

HELP STUDENTS GET A GOOD START

As a teacher or school staff member, you work hard every day to prepare students for future success. You may not realize how seriously underage drinking can undermine their academic achievement and other life goals.

You can play an important role in a new national campaign to prevent underage drinking. Sponsored by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the *Talk. They Hear You.* campaign empowers parents and caregivers to talk with their children ages 9 to 15 about risks of underage drinking. It also teaches them how to be effective in these sometimes tough conversations.

The campaign uses public service announcements and other materials to raise awareness. It also offers the *Talk. They Hear You.* application, which is like a video game that lets parents practice talking with kids about alcohol.

You can help get the word out by letting parents know about the Campaign and how to access the application on their computer or mobile device.

There are easy ways to incorporate support for the Campaign into an already busy school day. Everything you need is at underagedrinking.samhsa.gov.

UNDERAGE DRINKING

- » 33 percent of 8th graders and 70 percent of 12th graders in the United States have tried alcohol.
- » Young people who start drinking before age 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol problems as adults than those who begin drinking at 21 or older.
- » Underage drinking has severe consequences, including injury or death from accidents; unintended, unwanted, or unprotected sexual activity; academic problems; and drug use.
- » 40 percent of adolescents do not talk with their parents about the dangers of substance use, and 25 percent do not receive prevention messages through media or school sources.
- » Parents have a significant influence on young people's decisions about drinking alcohol.

Promote the Campaign in Your School

- » Schedule time during an in service day, faculty meeting, PTA meeting, or Back to School Night to introduce the Campaign and the problem of underage drinking. Go to the Campaign website for presentation materials you can tailor or use as they are.
- » Set up a computer in the faculty lounge with instructions for accessing the application.
- » Print Campaign posters and hang them in the faculty lounge.
- » Use parent conferences to let parents know about the problem of underage drinking, the Campaign, and how parents can make a huge difference just by talking with their kids. Be sure to mention the application, a tool to help them learn how to engage their kids.
- » Print out materials to give parents as handouts at school events.

PARENT TIPS FOR TALKING ABOUT ALCOHOL

1. Show you disapprove of underage drinking.
2. Show you care about your child's happiness and well-being.
3. Show you're a good source of information about alcohol.
4. Show you're paying attention and you'll notice if your child drinks.
5. Build your child's skills and strategies for avoiding underage drinking.

Promote the Campaign in Your Community

- » Talk with leaders in your community's organizations—religious groups, youth groups, civic organizations, and more—about helping display the Campaign posters or mentioning the Campaign in newsletters that reach parents.
- » Let local media know about the Campaign and ask them to use the PSAs to alert parents in your community.
- » Give demonstrations of the application at meetings held by groups you participate in.
- » Hold a Town Hall Meeting. See stopalcoholabuse.gov/TownHallMeetings.



Talk to Your Own Children About Underage Drinking

- » Fine tune your own parent communication skills using the application.
- » Take every opportunity to discuss alcohol risks—when watching TV, at the table, in the car, or when doing chores together.