A POWER TO THE PARENT TOOLKIT

They're listening

(even when they're not)

Your guide to the alcohol talk.

Facts, conversation starters, and games
for everyone from little kids to young adults.



POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

PowerToTheParent.org

CONTENTS Jump in anywhere. Every page stands on its own.

What's inside

Go

Start here

The original influencer's guide to this kit 3

Quick start: under 21, under your influence 4

1

The facts, served straight up

Alcohol 101, no chaser 6

Last call for myths, rounds 1 and 2 7

Fact check tic-tac-toe 9

The proof is in the numbers 10

Brain under construction 11

Pop quiz, parents! Take it online 12

2

Spill it. Talks for every age

Ages 4 to 8: little ears, big questions, plus two games 16

Ages 9 to 12: tween talk, plus a cootie catcher 20

Ages 13 to 18: conversation starters and a plan 23

Ages 13 to 18: say no like a pro 25

Ages 19 to 25: out of the nest, still in the loop 28

Ages 19 to 25: the red zone 29

3

Read the room

Trust your gut: signs it's time to step in 32

Hidden in plain sight: how many can you spot? 33

No party fouls: the laws, plus a hosting game plan 35

4+

Beyond the talk

Part 4 · Raising the bar: they're watching (always) 38

Part 5 · Tap into your power: for providers and partners 40

Part 6 · Your backup squad: help and resources 42

Part 7 · Cut it out (literally): cards and printables 44

Part 8 · Table talk: placemat conversation starters 46

START HERE Why this kit, and how to use it

The original influencer's guide to this kit

Your kids hear you more than they let on. This kit gives you the facts, the words, and the games to keep the alcohol talk going, one small conversation at a time.

What's inside

Learn
Myths, facts, and how alcohol affects a growing brain.

Talk
What to say at every age, for real-life moments.

Play
Games and activities to do together.

Spot
Signs to watch for and when to step in.

Pick your path

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS
Find your child's age in Part 2. Try one talk or game this week.

GRANDPARENTS, COACHES, MENTORS
Use the What if... cards at PowerToTheParent.org/whatif and the games with a team, class, or group.

PREVENTION PROVIDERS
Use the pages as handouts and the games as live workshop activities.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Share the tear-out cards, post the graphics, and host a parent night.

P.S. You don't need all the answers. You just need to be there, keep it calm, and keep it going. Small talks add up.

QUICK START Short on time? Start here.

Under 21, under your influence

You're the original influencer. Kids are listening, even when they're pretending not to. Here's what to know in five minutes.

80%

BIG IDEA 1

less likely to drink: teens who think you'd be upset if they did.

So say it out loud. Your opinion is the one that sticks.

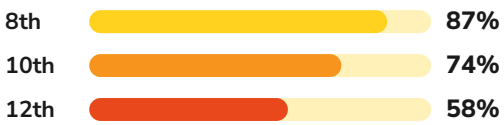
BIG IDEA 2

~~1 in 4~~ → **1 in 25**

Waiting until 21 drops the risk of addiction this much.

BIG IDEA 3

Most teens aren't drinking.



didn't drink in a typical month

BIG IDEA 4

Pick a code word today.

They text it, you come get them. No questions asked.

BIG IDEA 5

Lock it up.

The alcohol at home is the easiest to reach. Store it out of sight and keep track.

Sources: NIAAA · L. Richter, Partnership to End Addiction · Monitoring the Future, 2024

PART 1

The facts, served straight up

Myths, numbers, and what alcohol does to a growing brain.

PART 1

The facts, served straight up

There's a lot of old thinking out there about teens and alcohol. Here's what we know now, so you can talk about it with confidence.

1.1 Alcohol 101, no chaser

Alcohol is still the most common substance teens try. The good news: most aren't drinking, and parents and caregivers are a big reason why.

PAGE 7
Last call for myths
Outdated ideas, swapped for the truth.

PAGE 10
The proof is in the numbers
School, sports, mood, and more.

PAGE 11
Brain under construction
Why the age 21 line matters.

PAGE 32
Trust your gut
Signs it's time to step in.

PAGE 35
No party fouls
The laws you and your teen should know.

PAGE 38
Raising the bar
What your own habits teach them.

#1 **Your voice counts most.** Parents and caregivers are one of the biggest reasons teens delay or skip alcohol.

Sources: Power to the Parent · NIAAA · Monitoring the Future, 2024

LEARN · 1.2 The facts, served straight up

Last call for myths

Some ideas about teens and alcohol have been around forever. Here's what the science says now.

MYTH
"At 18 they can vote. Why not drink?"

→

TRUTH
The brain's decision-maker is still under construction until the mid-20s.
Waiting until 21 cuts the risk of addiction from 1 in 4 to 1 in 25.

MYTH
"It's safer at home. I'll take their keys."

→

TRUTH
A sober ride doesn't stop the other risks.
Injuries, alcohol poisoning, and assault still happen. And New York's Social Host Law makes it illegal.

MYTH
"Everyone's doing it."

→

TRUTH
Most teens aren't.
In a typical month, 87% of 8th graders and 74% of 10th graders don't drink at all.

PLAY IT 5 minutes · any age 9+

Thumbs up, thumbs down



1. Read a myth or truth out loud. Don't give it away.
2. Everyone votes: thumbs up for truth, down for myth.
3. Reveal the answer. Then ask, "Did that surprise you?"

Level up: fact check tic-tac-toe on page 9.

Sources: CDC · L. Richter, Partnership to End Addiction · Gogtay et al., PNAS · Westchester County Social Host Law · Monitoring the Future, 2024 · CDC alcohol facts

LEARN · 1.2 The facts, served straight up

Last call for myths, round 2

A few more you might hear at the dinner table or the sidelines.

MYTH
"I drank as a teen and turned out fine."

→

TRUTH
Today's world is different, and so is what we know.
Drinks are stronger, pressures are bigger, and the science on the teen brain is much clearer.

MYTH
"Alcohol helps people loosen up."

→

TRUTH
The "social lubricant" effect is mostly a placebo.
Alcohol doesn't improve social skills. Lots of teens feel regret the next day.

MYTH
"Wine at dinner is part of our culture."

→

TRUTH
Traditions matter. Early sips still carry risk.
You can honor the tradition and still keep a clear, consistent "not until 21."

MYTH
"It's just alcohol, not a real drug."

→

TRUTH
Alcohol causes more U.S. deaths than any other drug.
About 178,000 a year, far more than opioid overdoses.

YOUR TURN

Bust a myth together

A myth we've heard: _____

What's actually true: _____

Sources: Power to the Parent, misconceptions · Jason Kilmer, University of Washington · CDC alcohol facts

AGES 9 TO 12 PLAY · Tween talk, no eye rolls required

Fact check tic-tac-toe

Pick the right answer, claim the square. Three in a row wins, and everybody walks away knowing more.

1. Pick X or O. Take turns choosing a square.
2. Read the question. Pick A or B.
3. Tap or check the key. Right? Mark it yours.

1 In a typical month, how many 8th graders don't drink? A: 87% B: 40%	2 The brain keeps building until about what age? A: 16 B: 25	3 Teens who think you'd be upset are how much less likely to drink? A: 80% B: 10%
4 Waiting until 21 drops the risk of addiction to: A: 1 in 25 B: 1 in 5	5 Who has the most influence on a kid's choices? A: Parents B: Celebs	6 Calling 911 for a friend who drank too much is: A: Protected B: Risky
7 Alcohol is a: A: Stimulant B: Depressant	8 Which part of the brain makes memories? A: Hippocampus B: Cerebellum	9 Some fruity canned drinks equal how many beers? A: 1 B: 4 or more

X

VS.

O

Cut out pieces on page 45, or grab coins.

New game

Keep it going: "Which answer surprised you most?" Their pick tells you where to start your next talk.

Key · 1: 87% · 2: 25 · 3: 80% · 4: 1 in 25 · 5: Parents · 6: Protected · 7: Depressant · 8: Hippocampus · 9: 4 or more

Sources: Monitoring the Future, 2024 · Power to the Parent, misconceptions · The developing brain · NYS Good Samaritan Law · NIAAA

LEARN · 1.3 The facts, served straight up

The proof is in the numbers

Alcohol touches almost every part of a teen's life. Here's how, at a glance.

178,000
U.S. deaths a year linked to alcohol

4x
likelier to develop alcohol dependence when drinking starts before 18

9.8x
likelier to use marijuana, for teens who drank in the past month

#1
most common substance teens use is alcohol

Close to home
In Westchester, most teens don't drink. Those who do often binge.

The brain
Still wiring until the mid-20s. Alcohol gets in the way.

Safety and consent
Alcohol plays a role in many teen assaults and risky choices.

Cancer risk
Linked to several cancers. Earlier start, higher risk.

Grades
More missed school, weaker memory, lower GPA.

Sports
Slower reactions, slower recovery, more injuries. For days.

Addiction
The earlier the start, the more it rewires the reward system.

Mental health
Can worsen anxiety and depression and raise suicide risk.

Risky behavior
Lower inhibitions lead to fights, theft, and unsafe sex.

Alcopops
Sweet, colorful cans that look like soda but pack a punch.

Social host laws
Adults can face fines or charges for teen drinking at home.

Fake IDs
Can mean criminal charges that follow them to college and jobs.

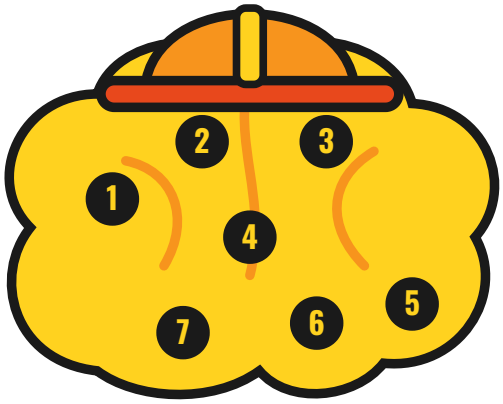
Talk starter: "Which of these facts surprised you?"

Sources: CDC · NIAAA · NSDUH via One Choice · NCI · ASCO · NIH · NSCA · Power to the Parent, facts about alcohol

LEARN · 1.4 The facts, served straight up

Brain under construction

The brain keeps building until the mid-20s. Alcohol slows down the crew.



10%

lower scores on memory tests for teens who drank twice a week.

A vs. B That's the gap between an A and a B.

1. **Cerebral cortex.** Thinking slows down, and judgment slips.
2. **Central nervous system.** Thinking, talking, and moving all slow down.
3. **Frontal lobes.** The planning and self-control center. Harder to manage emotions and urges.
4. **Hippocampus.** The memory maker. One or two drinks can blur what was just learned.
5. **Cerebellum.** Balance and coordination. Hands shake, feet stumble.
6. **Hypothalamus.** The housekeeper. Throws off thirst, hunger, heart rate, and temperature.
7. **Medulla.** Runs heartbeat and body temperature. Too much alcohol here can be deadly.

Did you know? Alcohol is a depressant. It only feels like a boost because it switches off inhibitions first.

PLAY IT

What's your brain building? Ask your teen to name goals for the year. Talk about what helps that brain get there, and what slows it down.

Sources: Power to the Parent, the developing brain · NIAAA, alcohol and the adolescent brain

PLAY ONLINE · 1.5 The facts, served straight up

Pop quiz, parents!

How much do you know about what your kids face? Ten quick questions, instant answers, and no grades. Promise.

SCAN TO PLAY

PowerToTheParent.org/learn/parent-quiz

What's on the quiz

- How much parents matter
- Slang decoder
- What's inside a vape
- Spot the stash
- Old meds, safe disposal
- The Good Samaritan Law
- Pain meds: what to ask
- Peer pressure and saying no
- Where to get parenting help

It goes beyond alcohol, so it's a smart check-in on everything from vapes to medicine cabinets.

1 **Scan it.**
Point your phone camera at the code.

2 **Answer 10.**
Quick multiple choice, plus one true or false.

3 **Learn more.**
Every answer links to more on the site.

SNEAK PEEK

Who has the biggest influence on whether a teen drinks?

A. Friends | B. Social media | C. Parents

Answer: C. It's you!

PLAY IT

Make it a family showdown. Take the quiz, then pass the phone to another caregiver or your teen. Compare scores over dinner.

Source: Power to the Parent, parent quiz

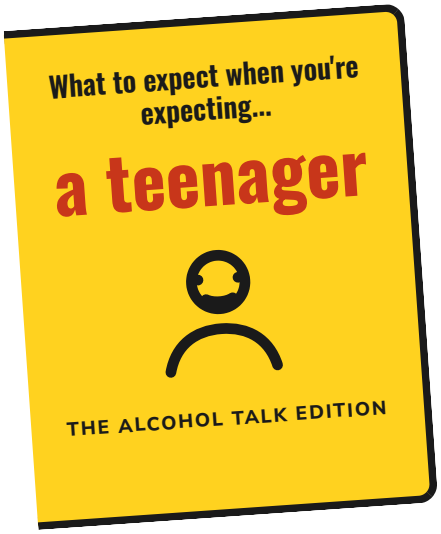
PART 2

Spill it. Talks for every age

What to say, and games to play, from little kids to young adults.

PART 2

Spill it. Talks for every age



They won't tell you everything. Especially about drinking.

That's why the conversation starts with you. Find your kid's age below for what to say and games to play.

Small talks beat one big talk.
Short, frequent chats build trust over time.

Listen more than you lecture.
Ask open questions. Stay calm, even when it's hard.

Use everyday moments.
Car rides, ads, and shows are easy openers.

Pair rules with love.
Clear limits plus lots of praise for who they are.

AGES 4 to 8
Little ears · p. 16

AGES 9 to 12
Tweens · p. 20

AGES 13 to 18
Teens · p. 23

AGES 19 to 25
Young adults · p. 28

Sources: Partnership to End Addiction, prevention tips for every age · Power to the Parent, conversation starters

AGES 4 TO 8

Little ears, big questions

Healthy bodies, safe choices, and "ask a grown-up first."

Little ears, big questions

Keep it simple and about right now: healthy bodies, safe choices, and "ask a grown-up first."

What they're ready for

Taking care of their body. Sleep, water, veggies, and play help them grow strong.

Making choices. Let them pick an outfit or a snack, and cheer them on.

Safe vs. not safe. Some things at home are only for grown-ups.

Conversation starters

THEY SEE GROWN-UPS DRINKING AT A PARTY

"That's a grown-up drink. Kids' bodies and brains are still growing, so it's not for kids."

THEY'RE CURIOUS ABOUT THE MEDICINE CABINET

"Medicine is only for when you're sick, and only when a grown-up or your doctor gives it to you."

CLEANING DAY, OR A STORY WHERE SOMEONE MAKES A BAD CHOICE

"Some things can make us sick. If you're ever not sure, ask a grown-up first. What do you think that character should do?"

TRY THIS

Turn a tumbling block tower into problem solving. Let them come up with the fix.

GAME TIME

Safe or not safe? and Body Boss Bingo are on the next two pages.

Source: adapted from Partnership to End Addiction, prevention tips for every age

ABOUT AGES 4 TO 8

PLAY · Little ears, big questions

Safe or not safe?

A sorting game that teaches the big rule: if you're not sure, ask a grown-up first.

1. Point to a picture.
2. Safe for kids, or ask first?
3. Tap to check. Cheer every try!



Water

Safe or not?



Medicine

Safe or not?



Apple

Safe or not?



Wine glass

Safe or not?



Cleaning spray

Safe or not?



Milk

Safe or not?



Vitamins

Safe or not?



Can of beer

Safe or not?

GROWN-UP KEY

Water, apple, and milk are safe. Everything else? Ask a grown-up first.

MAKE IT YOURS

Walk around the kitchen together and play with real things you find.

Play again

Source: activity adapted from Partnership to End Addiction, prevention tips for every age

ABOUT AGES 4 TO 8

PLAY · Little ears, big questions

Body boss bingo

Mark a square each time your kid takes care of their body. Three in a row earns a high five.

Drank water	Ate a veggie	Played outside
Slept all night	FREE: big hug	Asked a grown-up first
Brushed teeth	Read a story	Tried something new



Coloring bonus: draw a brain with a hard hat. It's still growing, so let's keep it safe!

SAY IT TOGETHER

"I take care of my body. When I'm not sure, I ask a grown-up first."

Start over

Source: activity adapted from Partnership to End Addiction, prevention tips for every age

AGES 9 TO 12

Tween talk, no eye rolls required

Clear rules, real reasons, and an easy way out.

AGES 9 TO 12 TALK · Spill it. Talks for every age

Tween talk, no eye rolls required

Friends start to matter more. Give them clear rules, real reasons, and an easy way out.

