

10 Prevention Steps for Parents

- 1. START EARLY ...** So you can instill values and give information to your children about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs before they reach the age when they are likely to be asked to try alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, inhalants, or other drugs.
- 2. DON'T BE AN ENABLER ...** By being passive when you see anyone or anything (TV or movies) encouraging your kids to use alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other drugs. Speak up and take a firm stand against their use. Also, be sure that alcohol and medications are safely secured in your home and stored away from children.
- 3. REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR CHILD ...** Actions speak louder than words. If you use or abuse alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs, your child is at greater risk to use them too.
- 4. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EVERY TEACHABLE MOMENT ...** Use news stories, events in your community, television shows, and movies as opportunities to discuss alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- 5. REINFORCE BOTH THE INFORMATION AND THE RULES YOU TEACH YOUR CHILD ...** Remember how many times you have to tell them to turn off the lights, eat their vegetables, or do their homework?
- 6. KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE AT HOME, IN SCHOOL, AND WITH FRIENDS ...** Listen to your child and to your child's friends. Stay aware and ask questions.
- 7. KNOW THE ATTITUDES TOWARDS ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUG USE, WHICH YOUR CHILD MAY BE LEARNING ...** From babysitters, day care providers, camp counselors, neighbors, family, friends, and relatives.
- 8. IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS EXPERIMENTING WITH ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, OR OTHER DRUGS, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT ...** Don't wait for the problem to go away by itself. Take appropriate action and don't back down. Parents have good instincts - trust them.
- 9. KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PARENTS OF YOUR CHILD'S FRIENDS ...** Work together with other parents to establish curfews and other rules for all your children, whatever their ages.
- 10. REMEMBER, PARENT POWER IS STRONGER THAN PEER PRESSURE ...** Parents are the first line of defense for safe, healthy, drug-free youth! Stand together!

The Facts About Our Youth

**Children don't stay alcohol or drug-free by luck.
It takes caring, commitment, and communication.**

- Alcohol is a drug.
- Alcohol is the #1 drug of choice among our Nation's youth (also #1 with PA youth).
- The average age of first alcohol use is 13.
- Kids drink to gain acceptance by peers and to feel the effects of alcohol.
- More than 40% of the children who start drinking before they are 13 will develop alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence at some point in their lives.
- Penalties for minors (youth under 21) who use a false ID, drink beverage alcohol, become intoxicated, attempt to purchase, purchase, possess, or transport alcohol include: fines up to \$300, the suspension of future driving privileges (90 days), and incarceration (90 days).
- Adults who sell, furnish, or purchase with the intent to sell or furnish alcohol to anyone under 21 (even their own children), or provide them a place to consume alcohol, face the following penalties: mandatory fines from \$1,000 - \$2,500 and incarceration up to 1 year.
- Several of the strongest protective factors against adolescent substance abuse are present in families who provide a supportive, loving environment in which education is valued and there are clear expectations of behavior.
- Parents can greatly influence whether their children will experience alcohol-related problems.

Be aware that most adolescent alcohol and drug use takes place in the home when parents are absent. Kids often take liquor and beer from home or their friends' homes, especially when that supply is readily available (in the fridge, for example), rather than locked in a cabinet. Adolescents are very crafty and can usually find "hidden" alcohol products. They are also quite creative in finding hiding spots for their own supply.

PA YOUTH ALCOHOL USE¹

Alcohol, including beer, wine, and hard liquor, is the drug used most by today's adolescents. Overall, 49% of Pennsylvania students (6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders) have used alcohol at least once in their lifetime.

Students among 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who have tried alcohol:

20.8% of 6th
45% of 8th
56.7% of 10th
70% of 12th

Students among 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders who have reported binge drinking* :

1.2% of 6th
7.5% of 8th
15.7% of 10th
27.6% of 12th

*Binge drinking, in this study, is consuming five or more drinks in a row within the two weeks before the survey.

ADOLESCENT DRINKING AND DRIVING²

- ▶ 27% of the driver deaths in the 16 - 20 age group were drinking drivers.
- ▶ There were 1,294 underage drinking drivers involved in Pennsylvania crashes in 2009.
- ▶ 27.4% of the total number of drinking driver deaths occurred in the 16 - 20 year-old age group.

