

“Not My Kid”

*Everything you need to know
about underage drinking*

A toolkit for parents, adults,
and the general public to
address underage drinking



Warren
Prevention Coalition



Warren
Prevention Coalition

The Warren Prevention Coalition is dedicated to protecting the health and welfare of youth, families, and community members. The Coalition is comprised of members from various backgrounds who come together to address factors that are proven to increase adolescent substance use rates, such as ease of access to drugs and alcohol, low perception of the risks associated with using, and negative peer influence.

Our Mission

To reduce substance use in a comprehensive and long-term manner with a primary focus on the youth in our community.

Our Vision

To empower the community to create a substance-free environment for our youth by preventing and reducing at-risk behavior including alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drug use.

Please check out our Facebook page for more about the Coalition and follow us on Instagram.



facebook@warrenpreventioncoalition

instagram@warrenprevention

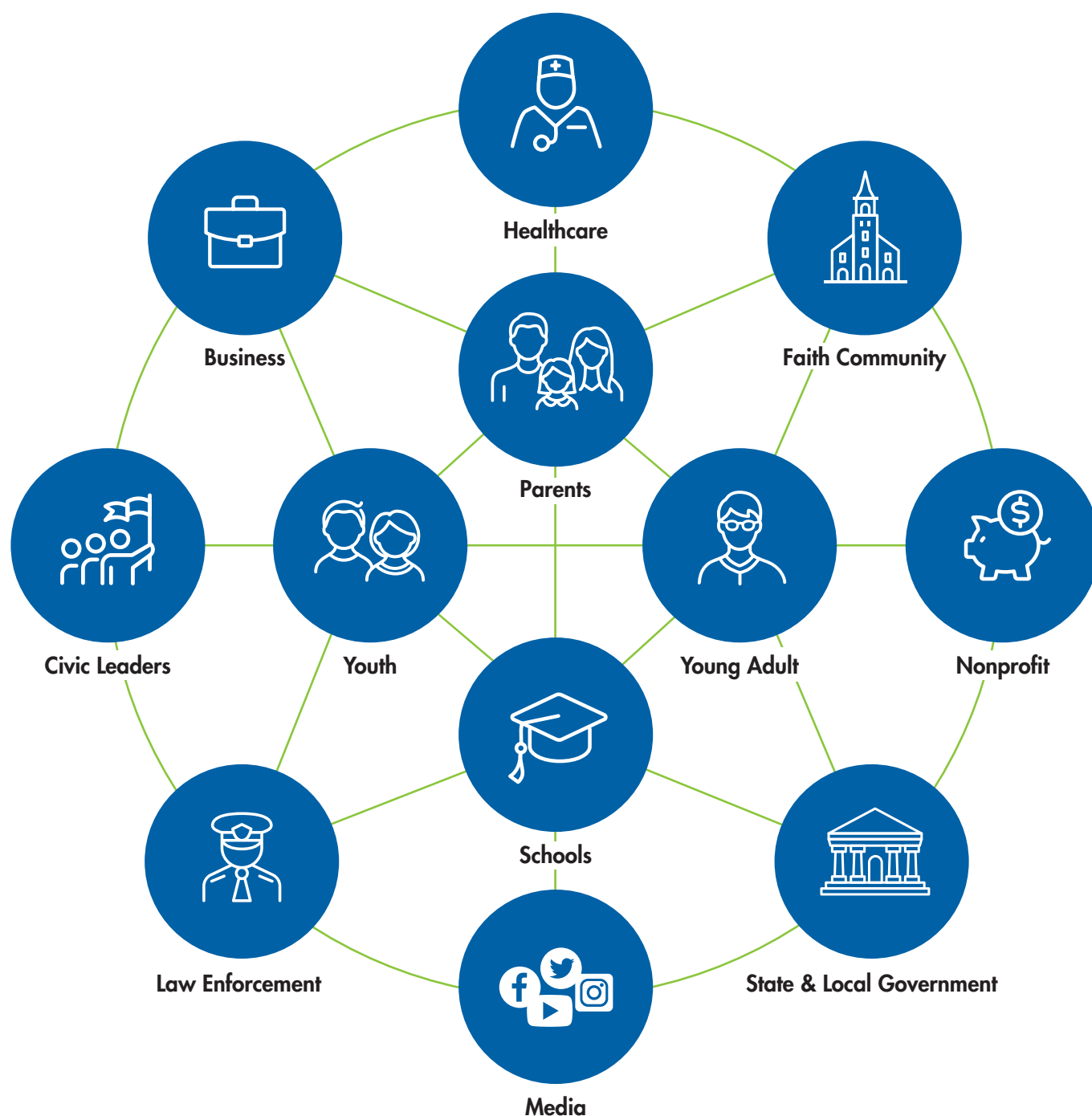
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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this toolkit is to educate and inform parents, guardians, and adults about the dangers and implications of underage drinking; provide a guide that includes recommendations and resources to strengthen and encourage open conversation with youth about alcohol use; and promote a best practices approach to prevent and reduce substance use among youth and young adults.

