



CommunityNEWS

Promoting Health & Wellness through prevention in our Community.

Talk with Teens About the Risks of Drinking at Prom & Graduation

Prom and graduation are two of the most exciting events in a teen's high school experience. It's a time to celebrate the end of the school year and remember it for the rest of their lives.

Unfortunately too often prom and graduation night end tragically for teens as a result of drinking and driving or from alcohol poisoning. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one in three deaths from alcohol-related incidents occurs during prom or graduation weekend.

Parents and the community as a whole should promote the message to teens that alcohol consumption is unacceptable, especially at prom and graduation time when peer pressure can be much higher. It is illegal, unsafe and unhealthy for anyone under age 21 to drink alcohol.

Know the facts:

- Parents who give alcohol to their teen's friends under any circumstances, even in their own homes, break the law.
- Adults who knowingly allow a person under age 21 to remain in their home or on their property while drinking or possessing alcohol can be prosecuted.
- Adults can be sued if they provide alcohol to those under 21 years old and they, in turn, hurt someone, hurt themselves, or damage someone's property.

Parents play a major role in their children's choices about alcohol and other drugs. Parents can help their teens and their friends remain safe by taking responsibility, getting involved and discussing limits. Share your expectations with your child. You may have talked many times about healthy choices, but it's important to be very clear about no alcohol before 21.

Present possible scenarios and what to do in these situations. Set a curfew that you can

be awake for. Make sure teens are home at the agreed-upon time and you see them walk in the door. Use that time to hear details of their evening.

If hosting a party, don't provide or allow underage alcohol use. Adults who provide alcohol to minors are not only breaking the law but are putting their young lives at risk.

Parents and teens are encouraged to make the decision before spring events to be safe, which means staying alcohol-free. Make sure your teen understands your expectations and the consequences. Healthy choices and good communication can create those happy memories that last a lifetime.



Parents Can Help Make Summer Safe for Their Teens!

There's a lot of information out there about making our homes safe for young children but what about making them safe for teens. During the summer months, the majority of teens are home alone for at least some amount of time, and there are plenty of ways for them to get in trouble or get hurt. So, how can parents keep teens safe?

While you can't keep all dangers out of reach of teens, you can help reduce the risks. Start with those you can control simply. Just as you would do with young children, you want to secure things in your home that teens may be tempted to experiment with like alcohol or drugs.

- Secure all alcoholic beverages, and monitor those kept in places like the refrigerator in garage or basement.
- Store prescription medications and over the over-the-counter medications in a secure place.
- Don't forget to ask the parents of your child's friends if they have taken similar precautions in their homes.

Talk to your teen about responsible phone use. That means no use while driving. No texts. No Snapchat posts. No calls to friends. They need to know that when they are driving, the phone is not in use. iPhones have a feature where notifications are automatically turned off when motion is detected.



Make sure your teen eats healthy. Plan a menu with your kids to get their input and teach them how to build a healthy diet on their own. Have at least one meal together as a family. It not only ensures your child is having a healthy meal, but it fosters communication which is a key prevention tool!

High School: A Perfect Time to Talk to Teens About Drinking

The high school years are a time when alcohol may come into play for different reasons. It's a time of adventure, new challenges, and taking risks for teenagers — and alcohol is often one of the risks. Most teens don't consider the short and long-term affects of alcohol.

Stress is one of the reasons that teens experiment with alcohol. Teens worry about grades, fitting in, and physical appearance, and they may use alcohol to cover anxieties. Transitioning to high school, breaking up with a significant other, moving, or dealing with a family member's divorce can also be stressors. Youth between the ages of 11 and 18 are especially susceptible to outside influences, especially from peers and family.

Parents are the greatest influence on their child's decision to consume alcohol or not which is why talking with them about underage drinking is so important.

SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You." Underage Drinking Prevention Campaign was developed to empower parents and caregivers to talk with children early about alcohol and other drug use.



[Helpful parent resources from SAMHSA available at <https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources>](https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources)

It's Here
When You **tip** 411
Need It!



With the Warren Police Department smartphone tool you can get updates, view alerts and submit anonymous tips.

Text "warrenpd" to 847411 or submit message through the department's website.
TIP411 is not intended for reporting emergencies.
Always call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

FREE download on Google Play, iTunes App, or visit the Warren Police Department website.

More information available on the WPD website at <https://www.warrenripolice.com/tip-411>

Tool for Screening for Teen Health, Wellness, & Wellbeing



Talking with your kids early and often about underage drinking and other drug use can help keep them safe. But how do you know if your child needs more support, and where do you go to find it? The answer is *Screen4Success*, a new, user-friendly interactive tool from SAMHSA's "Talk. They Hear You."® Campaign designed to help parents and caregivers better understand the health, wellness, and wellbeing of their children and find resources to address their needs.

This 10-minute screener will look for signs of elevated risk and help you find support to address their needs. The Resources section will provide you with recommended support services that are available in your area and at the national level.