Conversation starters

STARTING MIDDLE SCHOOL

"You might start hearing about kids drinking or vaping. Our family's answer is no, because it's bad for a growing brain. You can always come to me."

A CELEBRITY IS IN THE NEWS FOR DRINKING

"Some people drink because they think it'll take the stress away. It usually makes things harder. What do you think they need right now?"

PLAY IT What would you say?

Read a card out loud. Your tween picks an answer, or makes up their own. Switch roles next time.

A

At a sleepover, someone sneaks a bottle from their parents' fridge.

"Nah, I'm good. Want to start the movie?"

B

An older kid offers you a sip of something in a water bottle.

"My parents would totally find out. Pass."

C

Friends say, "Everyone's doing it. Don't be weird."

"Actually, most kids don't. I'm good."

AD DETECTIVE

Find an alcohol ad together. Who's it really for? Bright colors, candy flavors, and cartoons are clues it's aimed at kids.

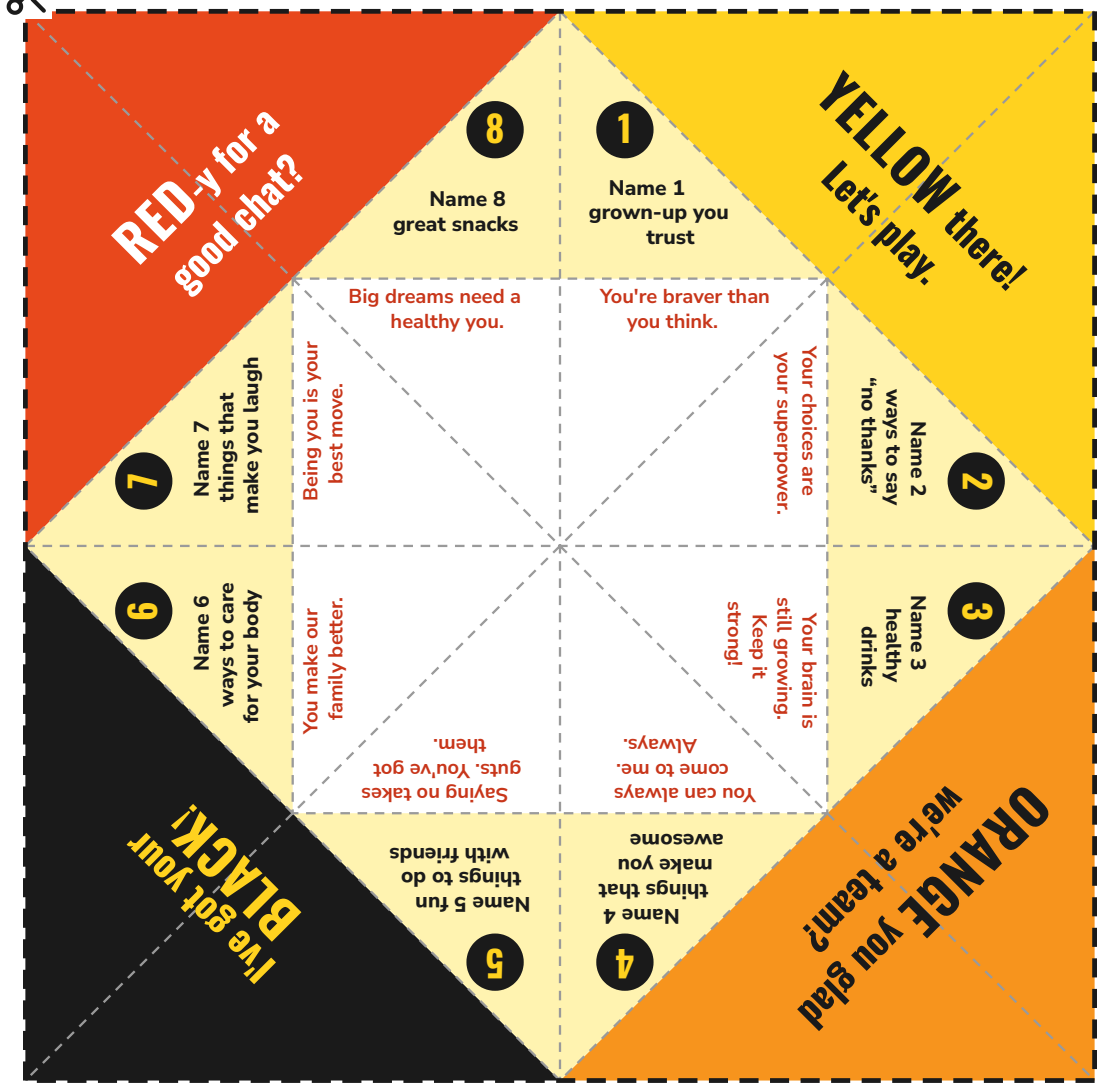
FAMILY RULES, TOGETHER

Write your family agreement as a team. Fill-in version on page 45, plus a "use me as your excuse" card on page 44.

Source: adapted from Partnership to End Addiction, prevention tips for every age · Monitoring the Future, 2024

Fold it. Flip it. Talk it out.

A color pun on the outside, a quick challenge inside, and a pep talk under every flap. Let your tween run the game.



1. **Cut** along the dashed black line.
2. **Flip it face down.** Fold each corner to the center.
3. **Flip it again.** Fold the new corners to the center.
4. **Fold in half** and slip your fingers under the color flaps.

HOW TO PLAY

Pick a color pun and spell the color, opening and closing with each letter. Pick a challenge, answer it, and count out its number. Pick one more, lift the flap, and read your message.

AGES 13 TO 18

Eye rolls are the new bedtime tantrums

Real talk, real plans, and how to say no like a pro.

