

## UNDERAGE DRINKING IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM

Too many preteens are drinking alcohol. Parents have a big impact on whether or not their kids drink. Your kids really do hear you. For tips on how—and when—to start the conversation about alcohol, visit:

[www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov](http://www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov)



**Chores.**  
A perfect moment to talk about alcohol.



For more information:  
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**Tips for Talking to  
Your Kids About  
Underage Drinking**



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## START EARLY

**The chance your child will use alcohol gets higher as he or she gets older.**

About 10 percent of 12-year-olds say they have tried alcohol. By age 15, that number jumps to 50 percent. The sooner you talk to your children about alcohol, the greater chance you have of influencing their decision not to drink.

**Some kids may try alcohol as early as 9 years old.**

Most 6-year-olds know that alcohol is only for adults. Between the ages of 9 and 13, kids start to view alcohol differently. Many begin to think drinking is OK. Some even start to experiment. It is never too early to talk to your child about alcohol.

## ..... Say Something

What you say to your child about alcohol is up to you. But remember, parents who do not discourage underage drinking may have an indirect influence on their children's alcohol use.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- » Be a positive adult role model.
- » Be aware of risk factors.
- » Support your kids, and give them space to grow.
- » Be prepared. Your child may become curious about alcohol; he or she may turn to you for answers and advice.
- » Use "natural" opportunities, such as dinner time or while doing chores, to start open, honest conversations about drinking.
- » Work with schools, communities, and civic leaders to protect children from underage alcohol use.



## SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

Over the last few decades, experts have learned much more about the dangers of kids drinking alcohol. Underage drinking has many serious risks.

Kids who drink alcohol are more likely to:

- » Use drugs;
- » Get bad grades;
- » Hurt themselves or someone else;
- » Have unwanted or unprotected sex;
- » Make bad decisions; and
- » Have health problems.

**Learn more:**  
[www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov](http://www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov)