



Five Tips for Preventing Underage Drinking

Tip 1 Limit Access

- GOOD:** If you have alcohol and prescription drugs in your home, keep track of them - know what and how much you have - and keep it where it is not accessible to teens.
- BETTER:** Ask young adult relatives not to provide your teen with alcohol.
- BEST:** Alert the police if you have information about where or how teens are getting alcohol in your community.

Tip 2 Network

- GOOD:** Get to know your teen's friends.
- BETTER:** Get to know the parents of your teen's friends. Know their rules so you don't have to just accept the argument "everybody else is allowed to..."
- BEST:** Let the parents of your teen's friends know your rules, and where you stand on underage alcohol use - no drinking or supplying alcohol, ever.

Tip 3 Reinforce and Enforce

- GOOD:** Reinforce the rules and consequences of underage drinking with your teen.
- BETTER:** Explain the reasons behind the rules so your teen understands the rules are a protective measure, not just a restriction on their freedom.
- BEST:** Enforce your rules consistently. Don't look the other way if your teen violates the rules. Your teen needs to know that you are serious and that he or she will be held accountable for violating them.

Tip 4 Check In Often

- GOOD:** Before your teen goes to a party or gathering, ask if adults will be there and call the host to make sure alcohol will not be available.
- BETTER:** Ask your teen to call you from the party or gathering. If you have caller ID, ask him or her to use a land line, not a cell phone so that you can tell where your teen actually is at that time.
- BEST:** Trust but verify; check in with other parents about your teen's activities or drop by occasionally.

Tip 5 Be Awake and Be Ready

- GOOD:** Wait up, or set the alarm for curfew time - talk with your teen about their night.
- BETTER:** Know the signs of alcohol and drug use. Teens who believe their parents would find out about their substance use are less likely to drink.
- BEST:** Plan in advance what you would do if you discover that your teen has been drinking or using drugs. Determine ahead of time how you want to react, how you would enforce the consequences, and who you would turn to for support or guidance if necessary.