AGES 13 TO 18 **TALK** · Spill it. Talks for every age

Eye rolls are the new bedtime tantrums

We've got the words for real talk. Pick one starter. Ask it in the car, at dinner, or on a walk.

"What do you think most people your age believe about drinking?"
Takes the pressure off them.

"Is it hard for some people to say no? Why do you think that is?"
Opens up peer pressure, no blame.

"What do your friends think about drinking?"
Shows you their world.

"Ever felt uncomfortable about what others were doing?"
Invites them to share and builds trust.

"What would you do if a friend had too much and needed help?"
A natural way into the Good Samaritan Law.

"If you ever needed a ride or help, how should we handle it, no judgment?"
Sets up the exit plan early.

"Let's pick a code word. Text it, and I'll come get you, no questions asked."
Your safety net. Plan it on the next page.

"What have you learned in health class about alcohol and the brain?"
Builds on what they know and fixes myths.

"If someone offered you a drink at a party, what would you say?"
Practice builds confidence.

"Can you come to me if something goes wrong, even if you made a mistake?"
Reminds them you're on their side.

58% **Guess the number:** ask your teen what percent of 12th graders didn't drink last month. Then reveal it. Most guess way lower.

Sources: Power to the Parent, conversation starters · Monitoring the Future, 2024

AGES 13 TO 18 **PLAY** · Eye rolls are the new bedtime tantrums

Make a plan together

Plans made on a calm day are the ones that work on a hard night.

The code word plan

OUR CODE WORD

Pineapple

SAVED IN BOTH PHONES AS

A contact or a note

The deal: you text the word, I come get you or send a ride. No questions that night. We talk later, calmly.

Party game plan

BEFORE

- [ ] Who's hosting? Will an adult be home?
- [ ] How are you getting there and back?
- [ ] Phone charged, code word ready

DURING

- [ ] Have your no ready: "I'm good."
- [ ] Look out for your friends
- [ ] Someone's in trouble? Call 911

AFTER

- [ ] Check in when you're home
- [ ] Ask, "Best part of the night?"
- [ ] Thank them for using the plan

IF THEY COME HOME SMELLING LIKE ALCOHOL

Stay calm, quiet, and serious. The next day, try: "I love you. Your health comes first. You can talk to me about what happened." Save consequences for that next day, and keep them fair and short.

Sources: Power to the Parent, conversation starters · Partnership to End Addiction · NYS Good Samaritan Law

Say no like a pro

Pick a line, practice it out loud, and keep it in your back pocket. A ready no is an easy no.

LINE 1

BLAME ME

"My mom says I have to leave right now."

Parents and caregivers: give them permission to make you the bad guy. It works every time.

2 "I'm good right now."
Simple wins. No speech needed.

3 "I don't want to get grounded."
Parents make the perfect excuse.

4 "I'd rather do something else."
Then pitch a better plan: food, a game, a movie.

5 "I'd get kicked off the team."
Or the cast, the band, the squad. Name what matters.

6 "I'm driving tonight."
Sober driver, no debate. And everyone gets home.

7 "I have to go home."
Pair it with your code word, and we'll come get you.

PLAY IT

Pick your line: circle the two that sound most like you. Say them out loud three times. Then flip the page to practice.

Source: adapted from Talk It Out NC

AGES 13 TO 18

PLAY · Refusal skills

Say it like you mean it

Five moves that make a no stick. Practice them together, then switch roles.

1 Give a reason

Honest answers land best. "I want to keep a clear head." "I could get suspended from the team."

2 Let your body back you up

- Eye contact
- Stand tall
- Firm voice
- No mumbling

3 Show you care

"I'd be really sad if anything happened to you." "What would your parents do if they found out?"

4 Suggest something else

"Let's go play volleyball out back." "I'd rather dance and eat something. I'm starved."

5 Take action

Still getting pushed? Just leave. That tells everyone you mean it.

PRACTICE ROUND — You play the friend. They play themselves.

Round 1: "Come on, just one sip."

Round 2: "Nobody will know."

Round 3: "You're no fun."

Score each no from one to three stars. Bonus star for a better plan.

Source: adapted from refusal skills guidance for teens and Talk It Out NC

AGES 19 TO 25

Out of the nest, still in the loop

Staying close while they build their own lives, including the red zone.

AGES 19 TO 25 TALK · Spill it. Talks for every age

Out of the nest, still in the loop

They're making their own choices now. You're still their best backup.

Conversation starters

MOVING INTO A DORM OR APARTMENT

"You're old enough to make your own calls, and I respect that. If you ever want another take, I'm always here."

AFTER A SHOW OR MOVIE WITH HEAVY PARTYING

"That stuck with me. Is it like that at your school? How do you feel about it?"

DO IT Before you go checklist

- [ ] We talked about pills that aren't theirs, like study drugs
- [ ] They know the Good Samaritan Law protects people who call 911
- [ ] We keep the contacts for campus mental health and counseling options
- [ ] They know they can call any time, day or night
- [ ] Helpline numbers are saved in their phone
- [ ] We set up a regular check-in, like a Sunday call

KEEP AN EYE ON MOOD

Stress, anxiety, and drinking often travel together. Ask how they're really doing.

WALLET CARD

Cut out the helpline card on page 44 and tuck it in their wallet or phone case.

Source: adapted from Partnership to End Addiction, prevention tips for every age

AGES 19 TO 25

TALK · Out of the nest

The red zone

It's not football. It's the first 6 to 10 weeks of college, when new freedom, new friends, and alcohol and other drugs all collide.

During these weeks, students are more likely to:

- Get hurt
- Get into a fight
- Face sexual assault
- Drive impaired
- Get arrested
- Land in the ER

Not a reason to panic. A reason to talk.