The Warren Prevention Coalition promotes coordination and collaboration to make efficient use of all community resources by mobilizing the entire community.



DID YOU KNOW?

Underage drinking is when anyone under the legal drinking age of 21 drinks alcohol. It's a risky behavior that attracts many adolescents and teens. When young people try alcohol, they don't often realize the damaging effects drinking can have on their lives, families, and their communities.

Alcohol use and excessive drinking can have short- and long-term effects on young people's mental and physical health and on their lives socially, legally, and financially.

- **Alcohol is the most commonly used and abused substance** among youth and young adults, more than vaping, tobacco, and marijuana.⁷

Young people consume 90% of their alcohol by binge drinking.⁷ Binge drinking is the act of consuming four or five alcoholic beverages during one occasion (approximately 2 hours).⁶ It is the most common, costly, and lethal pattern of excessive alcohol use.⁷

- **On average, underage drinkers consume more drinks** per occasion than most adult drinkers.⁷ The majority of the adults with alcohol dependence disorders began drinking before the age of 18. Research shows that young people who drink before the age of 15 are 4 times more likely to suffer from addiction later in life.⁷

- **The brain does not fully develop until the mid-20s.** Early alcohol use can disrupt normal brain development that is critical to memory, the ability to learn new information and concepts, impulse control, and emotional maturity.¹⁵

- **By age 18, only 58% of teens** report having had at least one drink in their lifetime.¹⁵ However, young people's perception of youth alcohol use is typically higher than the actual rate. This misperception can contribute to more permissive or favorable attitudes toward underage drinking and a decrease in their perception of risk.

- **Research indicates that adults are the predominant source** of alcohol for underage drinkers. Many young people gain access to alcohol through family members or find it at their homes.

HEALTH RISKS & CONSEQUENCES

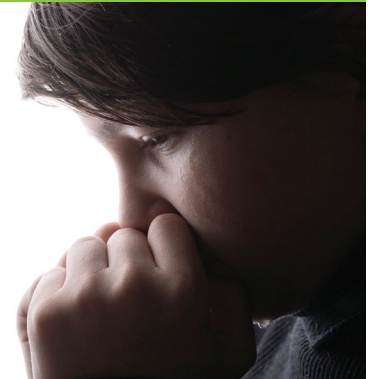
Mental and Psychological Effects

Short Term ^{8, 11, 17}

Impaired judgment
Decreased inhibitions
Dulled perception and vision
Mood changes
Memory difficulties
Loss of consciousness

Long Term ^{13, 19}

Interference with brain development
Depression
Anxiety disorders
Schizophrenia
Learning trouble
Memory loss
Addiction



Physical Effects

Short Term ^{11, 13, 15}

Reduced core body temperature
Raised blood pressure
Vomiting
Slowed reaction times
Slurred speech
Poor limb coordination

Long Term ^{13, 15, 17, 18}

Stroke
Alcoholic hepatitis
Liver fibrosis
Liver cirrhosis
Steatosis (i.e. fatty liver)
Throat, mouth, larynx, breast, liver, colorectal, or esophageal cancer¹
High blood pressure
Cardiomyopathy
Irregular heartbeat



