



# The Coalition Newsletter

June 2013

Our mission is to prevent and reduce youth substance use & abuse in the Pequannock Twp. Community through collaboration, education and community-wide change.

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An Initiative of:



## Why Your Child Might Start Drinking Alcohol

As children approach their teen years, they begin to experience many emotional and physical changes, and these changes are not always easy. During this challenging time, some children may experiment with alcohol. For most children, it is not just one thing that influences them to drink, but rather a combination of factors.

### **Stress**

When children worry about things like grades, fitting in, and physical appearance, they may use alcohol as a way to escape their problems. How can you help?

*Encourage your child to get involved in sports or other extracurricular activities as a healthier way to cope with his or her problems.*

### **Peer Pressure**

The age range between 11 and 18 is an impressionable period when youth are especially susceptible to outside influences such as peers, family members, and the media. How can you help?

*Help boost your child's confidence by helping him or her learn different ways to say "no" and reminding him or her that real friends would not pressure him or her to drink.*

### **Transitions**

Life events such as transitioning from middle school to high school, breaking up with a significant other, moving, or divorce can cause children to turn to alcohol. How can you help?

*Reassure your child that things will get easier, and make sure he or she knows that drinking is not a solution.*

### **Environment**

If children grow up in an environment where their parents or peers drink a lot and/or view drinking favorably, they may be more likely to drink themselves. How can you help?

*If you choose to drink, set a good example by drinking in moderation, and make sure your child knows that underage drinking is not acceptable.*

### **Genetics**

Children who come from a family with a history of alcoholism are at an increased risk for becoming an alcoholic. How can you help?

*If alcoholism runs in your family, have an honest discussion with your child to make sure he or she understands the seriousness of the disease.*

Copied from: <http://samhsa.gov/>

## Suggestions for Parents if Your Teen is Giving a Party

- Put your phone number on the invitation and welcome calls from parents.
- Let attendees know that if they leave the party, they can't come back.
- Limit party access to a certain area of the house/property.
- Be sure all forms of alcohol and over the counter/prescription medications are secured and in a safe place.
- Be clear there will be no alcohol, drugs or tobacco at this party.

Copied from: *Parents Who Host Lose the Most.*

## Why is Underage Drinking an Important Issue?

Underage drinking is a national public health issue with serious implications. According to a study by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an estimated 10 million people under the age of 21 drank alcohol in the past month in the United States. However, many young people start drinking **before** the age of 13. The age range between 11 and 18 is an impressionable period when youth are especially susceptible to outside influences such as peers, family members, and the media.

Monitoring the Future found that 33% of 8th graders and 70% of 12th graders in the United States have tried alcohol at some time in their lives. The survey also found that 13% of 8th graders and 27% of 10th graders said that they had consumed alcohol in the 30-day period before the survey.

Underage drinking has severe consequences, many of which parents may not be fully aware. Consequences may include injury or death from accidents;<sup>5</sup> unintended, unwanted, and unprotected sexual activity; academic problems; and drug use.

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

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<http://whitehouse.gov/ondcp>