Four ways you lower the risk

30%

Say your disapproval out loud.

Lower odds of driving impaired four years later, for kids who knew their parents disapproved.

20%

Talk about riding, not just driving.

Lower odds of getting in a car with an impaired driver.

20%

Stay connected from a distance.

Lower odds of alcohol-related blackouts. Ask where, with whom, and how they're getting home.

Again

Keep the conversation going.

Not one perfect speech on move-in day. Repetition wins.

Sources: Zoe Amsterdam, "It's called the red zone," Power to the Parent · Yale-led research on parental influence (Vaca et al.) · NIAAA

AGES 19 TO 25 DO IT · The red zone

Two rules and a plan

Share these before move-in day. Then text them, too, so they're saved when it counts.

RULE 1 · ONE PILL CAN KILL

Only take pills prescribed to you and filled by a pharmacist.

Not from a friend.
Not from someone in the dorm.
Not from someone online.
Not even once. Fake pills can look real and hide fentanyl.

RULE 2 · IF ANYTHING WAS USED, NOBODY DRIVES

And never ride with someone who's been drinking or using.

~~Coffee~~ ~~Cold shower~~ ~~Eating first~~ ~~Driving slowly~~ ~~Least buzzed drives~~

None of these make it safe.

11,904
alcohol-impaired driving deaths in the U.S. in 2024

44 min
one life lost, on average, every 44 minutes

21 to 24
the age group with the highest share of impaired drivers in fatal crashes

Make the plan together

"Call or text me at any hour. I'll pick you up or get you a safe ride. You won't be punished for asking for help."

- [ ] Who can they call if we're not nearby?
- [ ] Will we pay for a ride, no questions that night?
- [ ] RA, roommate, and campus safety saved in their phone
- [ ] A word or emoji that means "come get me"
- [ ] What to do if a friend won't leave or seems too drunk
- [ ] The offer stands for welcome week and beyond

Sources: Zoe Amsterdam, "It's called the red zone," Power to the Parent · NHTSA, 2024 impaired-driving data · DEA, One Pill Can Kill

PART 3

Read the room

Signs to watch for, clues to spot, and the laws to know.

PART 3 · SPOT · 3.1 Read the room

Trust your gut: signs it's time to step in

Every teen has ups and downs. One sign doesn't mean a problem. Several together? Worth a closer look. You know your kid best.

Attitudes

Sudden mood changes
Loses interest in school and activities
Defensive when alcohol comes up
Seems unconcerned about consequences
"Jokes" about others' drinking

Academics

Sudden drop in grades
Work not done or turned in late
Lost interest in class
Skipping classes or whole days
Late in the morning or after lunch

Appearance

Red or glassy eyes, lots of eye drops
Stumbling or confusion
Neglected hygiene
Big change in weight or appetite
Unusual smells on breath or clothes

Behaviors

New friends, old ones dropped
Memory gaps or blackouts
Dropping sports or activities
Trouble sleeping
Drink bottles that never leave their side

Noticed something? Here's what's next

1 **Breathe. Stay calm.**

2 **Talk when you're both ready, and listen.**

3 **Call your child's doctor.**

4 **Get support. See page 42.**

TRY A PRIVATE SCREENER

Free and confidential: the Substance Use Risk Assessment and Screen4Success.

HIGHER RISK

Family history of addiction, starting early, big moves or school changes, and trouble managing emotions.

Source: Power to the Parent, warning signs

SPOT · 3.2 Read the room

Hidden in plain sight

Put on your detective hat. How many clues can you spot before you peek?



Your scorecard

Spot all 8? You're a pro.

- [ ] **1. Sports drink** Easy to mix with clear alcohol.
- [ ] **2. Tall flavored can** Some pack as much as 4 or more beers.
- [ ] **3. Hairbrush** Some hide a flask in the handle.
- [ ] **4. Cover-up kit** Mints, eye drops, and perfume mask the signs.
- [ ] **5. Book safe** A hidden compartment for stashing things.
- [ ] **6. Air duster** Household inhalants can be misused.
- [ ] **7. Ping-pong ball** Drinking games lead to heavy drinking.
- [ ] **8. Phone** Check apps and search history.

BONUS ROUND The room holds more clues tied to vapes, marijuana, and hiding spots. Full answer key on the next page.

See the interactive page on: Power to the Parent, Hidden in plain sight

SPOT · 3.2 Read the room

How'd you do? The answer key



Flasks come in disguise. Hairbrushes, lotion bottles, flip-flops, even tampon cases. Worth knowing when you check bags at your party.



Sports drinks and water bottles can hide clear alcohol. If a drink never leaves their hand, take note.

The 8 clues on the scorecard

1. **Sports drink** on the shelf
2. **Tall flavored can** next to it
3. **Hairbrush flask** on the chair
4. **Cover-up kit** in the pink pouch
5. **Book safe** on top of the shelf
6. **Air duster** beside the books
7. **Ping-pong ball** for drinking games
8. **Phone** on the bed: apps and searches

BONUS ROUND ANSWERS

Vapes · posters and clothes with marijuana slang like "420" or "dab" · dryer sheets, incense, and air fresheners that mask smells · homemade or glass pipes · edibles that look like candy · a computer mouse with a hidden scale · cough medicine mixed into soda · odor-proof tubes and jars

Found something? Lead with a question, not an accusation: "I found this, and I'm worried. Can you help me understand?"

Source and photos: Power to the Parent, Hidden in plain sight

SPOT · 3.3 Read the room

No party fouls: the laws to know

These laws exist to protect kids. Read them together, so everyone knows the rules before the invite comes.

$250 to $1,000

Social Host Law. Fines for allowing teen drinking at your home, even if you didn't buy it. Repeat offenses can mean jail.

Call 911

Good Samaritan Law. People who call for help in an alcohol or drug emergency are protected.

Felony

Leandra's Law. Driving drunk or high with a child under 16 in the car.

For kids and teens

Under 21? It's illegal to have alcohol you plan to drink.

Calling 911 for a friend won't get you arrested.

Fake IDs are crimes. Charges can follow you to college and jobs.

You can always leave. Call for help or use your code word.

For parents and caregivers

Taking keys doesn't make it legal. Hosting teen drinking is still against the law.

You can be liable if a teen drinks at your home and gets hurt, hurts someone, or damages property.

Charging at the door for a party with alcohol counts as selling without a license.

Giving alcohol to other people's kids can bring criminal charges.

PLAY IT

Law or not? Read a point above as a question ("Can you get arrested for calling 911?"). Whoever answers right picks the next one.

This is a plain-language summary of New York State and Westchester County laws, not legal advice.

Sources: Power to the Parent, laws you should know about · Westchester County Social Host Law · NYS Alcoholic Beverage Control Law · NYS Penal Law · NYS Good Samaritan Law (2011) · Leandra's Law (2009)

DO IT · 3.3 No party fouls

Your hosting game plan

A great party doesn't need alcohol. It needs good food, good music, and a grown-up nearby.

Hosting checklist

- [ ] Set the rules with your teen ahead of time
- [ ] Set a guest list and a start and end time
- [ ] Plenty of food, drinks, and things to do
- [ ] Bags stay in one spot (flasks hide well)
- [ ] Lock up the alcohol, or take it out of the house
- [ ] An adult stays home and checks in often
- [ ] Guests who leave don't come back in
- [ ] Know who's driving everyone home

Fun that doesn't need a drink

Mocktail bar

Game night

Karaoke

Photo booth

The parent-to-parent call

Is your kid headed to someone else's party or sleepover? A quick, friendly call goes a long way.

"Thanks for having them! Will an adult be home the whole time?"

"We keep things alcohol-free for the kids. Are you on the same page?"

"What time should I pick up? Here's my number if anything comes up."

IF A PARTY GOES SIDEWAYS Stay calm, and don't let anyone who's been drinking drive. If someone's in danger, call 911.

Sources: Power to the Parent, parties and social host laws · Hidden in plain sight

PART 4

Raising the bar

Your habits teach more than any talk. Here's how to lead by example.

PART 4 Raising the bar

Proof you matter: they're watching (always)

What you say matters. What you do matters even more.

80% **less likely to drink: teens who believe their parents would be upset if they did.**

Your opinion is the one that sticks.

What your kid picks up on

How you talk about drinking

When and why you drink

Drinking as a reward or stress fix

The rules you set, and keep

DO IT Home check

- [ ] Alcohol is stored out of sight
- [ ] It's locked, or we keep track of it
- [ ] Extra care when friends come over
- [ ] Old meds are tossed safely
- [ ] We skip "I need a drink" talk

Celebrate without it

Game day: a mocktail bar in team colors

Holidays: a family recipe contest

Graduation: a surprise trip or big breakfast

Hard day: a walk, a playlist, a call to a friend

MIXED SIGNALS Even casual drinking can say "this is how adults relax." Share your reasons out loud, and keep "not until 21" clear.

Sources: Power to the Parent, parental modeling · NIAAA · Discarding unused medication

PART 5

Tap into your power

For prevention providers and community partners.

PART 5 For prevention providers and community partners

Tap into your power

Everything in this kit is built to share. Here's how to bring it to schools, teams, faith groups, and parent nights.

Run a 60-minute parent night

10 min	15 min	15 min	15 min	5
Welcome and the quick start	Thumbs up, thumbs down myth game	Hidden in plain sight, as a group	Practice conversation starters in pairs	Code word cards

Share it

Post the myth and fact pages as social graphics. Hand out tear-out cards at games, back-to-school nights, and pediatric offices.

Tailor it

Add your coalition's logo and local resources. Use the pages one at a time in newsletters and emails.

MEASURE IT

A quick before-and-after check

Ask parents and caregivers to rate each from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very), before and after your event:

1. How confident do you feel talking with your child about alcohol?
2. How well do you know New York's social host and Good Samaritan laws?
3. Does your family have a code word or exit plan?

PART 6

Your backup squad

Helplines, screeners, and local contacts for when you need more support.

PART 6 Help and resources

Your backup squad

You don't have to figure it out alone. These are free, confidential, and ready when you are.

911 **In an emergency, call 911.** Passed out, hard to wake, or trouble breathing? Don't wait. Stay with them until help arrives.

NYS HOPELINE

1-877-8-HOPENY

(1-877-846-7369) or text HOPENY (467369). 24/7 help for alcohol, drugs, and gambling.

988 LIFELINE

Call or text 988

24/7 support for anyone in emotional distress or crisis.

PARTNERSHIP TO END ADDICTION

855-378-4373

Or text CONNECT to 55753. One-on-one help for parents and caregivers.

SAMHSA NATIONAL HELPLINE

1-800-662-4357

Free treatment referrals and information, 24/7.

Private screeners

Substance Use Risk Assessment and Screen4Success

Toss old meds

How to discard unused medication

Keep learning

PowerToTheParent.org for facts, videos, and newsletters

Our local contacts

Doctor: _____

_____

School counselor: _____

_____

Sources: NYS OASAS HOPEline · 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline · Partnership to End Addiction helpline · SAMHSA National Helpline

PART 7

Cut it out (literally)

Cards, agreements, and game pieces to snip and keep.

Want more cards? Flip through the What if... conversation cards at PowerToTheParent.org/whatif.