¹PA Youth Survey, 2009

²PA Department of Transportation, 2009

Planning a Party the SAFE Way

The planning of a party or gathering is the most important aspect of the event and will help ensure its success. Proper planning provides an opportunity for dialogue and cooperation between parents and teenagers. The fun and success of your party will be a direct result of your efforts!

PARTY PLANNING

- Set ground rules in advance.
 - No alcohol or drugs allowed.
 - Party should be by invitation only.
 - No leaving the party and then returning.
 - All regular house rules apply.
- Agree on basic plan for party.
 - Who will be on the guest list? Agree to a final count.
 - What time will it start **and** end?
 - Where will the party be held? (Indoors? Outdoors?)
 - What equipment is lacking or needed?
- Agree to work together to make the party a success.

Never allow alcohol, tobacco, or drugs at the parties you sponsor with your children. The penalty for providing alcohol to minors is a minimum fine of \$1,000 and up to a year in jail.

Parent Responsibilities

- ▶ Be visible and available when guests arrive and throughout party.
- ▶ Help with refreshments so your child can attend to guests.
- ▶ Enforce no alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

Teen Responsibilities

- ▶ Take responsibility for preparation.
- ▶ Welcome people at the door.
- ▶ Be a leader in starting activities.
- ▶ Encourage guests to participate.
 - Discourage undesirable behavior.
 - Get parent help if needed.
 - Have fun yourself.
 - Make sure everything is cleaned up.

HOSTING THE EVENT

- Expect to be available to talk to other parents about the party in advance and to be present when they drop off their children at your home.
- Be present when guests are leaving and pay close attention for any unusual or suspicious behavior.
- Immediately call the parents of any child possessing alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs or appearing to be under the influence. Under no circumstance should you let the youth alone or allow them to leave until their parents come to pick them up.

IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES

Volleyball	Tug of War	Pumpkin carving	Costume party
Softball	Kites	Haunted House	Pancake supper
Soccer	Dancing	Art projects	Luau
Frisbee	Movies	Sundae bar	Manicure/Pedicures
Ping-pong	Magician	Ice Skating	Make-your-own Pizza
Board games	Lawn games	Barbeque	Talent contest
Charades	Piñatas	Roller-skating	Tie-dye T-shirts
Swimming	Hayride	Scavenger Hunt	Mystery

Elementary Parent Issues

Many parents feel that elementary school-age children are too young to talk about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention—thinking that they will wait until the teen years. There are, however, special advantages to starting early that parents of elementary students should consider.

Starting prevention practices early is easier for both the parents and the child. It is a continuation of the prevention efforts that parents have been using since their children were born.

Parents of children in elementary school can work together to develop guidelines concerning:

- Family responsibilities
- Bedtime
- Sleepover parties
- Rules for babysitters or babysitting
- Invitations to parties and gatherings
- Age to go to malls alone or with friends
- Types of movies can attend or watch at home
- Attending rock concerts
- Household chores
- Allowances/spending money
- Supervision when parents not home
- Internet rules
- Dating— when appropriate
- Transportation issues
- Types of music, MTV, radio, and TV programs
- Homework/study habits
- Appropriate clothing, language, and behavior
- Makeup—when appropriate

- Developing guidelines (rules), with logical and meaningful consequences, is an effective way to educate children at any age about many important issues—not just alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- Networking with other parents provides a chance to develop positive guidelines and consistent limits on a wide variety of topics that parents face in today's changing environment.
- Parents who have been networking since the primary school years will find that their children will naturally expect this communication to continue throughout their school years— even as they mature and become part of a larger and more diverse peer group. Parents need to know these parents of their children's new friends and continue the protection that networking allows.
- Parents can take advantage of the fact that younger children want their parents to take active, visible roles in school and social activities. However, parents must not be content to think that early participation is enough. Parents must continue the effort throughout the teen years.

Every child is at risk to use alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Talking to Your Kids About Alcohol

Common arguments from your children and answers that make sense.

QUESTION: *What's the big deal? Beer or wine coolers won't hurt me as much as liquor.*

REPLY: Alcohol is alcohol. Regular servings of beer and wine coolers contain the same amount of alcohol as a glass of "regular" wine or a 1.5-ounce shot of liquor. They all have the same effect.

QUESTION: *What's wrong with kids drinking?*

REPLY: A young person who has had just two drinks is ten times more likely to have a car crash than an adult who has had two drinks. Kids who drink get lower grades and are less likely to finish school. Alcohol affects concentration, coordination, and development. This not only hurts your grades, but also keeps you from doing your best at sports, music, art, or whatever else it is you like to do.