Screen4Success asks questions about substance use, mental and physical health, general wellbeing, and family life. It provides an easy way for parents and caregivers to identify areas where their children may benefit from additional support. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to fill out the screener with their kids — this provides opportunities for discussion in the moment — but if that's not possible, they can send it to them to complete on their own.

Access *Screen4Success* on your mobile device through the "Talk. They Hear You." Campaign mobile app. Download this app for free on App Store, Google Play, and Microsoft Store.

[samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/mobile-application](https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/mobile-application)

Teaching Refusal Skills for Teens

Learning consent and refusal skills for teens is essential — whether it's practiced in relationships, events, or choosing not to use alcohol or other drugs.

Your teen may face situations where others want them to do something risky or unhealthy. Unfortunately, many teens "go along" not because they want to, but simply because they don't know how to respond. They're afraid of losing a friend, looking uncool, or being left out. Parents can help by suggesting ways to say "no" in a variety of ways and a variety of situations.

Ways teens can say "no" to alcohol and other drug use:

- **Make a joke.** Sometimes humor is the best way to respond to a situation. It can lighten a serious mood and divert attention away from your child.
- **Give a reason why it's a bad idea.** Maybe they can't smoke because it could get them kicked off the team. Backing up refusals with evidence gives it more power.
- **Just say no, plainly and firmly.** In some situations, just saying no without a lot of explaining is the best response. Make sure their "no" is a strong and determined one.
- **Suggest an alternative activity.** Kids can end up doing stuff they shouldn't because they lack other options. By offering something better to do, it can give others an "out" too.
- **Leave the situation.** If your child doesn't like where things are headed, they can leave the situation. If they lead the way, other kids who don't want to do it either may follow.
- **Thanks, but no thanks.** They can be polite but aren't interested. It just something they're not into.
- **The power of numbers.** Have them make a pact with friends to stick to their feeling. Knowing friends will back them up can help them be more assertive.

By learning these skills, teens are more likely to be able to come up with a response that fits the situation when the time arises. This will help them develop assertiveness skills as well as confidence.



Good Role Models Can Make a Real Difference in Teens' Lives

All of us remember those key individuals who made a difference in our lives when we were growing up. These role models are the backbone of a kid's protective measures when it comes to drug and alcohol misuse. A kid presented with the choice to use substances will often find themselves asking — 'what would my role model do?'



Being a positive influence on teens is the best way to help them make the right choices — especially when it comes to alcohol or other substance use. Research shows that parents and caregivers are the number one reason that kids choose not to drink or use drugs. But preventing underage drinking or substance misuse takes a community. Together, parents, caregivers, and other role models can help give kids the confidence to grow up alcohol and substance-free.

Start with Conversations

Kids listen to what role models say. After all, you are the biggest positive influence in their lives. Short, casual conversations with kids, starting around age 8, make a big difference. And they can happen anywhere and anytime! Take time to engage with your children about what matters to them.

Provide Reliable Information

It's important to know the facts. When explained by an adult, data about substance use can make a real difference in kids' choices and opinions. Have open, honest conversations about the risks. Give kids the facts in a way they can relate, like how it can affect grades, favorite activities, health, and relationships.

Offer Assistance and Support

Being a teen isn't easy. They're going through a lot of changes as they grow and face a lot of pressure, often from their peers. Let them know that you are always there for them when they need a hand or someone to talk with. Offer them support and understanding in a non-judgmental way.

Talk About Your Own Experiences

If you feel comfortable, share experiences you had when you were young. If a kid can relate to you and your experiences, they will have more confidence to make the right choice when faced with pressure to drink or use substances. Give them healthy coping strategies and tell them it's ok to say no.

Help Create an Exit Strategy

All kids face peer pressure in one form or another. This is especially true when it comes to underage drinking or youth substance use. Helping teens create an exit strategy when they find themselves in a situation where they're offered alcohol or drugs prepares them to make the right choices.

What Do Role Models Do?

Every role model has a different relationship with the kids in their lives. Given that unique connection, every adult has an opportunity to help combat youth substance use.

Working together, we can all help reduce underage drinking and drug use among teens. Our Coalition is dedicated in supporting parents and caregivers as role models in kids' lives.

Community RESOURCES

East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP)
100 Bullocks Point Ave., Riverside, RI (401) 437-1000

East Bay Center 2 Old County Rd., Barrington, RI
(401) 246-1195

East Bay Recovery Center 31 Railroad Ave., Warren, RI
(401) 302-6231 or 401-289-2055

BH Link Hotline — (401) 414-LINK (414-5465)
24/7 – help with a behavioral healthcare crisis.

St. Mary of the Bay Food Pantry
645 Main St., Warren RI (401) 245-7000 ext 19

Warren Health Equity Zone (HEZ)
790 Main St., Warren RI (401) 486-5195



Warren
Prevention Coalition

514 Main Street, Warren, RI 02885 • 401.245.7387

#Connectionisthebestprevention

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