

**HIGHLIGHTS ON PRACTICAL TIPS TO
PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING IN YOUR CHILD**
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*These are a summary of points made by Ellen Morehouse
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SPEND REGULAR TIME WITH YOUR CHILD(REN).

Don't wait until there is a problem to spend quality time with your kids. Even though they may be giving you the message as they get older that they don't want or need to be with you, give them the message that it's important to spend time together. Have family dinner even if it can only be a couple times a week. Monitor their homework and be available for help if needed. Watch their favorite TV show with them. Take every opportunity to use issues that come up daily as "teachable moments".

BE GOOD ROLE MODELS

This does not mean you have to be perfect. Explain why you are or are not a good role model in specific situations. You can use your day to day experience to acknowledge when you may have made a mistake. Also be sure to point out characteristics that are important to your family when you display them. For example: if you are experiencing a stressful day and things aren't going according to plan, but you remain flexible and keep up on your responsibilities, you can say you are being resilient.

TEACH SKILLS: Refusal Skills and Exit Skills

Your children need to have skills they can use with peers in specific situations where drinking may occur. There are two categories you can teach and then role play: **Refusal skills and exit skills**. Refusal skills can be different ways to say "no". Exit skills require an "emergency code" that your child uses with you when he/she needs to get out of a bad situation and needs to be rescued without friends knowing. You and your child will need to come up with a word or phrase that is code for "pick me up now!"

IF YOU SUSPECT OR KNOW THAT YOUR CHILD HAS STARTED TO USE

- Stay up for them to come home (this is absolutely necessary)
- Talk to them the next morning (when they are in a more coherent state)
- Provide immediate consequences that you can fulfill such as “no screens for X amount of time” (no TV, computer time, texting/cell phone use, video games)
- If you need help, get other parents help or consult local experts to get resources and/or support
- DON’T WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE A SERIOUS PROBLEM

REASONS TO EXPLAIN TO YOUR CHILD WHY DRINKING ALCOHOL IS NOT GOOD FOR THEM

(explain the importance in this order)

1. It is physically unhealthy. (physical effects and recent research that shows the negative effects on the developing brain)
2. It is socially unhealthy (how it will negatively affect relationships)
3. It is emotionally unhealthy (need to have healthy ways to deal with stress and/or boredom).
4. It is academically unhealthy.
5. It is illegal.