QUESTION: *It's okay for you to drink, so why can't I?*

REPLY: First, using a drug like alcohol is a privilege, which comes with being an adult. There are many things you can do at your age that you would consider dangerous for a child younger than you. In the same way, using alcohol at your age is dangerous for you. You are still developing physically, socially, and emotionally. Second, it is illegal for you to drink alcohol. You could face many consequences as a result of drinking as a minor—both physically and judicially. The risks are just too great for a child to fully comprehend. As a parent, it is my job to help you mature into a responsible, healthy adult who respects the law.

QUESTION: *Since I don't drive yet, I don't have to worry about having my license suspended, so what's the problem?*

REPLY: Because you are under 21, it is against the law for you to drink alcohol. If you are caught drinking, possessing, trying to buy alcohol, lying about your age, using a fake ID to purchase alcohol, or transporting alcohol before you are 21, you will face serious trouble. Penalties include fines, loss of driving privileges, and jail time. For those under 16, the loss of driving privileges begins when applying for the permit.

QUESTION: *Everybody my age drinks. If I don't drink, I'll lose my friends.*

REPLY: More and more kids your age are choosing to be alcohol-free, but the perception many students have—that everyone drinks—is a myth. Besides, a real friend won't pressure you to do anything you don't want to do, especially something dangerous. Your real friends—the ones that want the best for you—will stand by your decision not to drink. Maybe they would be happy to have someone support them in their decision to be alcohol-free, too.

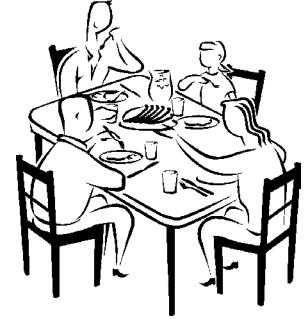
QUESTION: *Wouldn't you rather I drink than take drugs?*

REPLY: Alcohol is a drug! Recent studies have shown that the heavier the alcohol use, the more likely it is that the heavier use of other drugs will also be an issue. Consuming alcohol when using other drugs can multiply the effects of those drugs and have disastrous outcomes—even accidental death (overdose).

Quiz for Parents

DOES MY CHILD HAVE A PROBLEM?

This can sometimes be a difficult question to answer, especially during the initial stages of alcohol and other drug use, when you may see little direct evidence that your child is using. Some signs of alcohol and/or other drug use can often be confused with "normal" adolescent behavior or other health problems. Other signs, however, are very strong indicators.



Please circle your answer.

1. Has your child's personality changed remarkably?
YES NO UNSURE
2. Do your child's moods change quickly? Does he/she seem sullen, withdrawn from the family and/or display sudden anger or depression?
YES NO UNSURE
3. Does your child spend hours alone in his/her room?
YES NO UNSURE
4. Has your child lost interest in school, school activities, or school athletics?
YES NO UNSURE
5. Has your child stopped spending time with old friends and started spending time with kids that worry you?
YES NO UNSURE
6. Is your child secretive or evasive about his/her friends, where they go, and what they do?
YES NO UNSURE
7. Have you suspected that money or other objects have been missing from around the house?
YES NO UNSURE
8. Have you noticed your child having more money than you would expect?
YES NO UNSURE
9. Has your child been in contact with the law and have alcohol or other drugs been involved in any way?
YES NO UNSURE
10. Does your child get angry and defensive when you talk to him/her about alcohol and other drugs or refuse to discuss the topic at all?
YES NO UNSURE
11. Has your child become dishonest? Do you feel you're not getting straight answers about what your child is doing, who he/she is with, or where he/she is going?
YES NO UNSURE
12. Are there physical signs of alcohol use? Have you smelled alcohol on your child's breath?
YES NO UNSURE
13. Are there physical signs of other drug use? Have you smelled the odor of marijuana or tobacco on your child's clothing or in his/her room?
YES NO UNSURE
14. Has your child had slurred speech when talking to you or thoughts that seem to be unclear?
YES NO UNSURE
15. Has your child had bloodshot eyes, swaggering gait, or has he/she been physically unable to stand?
YES NO UNSURE

Quiz for Parents (continued)

