



Pathway to Prevention

Educating Parents about Prevention of Teen Drug & Alcohol Abuse



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Alcohol remains the #1 drug of choice for teens, as well as their biggest killer

With the current opiate epidemic, you might think that prescription pain medication or heroin overdose was the biggest killer of our youth. The reality is that more young people die from alcohol-related suicide, homicide or accidents than all other drugs combined.

Yet most parents would answer, "Not my child!" when asked if their underage children are drinking alcohol. Statistics from the Center for Disease Control's **2013 Youth Risk Behavior Survey** tell a different story. Among high school students, during the past 30 days:

- 35% drank some amount of alcohol
- 21% were binge drinkers (defined as boys who consume more than 5 drinks at a time or girls who consume more than 4 drinks at a time)
- 10% drove after drinking alcohol.
- 22% rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol.

Bolstering those findings, the **2014 Monitoring the Future** study showed that among 12th graders, 20% reported having having five or more drinks on the same occasion in rapid succession *within the prior two week period*.

Resources of the Month

Underage drinking is an "equal opportunity" problem across communities and cultures. Here are some great resources for parents:

The free **Power of Parents** handbooks from Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) help you talk with your teens about the dangers of alcohol. Available in English or Spanish

A new bestseller called **The Teenage Brain** explains in layman's terms what happens to developing brains that are exposed to drugs or alcohol. Share the facts with your teens. And see what other **powerful books we recommend**.

Prevention is Priceless!

We're educating families at events in our community, through our Facebook campaigns and with our **on-line resources**. You help us

Underage drinking is an invitation for things to go wrong. Car accidents, fighting, suicides, homicides, accidental injury, legal problems, lowered inhibitions leading to unwanted sex...the list goes on and on.

Last but not least, because of the way the brain develops during the teen and young adult years, those who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin at age 21 (16% versus 3%). No teen sets out to become an alcoholic, but for those with the risk factors of chemical dependency, that first experiment with a fruity, fun wine or a sweet "after dinner drink" can set the stage for a lifetime of chemical dependency.

Let's help our young people stay on the right track by talking to them often and openly about the risks of underage drinking. Our guide to "Reducing the Risks and Talking with Teens," available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), can help with those hard conversations.

Sincerely,

Kim Box

Executive Director, Pathway to Prevention

Parting Notes

How to reduce the chances your child will consume alcohol at an early age? Here is advice from the [National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence](#).

Perceived risk and **social acceptance** are the top two factors in whether kids decide to try drugs or alcohol. What does this mean to parents?

1. If kids understand the risks of using drugs (including alcohol) and they see using them as socially unacceptable, they are less likely to try drugs. Talk with them about the real dangers of consuming drugs or alcohol at a young age.
2. If you consume alcohol as a parent, make sure you set a good example of responsible drinking. Drink moderately, never drink and drive, and lock up the

broaden our reach and impact when you make a [tax-deductible donation](#) to Pathway to Prevention.

Join Our Mailing List!



Need Help??

[ParentPathway](#) has resources to help you navigate the difficult road of a child's substance use disorder, no matter what the age.



\$1000 Fine Holds Parents Accountable

Kudos to the [Coalition for Placer Youth](#) and the City of Rocklin for the new "social host" ordinance that allows police to cite the host of a party and any other adults who knowingly allow underage

alcohol in your home.

3. Establish clear family rules about alcohol and other drugs. Here are some ideas:

- Kids under 21 will not drink alcohol. It's illegal and it's non-negotiable.
- Kids will not ride in a car with someone who has been drinking or using drugs.
- Older siblings will not encourage younger kids to drink or use drugs.
- Kids under 21 will not host parties at our home without parental supervision.

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drinking to occur.