HEALTH RISKS & CONSEQUENCES

Sexual Implications ^{2, 3, 6, 7}

- Increased risk of becoming a victim of sexual assault
 - Diminished usual ability to avoid risk
 - Diminished ability to resist
- Increased risk of becoming a perpetrator of sexual assault
 - Seemingly justified aggression
 - Increased likelihood of misreading body language and social sexual cues
 - Increased likelihood of misunderstanding sexual intentions
- Increased risk of unplanned and unprotected sexual activity
- Increased risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections
- Increased risk of unintended pregnancy
- Disruption in normal growth and sexual development



Social Consequences ^{4, 6, 7}

- Incidents of violence and crime (property damage, homicide, suicide, fights)
- Self-injury (alcohol poisoning, falls, burns, drowning)
- Intimate partner violence
- Financial problems
- Work issues (absenteeism, productivity, performance issues)
- Risky behavior (drinking and driving)

School Consequences ⁹

- Drop in grades
- Truancy (poor attendance)
- Increased dropout rates

Legal Consequences ¹

- DUI
- Vehicular manslaughter
- Public intoxication arrest or citation
- Social host citation
- Jail time
- Difficulty finding employment
- Court-ordered alcoholism treatment



RISK FACTORS & WARNING SIGNS

Risk Factors

- Having a parent with an addiction or issue with alcohol use
- Having close friends and relatives who use alcohol or other drugs
- Impulse control issues, aggressive, antisocial behavior during childhood
- Academic or behavior problems in school
- Communication issues with family
- Lack of adult supervision
- Lack of parental support
- Lack of or overly restrictive boundaries
- Issues with anxiety, depression and other mental health issues
- Having parents with favorable attitudes toward alcohol and other drugs
- History of childhood abuse and trauma
- Heavy exposure to alcohol advertising and marketing



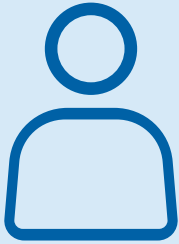
Warning Signs

- Mood changes (anger, defensiveness, and irritability)
- Academic or behavioral problems in school
- Rebellion against family rules
- Friend changes
- A “nothing matters” attitude (sloppy appearance and lack of involvement in former interests)
- Alcohol presence (finding alcohol among their things and smelling alcohol on their breath)
- Physical or mental health problems
- Low energy level
- Slurred speech
- Coordination problems



PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Individual



- High IQ
- High self-esteem
- Good coping and problem-solving skills
- Achievement motivation
- Prosocial activities (i.e., helping, sharing, caring)
- Attending religious services

Family



- Parental involvement
- Strong value placed on education
- Parental disapproval of drug and alcohol use
- Family and relation connections

Community



- Resources
- Social support
- Positive peer influence
- Community involvement

Society



- Laws and policies limiting access to alcohol and drugs
- Cultural influences
- Strictly enforced laws and ordinances



KNOW THE LAW

What is Underage Drinking?

It is illegal for a person under 21 to consume alcohol, possess alcohol, or have any bodily alcohol content.

What is Social Hosting?

Social hosting occurs when an adult knowingly allows a minor, who is not their own child, to consume alcohol in their private residence, on their land, or on other legally secured property.

The primary purpose of the Social Host Law (RI General Laws 3-8-11.1) is to deter underage drinking parties or gatherings where adults knowingly allow minors to drink alcohol, whether or not they provide it.

What Are the Penalties in Rhode Island?

First Offense: Any person over 18 years old who violates the law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$500.

Second and subsequent offenses: Any person who violates the law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000, a term of imprisonment not to exceed one year, or both.

You may be required to make restitution or incur criminal charges if someone is hurt, suffers alcohol poisoning, or is killed as a result of drinking alcohol on your property.

The person in control of the property does not have to be present, does not have to be aware of the drinking, nor do they have to be an adult.

Using a Fake ID

It is illegal to create, possess, purchase, attempt to purchase or possess false identification, and use false identification to purchase or attempt to purchase alcohol. Fake IDs can result in criminal and civil charges, including suspension or revocation of a driver license, forgery, and fraud criminal charges.

