



KEEP SHOWING UP.

They're still growing up.

Reduce the Risk

Protective Factors in Preventing Underage Drinking

As a parent, you may not have eyes on your teen 24-7, but you still can help keep them safe.

Research confirms there are protective factors that reduce teens' chances of underage drinking. Learn how you can help reduce your child's risk of underage drinking.

Alcohol-Specific Rule Setting

While children are under your roof, they need to follow your household rules. These rules vary from family to family, but guidelines are imperative, such as a no underage drinking rule. Not only does this rule comply with the law; it also discourages your teen from drinking and sets your expectations.

Set a zero-tolerance alcohol policy with your teen. They know that underage drinking is not allowed inside and outside of the home and that there are consequences if they break these rules. Clear expectations help foster an environment where rules are respected. [Click here](#) or use the resources below to help you set and enforce these expectations.

Parent-Child Relationship

Research shows that a strong parent-child bond can reduce teens' risk of underage drinking.

The reality is that every parent-child relationship is unique. If your relationship with your teen seems a bit rocky, don't feel discouraged. You can still play an active role in their life and work to improve your rapport with your teen.

Many teens want to feel heard, so a parent's willingness and ability to listen can go a long way. Listening is about two-way communication between you and your child. It doesn't mean your child necessarily gets the last word. When you speak, be aware of your body language and tone of voice. A defensive tone or folded arms can show anger or a reluctance to listen

Be a present parent. Show up for your child when they need you and make sure they know that you care for them.

Parental Monitoring

Parental monitoring involves keeping tabs on your teen and having an idea of how and where they're spending their time and who they may be spending it with. This parenting technique comes down to awareness, communication, concern, supervision, and tracking your teen's behavior.

You are practicing parental monitoring every time that you ask where your teen is going, check what's on their phone, or get to know the parents of your child's friends.

Parental monitoring proves to be one of the most substantial protective factors against teen alcohol use. Research shows that parental monitoring can minimize underage alcohol use, improve teens' ability to refuse alcohol, and improve family closeness.

Resources:

SAMHSA's 'Talk. They Hear You.' Campaign: samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/parent-resources/what-you-can-do-prevent-your-child-drinking

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/make-a-difference-child-alcohol>

Sources:

De Witte, P., & Mitchell Jr., M. C. (Eds.) 2012. Underage Drinking: A Report on Drinking in the Second Decade of Life in Europe and North America. Presses universitaires de Louvain. Retrieved from <http://books.openedition.org/pucl/3263>

Hurley, E., Dietrich, T. & Rundle-Thiele, S. A systematic review of parent based programs to prevent or reduce alcohol consumption in adolescents. BMC Public Health 19, 1451 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7733-x>

