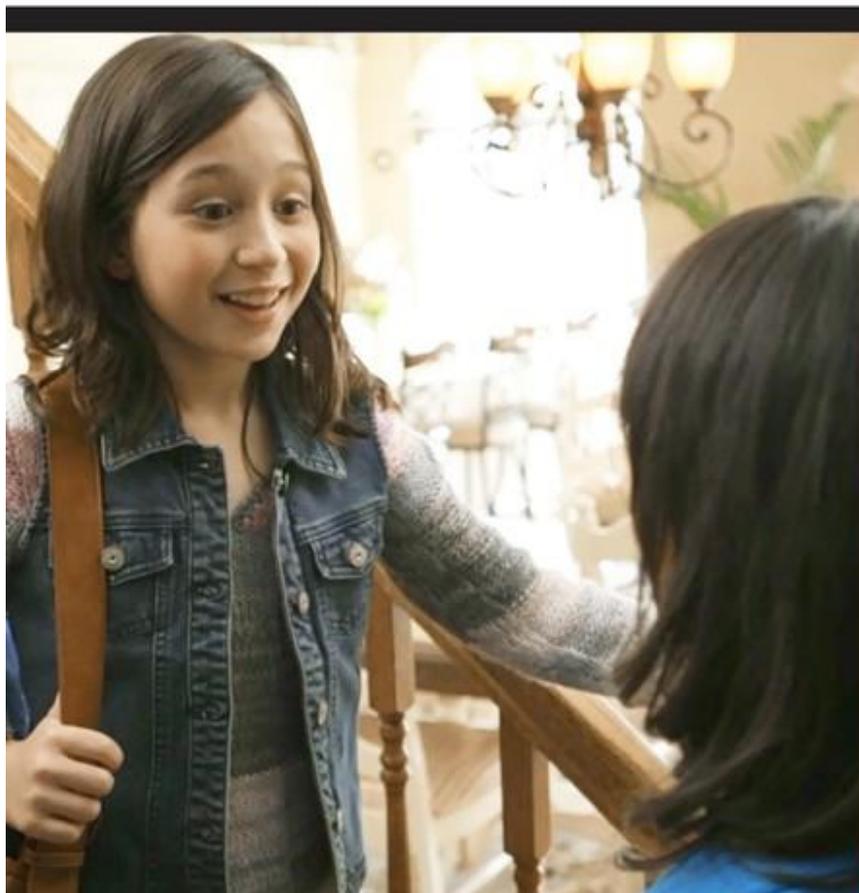


The Educator

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April is Alcohol Awareness Month



TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT ALCOHOL

5 CONVERSATION GOALS

Research shows that parents are the #1 reason young people decide not to drink. So, start talking to your children about alcohol before they start drinking—as early as 9 years old. Even if it doesn't seem like it, they really do hear you.



Importance of Parents

Research shows that parents are the leading influence on their child's decisions about alcohol. Although it may not seem like it, when parents talk about underage drinking, their children do hear them.

9–15: A Crucial Age

To prevent young people from starting to drink, the campaign focuses on ages 9–15. Around 9, children begin thinking alcohol may not be just for adults. By 15, many young people are drinking. 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.

Talking To Kids About Alcohol 5 Conversation Goals

1. Show you disapprove of underage drinking.

More than 80% of young people ages 10-18 say their parents are the leading influence on their decision to drink or not drink. So they really are listening, and it's important that you send a clear and strong message.

2. Show you care about your child's happiness and well-being.

Young people are more likely to listen when they know you're on their side. Try to reinforce why you don't want your child to drink—not just because you say so, but because you want your child to be happy and safe. The conversation will go a lot better if you're working with, and not against, your child.

3. Show you're a good source of information about alcohol.

You want your child to be making informed decisions about drinking, with reliable information about its dangers. You don't want your child to be learning about alcohol from friends, the internet, or the media—you want to establish yourself as a trustworthy source of information.

4. Show you're paying attention and you'll notice if your child drinks.

You want to show you're keeping an eye on your child, because young people are more likely to drink if they think no one will notice. There are many subtle ways to do this without prying.

5. Build your child's skills and strategies for avoiding underage drinking.

Even if your child doesn't want to drink, peer pressure is a powerful thing. It could be tempting to drink just to avoid looking uncool. To prepare your child to resist peer pressure, you'll need to build skills and practice them.

Keep it low-key. Don't worry, you don't have to get everything across in one talk. Many small talks are better.

For more information visit www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking