

## MIXED MESSAGES MAY LEAD TO MIXED DRINKS

- **Be** straight with your kids when it comes to the dangers of alcohol:
- **Be a good role model.** Don't engage in illegal or unhealthy behavior and don't host drinking parties for your kids or anyone else's.
- **Set and enforce rules** against underage drinking and keep alcohol out of reach of children too young to follow them.
- **Be clear and concise** when it comes to your position on underage drinking. Let others know your views if your child will be a guest in their house.
- **Listen to your teens** and provide love, support, and encouragement.
- **Be aware of the connection between alcohol and other drugs and sexually transmitted diseases** like HIV/AIDS.
- If a young family member shows signs of alcohol problems, **know what alcohol addiction and help resources are available in your community.**
- **Help children learn the consequences.** Alcohol use is illegal and dangerous under the age of 21 and can have devastating health, safety, and legal consequences.
- **Be sure children have access to a variety of alcohol-free alternatives** and safe, monitored places they can gather.
- **Discuss alcohol advertising and marketing with youths.** Seek their opinions on these messages, ask if they understand the purpose and if they recognize why harmful effects of drinking aren't shown.
- **Support public policy programs that make your community, state, and country safer and healthier.**

You can not always control where alcohol is nor prevent it from being in certain environments (bars, house-parties, festivals, sporting events, etc.). However, at times with the help of others, you can always make a point of knowing where alcohol is and seeing to it that your child is always somewhere else, if not with you. Keep in mind that, in addition to being their ultimate authority, parents are a child's most influential role model.

*“Remember- No one has the right to provide your underage child with alcohol. No one has the right to violate the sanctity of your parental domain. They do not have the right morally or legally.”*

*Paul Bogosian, Chairman  
Chautauqua County Underage Drinking Task Force*

UNDERAGE  
DRINKING  
Not a minor problem

Chautauqua County  
Underage Drinking Task Force  
&

Chautauqua Alcoholism  
& Substance Abuse Council

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Prevent UNDERAGE  
DRINKING!  
WHAT Parents  
CAN DO!



See it. Hear it. Talk about it.  
Parents DO make a difference.



Chautauqua Alcoholism  
& Substance Abuse Council

&  
Chautauqua County  
Underage Drinking Task Force

**Parents DO make  
a difference!**

## What Parents Can Do:

No parent wants to think of their child as one of the thousands of teens who drink—or about all the things that can happen when they do. Still, by the time they're in their senior year of high school, four out of five teens have consumed alcohol. Adolescents who drink are likely to be heavy drinkers or binge drinkers. Research shows that when parents communicate their expectations that their children abstain from alcohol, teens and pre-teens are far less likely to drink.

### **PARENTS NEED TO COMMUNICATE TO THEIR CHILDREN THAT:**

- \* **Underage drinking is against the law.**
- \* **Using alcohol is risky, unnecessary and unacceptable.**
- \* **They are judged by their personality and their character, not whether or not they drink.**



- 1. Educate yourself as to the real issues involved in underage drinking.** This will help you realize that **alcohol is a drug** which is **highly toxic and lethal to our children** and why. An excellent place to start is by calling Chautauqua Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Council (CASAC) at :664-3608 or go online at: [www.casacweb.org](http://www.casacweb.org).
- 2. Decide that your child is not going to drink underage.** This must be mutually agreed upon by both parents (or guardians) of that child and supported by each other.
- 3. Inform your child** of your decision, preferably **prior to age 12**. Set consistent boundaries and have regular discussions about alcohol.
- 4. Educate your child** as to why you have made this decision, teach him all you have learned in step one above; he/she needs to understand.
- 5. Identify consequences and follow through.** This step is a life commitment. It is difficult but do-able (because it has been done). You must make being involved with your teen your priority keeping in mind that **“If they can’t get it, they can’t drink it!”** Preventing the availability of alcohol, along with education, is the only way to ensure the absolute prevention of his/her use of this drug which is so lethal and toxic to our youth. It is by far the single greatest threat to their health, well-being, development and their very lives!
- 6. Monitor your child’s activities.** Know where they are going, who will be there, when they will be home and that there will be an adult that meets with your approval who will be supervising.

## CONSEQUENCES OF UNDERAGE DRINKING INCLUDE:

### Health Problems

- Young people who began drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who abstained until age 21.
- Our children are at great risk of sustaining permanent brain damage, resulting from even moderate alcohol use, in ways that adults are not.
- Of all of our youth who die, alcohol kills 73.6% which is 6 times as many as are killed by all other drugs combined!
- Only one third of our children who die alcohol related deaths do so due to drinking and driving.
- Adults who host underage drinking parties are committing a crime and are not keeping our children safe by simply taking the car keys. The automobile is not the danger; the alcohol is!
- Ninety-five percent of violent crimes on college campuses are alcohol-related. The majority of college rapes (ninety percent) involve alcohol use by either the victim and/or the assailant.
- More than 70,000 students between the ages of 18-24 are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape each year.

### Sexual

- Higher levels of alcohol use are associated with unplanned or unprotected sexual activity among adolescents. This poses increased risk for teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

### School

- Alcohol use and higher levels of use among adolescents is associated with poor grades, absenteeism and higher rates of school dropout.

**Report Underage Drinking  
1-866-UNDER21  
1-866-863-3721**