keep track of child's activities
- Develop family rules about drinking
- Set a GOOD example
- Don't support teen drinking
- Help your child build healthy friendships
- Encourage healthy alternatives to alcohol

C. Setting a Good example

1. Use alcohol moderately
2. Don't communicate to your child that alcohol is a good way to handle problems (example: don't come home from work and say, "I had a rotten day, I need a drink")
3. Instead, let your child see that you have healthier ways to cope with stress, such as exercise, listening to music, or talking things over with a spouse, partner, or friend
4. Don't tell your kids stories about your own drinking that conveys the message that alcohol use is funny or glamorous
5. Never drink and drive or ride in a car with a driver who has been drinking

6. When you entertain other adults, make available alcohol-free beverages and plenty of food. If anyone drinks too much at your party, make arrangements for them to get home safely
7. Don't support teen drinking
8. Always remember that parents and guardians are important **ROLE MODELS** for their children!

2. Recognize warning signs of a drinking problem:

- Mood changes: flare-ups of temper, irritability, defensiveness
- School problems: poor attendance, low grades, recent disciplinary action
- Rebelling against family rules
- Switching friends, along with a reluctance to have you get to know the new friends
- A "nothing matters" attitude: sloppy appearance, a lack of involvement in former interests, and general low energy
- Finding alcohol in your child's room or backpack, or smelling alcohol on his or her breath
- Physical or mental problems: memory lapses, poor concentration, bloodshot eyes, lack of coordination, or slurred speech

3. Laws You Need to Know

A. Parents

- Parents who give alcohol to their children's friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, are breaking the law, even if they have their child's friend's parents' permission
- Parents who knowingly allow a person under 21 to remain in their home or on their property while consuming alcoholic beverages can be prosecuted and everything associated with such a violation can be confiscated including personal property
- Purchasing or furnishing alcohol for a minor results in a Class C misdemeanor with a fine up to \$2000 and/or jail up to 180 days

B. Teens

- For minors with any detectable amount of alcohol in their system: Class C misdemeanor with a fine up to \$500, 20 to 40 hours of community service, and attendance at an Alcohol Awareness Course
- Purchase or possession of alcohol by a minor is a Class C misdemeanor with a fine up to \$500, 8 to 12 hours of community service, loss of driving privileges for 30 days, and attendance at an Alcohol Awareness Course

4. Hosting a Teen Party

- An adult should be present at all times
 - Alcohol or other drugs should not be served, allowed, or accessible
 - Anyone who leaves the party should not be allowed to return
 - Encourage a manageable size group
 - Set ground rules
- A. If you are the parent of a student invited to a party
- Talk with the parent who is hosting the party
 - Clarify the host's expectations about arrival and departure times, and transportation arrangements
 - If this is the first time your child has visited this home, consider walking to the door to meet the host
 - Thank the parent for hosting the party
- B. If you are hosting a party
- You are legally responsible for the party attendants
 - Maintain an open door policy within the house
 - Be clear about parameters
 - Encourage other parents to attend, possibly co-host
- C. Legal consequences for hosting a teen alcohol party
- Parents can be sued if they give alcohol to anyone under 21 and then in turn hurt someone, hurt themselves, or damage property

5. Creation of Parent Support Network

- Know the parents of all your teen's friends
- Make sure you know the teen, parent, and a phone number to the house if your child is going to a party
- Make sure that parents are present at all times during parties
- Get the address and phone number of the party giver
- Confirm with parents that no alcohol or other drugs will be permitted
- Communicate with other parents about issues in your community which may involve your teen
- Support one another on preventing alcohol use among your teens
- **Always communicate with other parents about any event!**