

Parents Make the Connection



What's the biggest deterrent to your teen using alcohol and other drugs?



You. Research shows that *parents* are the #1 influence on teens' decisions to use or not use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.



Parenting IS Prevention

Close family relationships help prevent risk behaviors, like drug use or violence. Which protective factors does your family offer?

- Family shares responsibilities, including chores and decision making
- Family members are nurturing and support each other
- Parenting is consistent
- Parents set clear expectations and limits regarding alcohol and other drug use
- Family copes with stress in a positive way
- Parents encourage supportive relationships with caring adults beyond the family
- Education is valued, encouraged, and supported

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You are a Role Model

As a parent, you know your children learn from your example. So you exercise, eat right, and maintain strong, loving relationships with family and friends.

But what if you choose to drink? How can you model healthy choices about drinking while making it clear that underage drinking is unacceptable in your family?

Research shows that when parents consistently make healthy choices about their own alcohol use, their children are more likely to delay their own use of alcohol and less likely to have alcohol-related problems if they do begin to drink.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind if you are a parent and choose to drink:

- ◆ Demonstrate that alcohol is not necessary to remedy stress or to have fun.
- ◆ Use teachable moments to educate your children about the dangers and consequences of underage and heavy drinking.
- ◆ Always have non-alcoholic beverages available for guests and minors. Monitor any alcohol in your home, so you know if some is missing.
- ◆ When you choose to drink, also drink water, eat, and limit the amount of alcohol you consume to 1 or 2 drinks.
- ◆ Make sure guests who have been drinking have a safe ride home. Never drink and drive.



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