- 16.** Have you seen evidence of alcohol? Have you ever found a hidden bottle or beer cans carelessly left in the car?
YES NO UNSURE
- 17.** Have you seen evidence of other drugs such as tobacco, marijuana seeds, pipes, rolling papers, or other drug paraphernalia?
YES NO UNSURE
- 18.** Have your child's relationships with you or other family members deteriorated?
YES NO UNSURE
- 19.** Is your child less interested in siblings or does he/she now verbally (or even physically) abuse younger brothers and sisters?
YES NO UNSURE
- 20.** Has your child ever been caught with alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs at school or school activities?
YES NO UNSURE
- 21.** Has your child's grooming deteriorated and/or does he/she dress in a way that may be associated with drug use?
YES NO UNSURE
- 22.** Has your child's taste in music changed or become more drug-oriented?
YES NO UNSURE
- 23.** Has your child lost interest in school and/or other activities?
YES NO UNSURE
- 24.** Does your child seem unhealthy, lethargic, more forgetful, and less active?
YES NO UNSURE

This questionnaire is not a scientific instrument and is not meant to diagnose alcohol and drug problems. It is meant to alert parents to the signs that help determine when problems exist. The questions are red flag detectors and may show a need for further investigation. Keep in mind that some of these questions can be answered "yes," but simply reflect normal adolescent behavior. "Yes" answers to questions directly related to alcohol and other drug use are, of course, cause for concern.

Parents should look for an emerging pattern. A few "yes" or "unsure" answers should alert parents to suspect alcohol and drug use. Monitor the child more closely, talk to knowledgeable sources, and prepare to receive outside help.

If you answered "yes" to 3 or more questions, help is probably needed. Your child may be in the experimental stages or may already be heavily involved in alcohol or other drugs. Remember that it is very difficult to handle this problem without the help of others. Do not fool yourself into believing it will pass with time. It may be a more serious problem than you realize.

Trust your instincts. If you are concerned, there is probably a good reason. Take action! Call a knowledgeable source and discuss this questionnaire with them.

Understanding Adolescent Drug Use

For a community to be successful in preventing adolescent alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use, it is necessary to learn how and why children experiment with drugs.



- **Adolescent Curiosity**

The numerous stories heard about other young people and their reactions to drugs stimulate a natural curiosity to experience these same feelings. There is also an element of adventurous risk-taking that is a normal part of adolescence.

- **Availability**

Drugs are readily available in most communities. Younger children get them from older siblings. Teens have many potential sources for obtaining substances—friends and neighbors, co-workers, people on the street, and at parties. Sometimes, the family medicine cabinet, liquor cabinet, or refrigerator can provide an adequate supply.

- **Peer Pressure**

The need for acceptance and the desire to be part of the group have a strong influence on young people to experiment with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. This is reinforced by the need of those using drugs to involve others in their lifestyle.

- **Modeling**

For some, using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs is a way of coping with the anxieties of adolescence and everyday stresses of home and school. One of every six commercials on prime time TV advertises some sort of drug or chemically related relief. It is a short step for the average teenager to connect this message with that of the local dealer who dispenses chemicals that will make you forget about your problems for a while.

- **Cultural Acceptability**

Television, movies, and the Internet all carry messages and commercials that either directly or indirectly signal the acceptability of the adolescent use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. The lyrics of many of today's popular songs carry similar messages. The availability of drug paraphernalia in record shops and mall kiosks leads young people to conclude that society approves of the use of drugs. Celebrities from all fields talk openly of their drug use and are common stories in the daily news. Based on all of this, it is easy to see how young people are getting the message that "everyone does it" and it's OK.

- **Parental Denial**

Most adults are woefully unaware of the harmful effects associated with adolescent use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. They generally have no idea what common drugs look like or the side effects of their use. They are often ill equipped to discuss the topic with their children, cannot recognize its presence in their home, and consequently, are not prepared to confront the problem of drug use or experimentation as they should. Many parents ignore the symptoms of drug use and label unusual behavior as a phase their child will eventually outgrow.

Reporting Underage Drinking

A statewide toll-free hotline for anonymous tips and complaints about underage drinking is available in Pennsylvania. The callers can report underage drinking parties—planned or in progress—or establishments selling or serving alcohol to minors. Callers can also report sellers or manufacturers of false identification. Calls and information are then relayed to the appropriate local law enforcement agencies for investigation.

The hotline is designed to provide citizens with the opportunity and power to do something about community underage drinking problems.

**ALL CALLS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL AND
MAY BE MADE ANONYMOUSLY**

To report underage drinking, call:

1-888-UNDER-21

For underage drinkers, the party's over.