Zero Tolerance Laws for Alcohol Use

All 50 states have made it illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to have any measurable alcohol in the contents of their blood while driving. Driving under the influence under the age of 21 can result in loss of driving privileges and felony charges in some states.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR PREVENTION

Parents



- Advocate for environmental and policy change in your community and school systems
- Educate yourselves, adults, and community
- Talk to your children about alcohol and drugs
- Join or volunteer for community organizations or local coalitions

Schools



- Educate students and parents
- Create truancy prevention programs
- Promote social media campaigns, and support youth-led prevention initiatives and clubs
- Include evidence-based alcohol and drug prevention programs in the curriculum

Youth



- Educate peers
- Create and promote social media campaigns
- Advocate for change in your community and school systems
- Join or volunteer for community organizations and coalitions
- Join or volunteer for school-based organizations

Business



- Assist with social marketing and community outreach
- Adopt drug-free workplaces
- Educate employees about alcohol and drugs
- Revise policies and programs to include language addressing drugs and alcohol
- Support community coalitions and organizations

KNOW THE REAL RISKS

Alcohol and the Brain Studies show that the brain is not fully developed until a person passes the age 20. Drinking alcohol during adolescence damages parts of the brain responsible for decision-making, self-control, memory and learning.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR PREVENTION

Law Enforcement



- Ensure underage drinking prevention is a priority
- Enforce underage drinking laws
- Ensure social hosting policies are a priority
- Educate community on consequences of underage drinking, impaired driving, and social host

Healthcare Professionals



- Educate community members and patients
- Advocate for policies that reduce underage drinking
- Join and volunteer for community organizations and local coalitions
- Facilitate workshops and seminars for employees

Youth-Serving Organizations



- Host workshops and seminars to educate community
- Participate in community outreach
- Advocate for policies that reduce underage drinking
- Collaborate with coalitions and community organizations
- Offer SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) workshops and trainings

Government



- Advocate and implement policies to reduce underage drinking
- Advocate for evidence-based prevention programs in public education
- Monitor and address barriers to enforcement of underage drinking policies

KNOW THE REAL RISKS

Binge Drinking and Youth According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, on average, underage drinkers consume more drinks per drinking occasion than adult drinkers, significantly increasing risks to health and safety.

WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR PREVENTION

Media



- Promote campaigns and assist community organizations with social marketing
- Generate and promote editorials
- Publicly recognize prevention partners and businesses
- Promote positive social norming messages
- Promote community coalition and organization success stories

Civic & Volunteer Groups



- Support, collaborate, and volunteer for organizations and community coalitions
- Participate in community outreach
- Host workshops and seminars to educate community
- Advocate for policies that reduce underage drinking

Religious & Faith Groups



- Encourage youth engagement in community coalitions and organizations
- Host workshops and seminars to educate community
- Support, collaborate, and volunteer for organizations and community coalitions
- Participate in community outreach

Community Organizations



- Participate in community outreach
- Collaborate with and support community coalitions
- Host workshops and trainings to educate community
- Advocate for policies that reduce underage drinking

KNOW THE REAL RISKS

Alcohol and a Child's Future A criminal or juvenile record can prevent a young person from getting a job or joining the military. Bad decisions around alcohol can also jeopardize their involvement in school activities, sports or clubs as well as college admissions and financial aid.

BEST PRACTICES

Why You Should Talk With Your Child about Alcohol

The Chance That Children Will Use Alcohol Increases as They Get Older About 10% of 12-year-olds say they have tried alcohol, but by age 15, that number jumps to 50%. The sooner you talk to your children about alcohol, the greater chance you have of influencing their decisions about drinking.

Parents Play a Critical Role in Children's Decisions to Experiment with Alcohol Studies have shown that parents have a significant influence on young people's decisions regarding drinking alcohol, especially when parents create supportive and nurturing environments in which children can make their own decisions.

The Conversation is Often More Effective before Children Start Drinking If you talk to your kids directly and honestly, they are more likely to respect your rules and advice about alcohol use. When parents know about underage alcohol use, they can protect their children from many of the high-risk behaviors associated with it.

