

Tips and Alerts

Oneida County Prevention Council Bulletin

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Underage Drinking: The Hard Truth

The end of summer will be here before we know it and soon students will be returning to school. Four out of every five college students are impacted by drinking, whether they consume alcohol or not. Also, 35% of teens in Oneida County have reported binge drinking. Students in high school and in college have similar experiences when it comes to beginning and continuing use of alcohol. Parents play a crucial role in protecting their kids and assuring high school and college years are fun but also safe.

- Most students are aware of the unfortunate consequences of underage drinking including death, assault and other serious injuries.
- Most students do not know is that alcohol can significantly affect their academic and athletic performances.
- Assuring your child is prepared to handle situations in which they would be offered alcohol can help them avoid the negative consequences often associated with misuse.
- Practicing open communication with your children is important in educating them about alcohol.
- Making yourself available for conversations and questions about alcohol will assure your child that it is okay for them to talk to you.
- Research shows that parents' beliefs, values, and norms about alcohol have the biggest impact on their child's decision to use alcohol.

Equally as important is being aware of outside resources to help your child. If your child is going away to college, you can find out what the college does to promote an alcohol-free environment. Some colleges offer alcohol-free dorms and alcohol screenings. If your child is still in high school, find out what the school will do if there is an underage party, or if alcohol is found on school grounds. Knowing about these policies can help your student reach their fullest potential.

Did you know?

The average girl in America has her first alcoholic drink at age 13, while the average boy in America has his first drink at age 11.

Addressing issues of underage drinking and alcohol misuse by coaches may deter athletes from early age alcohol use.

While speaking with your child about alcohol, ask how they feel about alcohol consumption. Use open-ended questions to avoid simple "yes" or "no" answers.

If you are looking for more opportunities to understand the impact of alcohol use, as well as other aspects of teenage life, consider joining Center for Family Life and Recovery Inc.'s Active Parenting of Teens Program. This is a 6-week program run by CFLR, Inc.'s Family and Prevention Advocate, Brittany Pape. If you are interested in joining, please call (315) 733-1709.