Local Resources

The PLCB provides contact information and referral sources for each county at their web site: www.lcb.state.pa.us.

The following programs are included:

- Comprehensive Highway Safety Programs
- Driving Under the Influence Association
- PLCB's Responsible Alcohol Management Program (RAMP)
- Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement
- Pennsylvanians Against Underage Drinking (PAUD)
- Single County Authorities

PA Comprehensive Highway Safety Programs

1 (800) 422-2358

The Comprehensive Highway Safety Program provides education and information on highway issues. Highway safety programs and training are available for preschool through senior high, colleges, business and industry, law enforcement, senior centers, community groups, and public service organizations.

Pennsylvania Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Association

1 (800) 62-PA-DUI

The Pennsylvania Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Association is a professional organization which is working to address the DUI problem in all of its many stages—from prevention to enforcement up to, and including, adjudication and rehabilitation. They provide information, direction, training, and support with the purpose of working toward the elimination of impaired drivers and the harm they can cause.

Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, Bureau of Alcohol Education, Responsible Alcohol Management Program

1 (866) 275-8237

The program includes pamphlets, brochures and other printed materials, video presentations, educational seminars, and consulting for licensees. RAMP is offered to supplement, not replace, established server training programs.

Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement

1 (800) 932-0602

The Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement has the responsibility to investigate violations of beverage alcohol law. To report liquor law violations, you may call the 24 hours a day Hotline at 800-932-0602. All complaints, anonymous or otherwise, are investigated.

Single County Authorities

(717) 783-8200

The PA Department of Health Single County Authorities can be a good starting point when searching for additional information. These local programs provide education, prevention, intervention, and treatment services to all individuals without restriction.

Additional Resources

Crisis Hotlines

PA HIV/AIDS Helpline	1 (800) 662-6080
Childline-Child Abuse	1 (800) 932-0313
Crisis Hotline-Suicide, National Helpline Network	1 (800) 784-2433
Parents Anonymous	1 (800) 448-4906
American Association of Poison Control Centers: (<i>National office-will direct call to local poison control</i>)	1 (800) 222-1222
Toughlove	1 (800) 333-1069

Enforcement

Pennsylvania State Police, Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement	1 (800) 932-0602
To Report Underage Drinking (anonymous)	1 (888) UNDER-21

Legal Help

Pennsylvania Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service	1 (800) 692-7375
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Prevention

Pennsylvania DUI Association and SADD	1 (800) 62-PA-DUI
Pennsylvanians Against Underage Drinking	(717) 238-4354

Resources and Referrals

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention	1 (800) 662-HELP
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America	1 (800) 54-CADCA
Communities That Care (Channing Bete Company)	1 (800) 828-2827 ext 6361
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information	1 (800) 729-6686
National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependency Hope Line	1 (800) 622-2255
Pennsylvania Department of Health—Health Information Line	1 (877)PA HEALTH

Support Groups and Self-Help

Alateen	1 (800)356-9996
Al-Anon	1 (800)356-9996
Alcoholics Anonymous (general information number)	(212) 870-3400
MADD Pennsylvania Victims Hotline	1 (800) 848-6233
MADD (Pennsylvania state office)	(717) 657-3911
The Family Compass (Hotlines & Helplines in the US)	1 (866) 490-3666

Websites for Parents

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board is pleased to provide you with links to other prevention resources through the Internet.

Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board

www.lcb.state.pa.us

Parent Resources

American Outreach Association

www.americanoutreach.org

Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids

www.tobaccofreekids.org

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

www.cadca.org

Developing Capable Young People

www.empoweringpeople.com

Growing Up Drug-Free

www.health.org/govpubs

Informed Families

www.informedfamilies.org

Keeping Youth Drug Free

www.health.org/govpubs/PHD711

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information

www.health.org

National Inhalant Prevention Coalition

www.inhalants.org

National PTA

www.pta.org

National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign

www.theantidrug.com

PA DUI Association

www.padui.org

Parenting is Prevention

www.parentingisprevention.org

PRIDE-Omaha, Inc.

www.pride.org

Security on Campus

www.securityoncampus.org

Talking with Kids About Tough Issues

www.talkingwithkids.org

Support Groups and Self Help

Al-Anon/Alateen

www.al-anon.alateen.org

MADD

www.madd.org

Parents Anonymous

www.parentsanonymous.org