Some Children May Try Alcohol as Early as 9 Years Old Most 6-year-olds know that alcohol is only for adults. Between the ages of 9 and 13, children start to view alcohol more positively and many begin to think underage drinking is OK. It is never too early to talk to your children about alcohol.

If You Do Not Talk About It, You Are Still Saying Something What you say to your children about alcohol is up to you. But remember, parents who do not discourage underage drinking may have an indirect influence on their children's alcohol use.



BEST PRACTICES

When to Start the Conversation

- Have conversations frequently and find good times and places to have them
- Have lots of little talks instead of one big one
- Choose informal times, such as in the car, during dinner, or while watching TV
- Continue to talk about alcohol throughout adolescence
- Encourage your child to talk to you

How to Start Conversations

- Give good reasons not to drink
- Develop family rules
- Renegotiate the rules as they get older
- Let them know you're always there
- Share important facts about alcohol
- Teach them how to handle peer pressure
- Ask open-ended questions

**Talk Early. Talk Often.
And Listen.
It Starts With You!**

How to Set Clear Boundaries

- Set clear rules and let your child know that drinking is unacceptable
- Tell your child, "I do not want you drinking until you are 21"
- Make your standards clear to immediate and extended family members and your child's friends' parents
- Enforce your rules
- Ensure alcohol is not available to teens at parties in your home



BEST PRACTICES

Five Goals to Use When Talking to Kids about Alcohol and Other Drugs

1

Show you disapprove of underage drinking and other drug use

More than 80% of young people aged 10–18 say their parents are the leading influence on their decision whether to drink. Send a clear and strong message that you disapprove of underage drinking and use of other drugs.

2

Show you care about your child's health, wellness, and success

Young people are more likely to listen when they know you're on their side. Reinforce why you don't want your child to drink or use other drugs — because you want your child to be happy and safe. The conversation will go a lot better if you're open and you show concern.

3

Show you're a good source of information about alcohol and other drugs

You want your child to make informed decisions about alcohol and other drugs with reliable information about their dangers. You don't want your child to learn about alcohol and other drugs from unreliable sources. Establish yourself as a trustworthy source of information.

4

Show you're paying attention and you'll discourage risky behaviors

Show you're aware of what your child is up to, because young people are more likely to drink or use other drugs if they think no one will notice. Do this in a subtle way, without prying.

5

Build your child's skills and strategies for avoiding underage drinking and drug use

Even if you don't think your child wants to drink or try other drugs, peer pressure is a powerful thing. Having a plan to avoid alcohol and drug use can help children make better choices. Talk with your child about what they would do if faced with a decision about alcohol and drugs, such as texting a code word to a family member or practicing how they'll say, "No thanks."

***Keep it low key.
Don't worry, you don't have to get everything across in one talk.
Plan to have many short talks.***

(Source: SAMHSA's Talk They Hear You Campaign)

RESOURCES

Warren Prevention Coalition

<https://www.warrenprevention.com>

Bristol Warren Regional School District

<https://www.bwrsd.org>

Rhode Island Regional Prevention Coalitions

<https://riprevention.org>

Rhode Island Prevention Resource Center

<https://www.riprc.org>

Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals

<https://bhddh.ri.gov>

East Bay Community Action – East Bay Health Center

<https://www.ebcap.org/center/east-bay-center-john-p-digits-jr-facility/>

East Bay Community Action – East Bay Recovery Center

<https://www.ebcap.org/programs/east-bay-recovery-center/>

BH LINK

<https://www.bhlink.org>

Prevent Overdose RI

<https://preventoverdoseri.org>

Family Task Force – State Youth Treatment Planning Program

<https://www.familytaskforce.org>

Regional Center for Poison Control and Prevention

<http://www.maripoisoncenter.com>

***Talk. They Hear You Campaign* from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

<https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/mobile-application>

National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov>

Campaign to Change Direction

<https://www.changedirection.org>

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)

<https://community.cadca.org/home>

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It Starts With YOU!



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#Connectionisthebestprevention

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