

According to the 2012 Illinois Youth Survey, 52% of high school students report their parents talked to them about not using alcohol in the past year. This is a great start but we can do better! Tell them you don't want them to use because you love them. Then establish family rules and expectations to keep them safe.

When you talk to your teen about alcohol...

Parents Make a Difference.

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love you...*

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You can't go everywhere with your teens, so being creative and consistent in how you check in before they go out and when they return must be a priority. Tell them you trust their ability to make positive decisions. Emphasize this includes avoiding alcohol and drugs and never riding in a car with someone that has been drinking or doing drugs. Then, use these checklists as a reminder of things to go over before they leave and after they come back.



Before they leave ...

- Set a curfew and discuss the consequences if they were to break curfew.
- Ask them where they will be, what they plan to do, and whom they will be with.
- Ask what their plan is if alcohol is there.
- Tell them they can call you any time for help if they feel unsafe.
- Tell them to keep their cell phone with them and not to make any changes to the itinerary without first consulting you.
- Tell them they need to speak with you as soon as they come home, even if they have to wake you up!

Upon returning home ...

- Either be awake or make sure your teen knows to wake you.
- Have a conversation with your teen to make sure they are coherent.
- Check for signs and smells of alcohol use. (Some parents require their teens to kiss them on the cheek so they can get a good smell. Determine what works for your family!)
- Ask how the evening went and if there were any problems.
- Ask if there was alcohol present. If so, ask how that made him/her feel and what could be done next time to avoid the risk of problems.

And try these ...

Implementing different parenting techniques will ensure that you are serious about “no drinking.”

- Get to know all you can about your teen's friends. Get to know the parents of your teen's friends.
- Praise and reward good behavior.
- Follow through on consequences when rules are broken.
- Encourage your teen and his/her friends to have fun, without drinking, through other activities (sports, family activities, hobbies, clubs, etc.).
- Eat dinner together and have fun as a family.
- Refuse to provide alcohol to minors and don't allow minors to consume alcohol in your home. If they ask, tell them “No” because you love them. And, let them know you could receive a fine of not less than \$500, get a record or go to jail for providing alcohol to teens.