Cut it out (literally)

Snip along the dashed lines. Stick them on the fridge, tuck them in a wallet, or snap a photo for your phone.

OUR CODE WORD

_____

Text it any time. I'll come get you. No questions that night.

USE ME AS YOUR EXCUSE

"My parents would totally find out."
"I've got a game tomorrow."
"I'm good. Anyone want a soda?"

HELP, ANY TIME

Emergency: 911
Crisis: call or text 988
NYS HOPEline: 1-877-8-HOPENY
Text: HOPENY (467369)
Others:

CAR RIDE STARTER

"What do you think most kids your age believe about drinking?"

DINNER TABLE STARTER

"If someone offered you a drink, what do you think you'd say?"

FRIDGE REMINDER

"You can come to me with anything. Even a mistake."

PART 7 Cut it out (literally)

Agreement, badge, and game pieces

Our family agreement

Write it together. Keep it short, fair, and somewhere you'll both see it.

Our rule about alcohol is:

Why it matters to us:

If plans change or something feels off, I will:

And I (grown-up) promise to:

KID SIGNS HERE _____

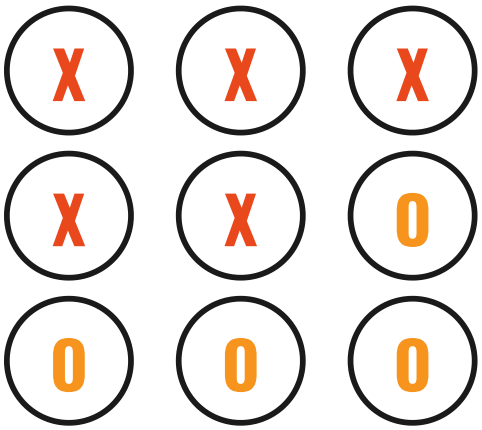
GROWN-UP SIGNS HERE _____

Make your own badge



Tic-tac-toe pieces

For fact check tic-tac-toe on page 9.



PART 8

Table talk: placemat conversation starters

Two placemats for every age group. Print and set the table for real talk.

AGES 4 TO 8

Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

If you could invent a new healthy snack, what would it be?

What helps your body grow big and strong?

What would you do if you found medicine on the floor?

Spin the fork!

Whoever it points to picks a question.

What was the best part of your day?

What makes you feel happy and calm?

What's your favorite way to move your body?

Who are the grown-ups you can ask for help?

What's something you did all by yourself today?

BONUS ROUND

Name three healthy snacks in 10 seconds. Go!

AGES 4 TO 8 Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

Who makes you feel safe, and why?

What do you do if you're not sure something is safe?

What do you do when you feel mad or sad?



Which drinks are just for grown-ups?

If a character made a bad choice, what should they do instead?

What's one rule that keeps our family safe?

How do you take care of your brain?

What's one thing that made you proud this week?

BONUS ROUND

Everyone shows their best body boss move!

AGES 9 TO 12

Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

What's a show or game where someone made a smart choice?

What do kids at school say about drinking or vaping?

Who's someone you look up to, and why?



What would you say if a friend offered you a sip?

How can you say no and still stay friends?

What would you do if an older kid offered you something?

What's an ad you've seen that seems aimed at kids?

What would you do if a sleepover started to feel weird?

BONUS ROUND

Each person shares one thing they're great at.

AGES 9 TO 12

Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

What's the best advice you've ever gotten?

What's our family rule about alcohol, and why do we have it?

If you could make one house rule, what would it be?



What makes someone a good friend?

When is it okay to use me as your excuse?

What's one way our family has fun together?

What do you do when you feel stressed?

What's something healthy and fun you want to try?

BONUS ROUND

Say a myth about alcohol. Everyone votes: true or false?

AGES 13 TO 18

Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

What's one pressure you think teens feel today?

What do you think most people your age believe about drinking?

Ever felt uncomfortable about what others were doing?

Spin the fork!

Whoever it points to picks a question.

Is it hard for some people to say no? Why?

What would you do if a friend had too much and needed help?

Who's a friend you can always count on?

What do your friends think about drinking?

What would make a party fun without alcohol?

BONUS ROUND

Quick round: everyone shares their best way to say no.

AGES 13 TO 18 Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

What do you wish adults understood about your life?

If you needed a ride or help, how should we handle it?

If someone offered you a drink, what would you say?



What should our code word be?

Can you come to me if something goes wrong?

What's a story from this year you'll still tell in 10 years?

What have you learned about alcohol and the brain?

What are you most looking forward to this year?

BONUS ROUND

Guess the number: what percent of 12th graders didn't drink last month?

AGES 19 TO 25

Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

What's the best thing about being on your own?

What's the party scene like at your school or job?

What helps you unwind after a hard week?



How are you really doing these days?

Ever worried about a friend's drinking?

What's one thing you want to do differently this year?

Do you know where to find counseling on campus?

How can I support you from here?

BONUS ROUND

Everyone shares a win from this month.

AGES 19 TO 25

Table talk

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

What would you do if your ride had been drinking?

What does a great weekend look like for you?

Who do you call when things get tough?



Have you seen anyone use pills that weren't theirs?

What's a goal you're working toward?

What's a family tradition you want to keep?

What would you do if a friend passed out after drinking?

What's something you wish I'd told you sooner?

BONUS ROUND

Name your go-to safe ride home. Is it saved in your phone?

You've got the power.

They're listening, even when it seems like they're not. So keep talking.



SOURCES

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Power to the Parent
Photos: Power to the Parent, Hidden in plain sight

POWER TO THE PARENT .ORG

PowerToTheParent.org

A program of the Westchester Coalition for Drug & Alcohol Free Youth

WESTCHESTER COUNTY