

UNDERAGE DRINKING PREVENTION

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT YOUR CHILD FROM DRINKING ALCOHOL¹

Be Aware of Factors That May Increase the Risk of a Child's Alcohol Use, Including:

- » Significant social transitions such as graduating to middle or high school or getting a driver's license;
- » A history of social and emotional problems;
- » Depression and other serious emotional problems;
- » A family history of alcoholism; and
- » Contact with peers involved in troubling activities.

Be a Positive Adult Role Model.

- » Stay away from alcohol in high-risk situations. For example, do not operate a vehicle after drinking alcohol.
- » Get help if you think you have an alcohol-related problem.
- » Do not give alcohol to your children. Tell them that any alcohol in your home is off limits to them and to their friends.

Work With Schools, Communities, and the Government to Protect Children From Underage Alcohol Use by Ensuring That:

- » Schools and the community support and reward young people's decisions not to drink;
- » Schools and the community identify and intervene with children engaged in underage drinking early;
- » Rules about underage drinking are in place at home, at school, and in your community;
- » Agreements of acceptable behavior are established, well-known, and applied consistently; and
- » Parties and social events at home and elsewhere do not permit underage drinking.

Support Your Children and Give Them Space to Grow.

- » Be involved in your children's lives.
- » Encourage your children's growing independence, but set appropriate limits.
- » Make it easy for your children to share information about their lives.
- » Know where your children are, what they are doing, whom they are with, and whom they are friends with.
- » Make an effort to get to know the parents of your children's friends. Share your rules about not allowing alcohol use.
- » Find ways for your children to be involved in family life such as doing chores or caring for a younger sibling.
- » Set clear rules, including rules about alcohol use. Enforce the rules you set.
- » Help your children find ways to have fun without alcohol.
- » Do not let your children attend parties at which alcohol is served. Do not allow alcohol at parties in your own home.
- » Help your children avoid dangerous situations such as riding in a car driven by someone who has been drinking.
- » Help your children get professional help if you are worried about their involvement with alcohol.
- » Create a pledge between yourself and your children that promises they will not drink alcohol.

References

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking: A Guide to Action for Educators*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General, 2007.