

Strategies for Parents to Help Prevent Alcohol Abuse

YOUNG CHILDREN

- **Model responsible alcohol consumption**
- **Talk about taking care of ones body including exercising and eating healthfully**
- **Talk about the importance of brain development and nurturing healthy growth**
- **Encourage taking with an adult about anything they wonder about or observe related to alcohol or drug use**
- **Realize that young children are watching and monitor your own behavior when consuming alcohol.**
- **Make a point to talk about the choices you are making to be safe when you drink by saying such things as “I just had a glass of wine. Dad will have to drive you to soccer practice.”**

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

- **Recognize that your kids are watching you. You are a role model about alcohol. Model responsible alcohol consumption and if you do not drink, talk about why.**
- **Start to talk about family expectations with regard to alcohol and other drugs**
- **Introduce conversation about family history of alcoholism. Describe symptoms and how an alcoholic drinks versus how a responsible person drinks alcohol. Encourage questions.**
- **Point out the importance of fitting in but also making one's own decisions about all kinds of things like what sport or musical instrument a child might choose. Explain the need to stay true to oneself by following ones interests as one gets older and spends more time with peers.**
- **Encourage talking with an adult and bringing questions.**
- **Reiterate the importance of having a healthy body**
- **Share concerns about risks of longer term problems if starting too early.**
- **Begin to think about access to alcohol-lock it up, keep minimal amounts at home**
- **Talk about your child's goals and ways that alcohol or other drugs could stand in the way.**
- **Encourage conversation with an older sibling or other high school age youth**

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