

Effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Using alcohol and other drugs carries risks. Alcohol and drugs impair your judgement, making you more likely to hurt yourself or others, to have trouble with the law, to do poorly at work and school, and to have relationship trouble. Alcohol and drugs also have specific health risks: they can damage major organs, increase your risk of cancers, and even cause death.



**START TALKING
BEFORE THEY
START DRINKING**
www.stopalcoholabuse.gov

It's not easy to talk to your child about the dangers of alcohol use. But, keeping quiet about how you feel about teens using alcohol may give him or her the impression that alcohol use is OK for kids.

What is Alcoholism?

Alcoholism is a medical disease. It involves periodic or constant:

- impaired control over drinking
- preoccupation with alcohol
- use and abuse of alcohol in spite of adverse consequences
- distorted thinking, especially denial.

Alcoholism stems from genetic, environmental, and psychosocial factors. A high percentage of alcoholics have a genetic predisposition to the disease, although genetic predisposition can be overcome. Genetics are risk factors, not destiny. People with the disease of alcoholism often need treatment, counseling, or medical attention to learn how to stop drinking and to live a healthier life.

What is Alcohol Abuse?

Alcohol abuse is also a serious medical and social problem, but is not the same as alcoholism. Alcohol abuse is the intentional overuse of alcohol, i.e., to the point of drunkenness. This includes occasional and celebratory over-drinking.

Not all people who abuse alcohol become alcoholics, but alcohol abuse by itself can have serious medical effects. Overuse of alcohol is considered to be:

- more than 3-4 drinks per occasion for women
- more than 4-5 drinks per occasion for men.

One drink equals one (12-ounce) bottle of beer or wine cooler, one (5-ounce) glass of wine, or one and a half ounces of liquor.

For additional information and links to other agencies, please visit:

www.drugfreevicksburg.org

Let's Talk about...

Underage Drinking

**Presented by:
The Make a Promise Coalition for a
Drug-Free Community**

**Sponsored by:
The Behavioral Health Foundation of
Central MS, Inc.
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www.drugfreevicksburg.org**

Society gives children mixed messages about alcohol. Make sure that your children get their information from the best resource available....YOU.

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What Is Alcoholism?

Alcoholism, also known as “alcohol dependence,” and is a disease that includes four symptoms: **Craving, Loss of Control, Physical Dependence and Tolerance.** *Come learn more.....*

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“What parents may not realize is that children say that parent disapproval of underage drinking is the key reason they have chosen not to drink.” - Charles Curie, SAMHSA Administrator U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

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If your family has a history of alcoholism, your children need to know that they are at a greater risk for problem drinking.

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Parents who serve or allow alcohol at their home for children other than their own take on a great liability. They are contributing to the delinquency of a minor, which carries pretty hefty penalties in Warren County, Mississippi.

SOMEBODY SHOULD HAVE TAUGHT HIM

I went to a birthday party
But remembered what you said.
You told me not to drink at all,
So I had a Sprite instead.

I felt proud of myself,
The way you said I would,
That I didn't choose to drink and drive,
Though some friends said I should.

I knew I made a healthy choice and
Your advice to me was right
As the party finally ended
And the kids drove out of sight.

I got into my own car,
Sure to get home in one piece,
Never knowing what was coming,
Something I expected the least.

Now I'm lying on the pavement.
I can hear the policeman say,
“The kid that caused this wreck was drunk.”
His voice seems so far away.

My own blood is all around me,
As I try hard not to cry.
I can hear the paramedic say,
“This girl is going to die.”

I'm sure the guy had no idea,
While he was flying high,
Because she **CHOSE** to drink and drive,
That I would have to die.

So why do people do it,
Knowing that it ruins lives?
But now the pain is cutting me,
Like a hundred stabbing knives.

Tell my sister not to be afraid,
Tell Daddy to be brave,
And when I go to heaven, to
Put “Daddy's Girl” on my grave.

Someone should have taught him,
That it's wrong to drink and drive.
Maybe if his Mom and dad had,
I'd still be alive.

My breath is getting shorter,
I'm really getting scared.
These are my final moments,
And I'm so unprepared.

I wish that you could hold me Mom,
As I lie here and die.
I wish that I could say
I love you and good-bye.

*Retold by Jane Watkins
Printed in the book, “Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul”*



Fast Facts

- Underage alcohol use can have a negative effect on youth and adults alike.
- Kids who start drinking before the age of 15 are 5 times more likely, than those who start of the age of 21, to develop alcohol problems.
- One out of every two 8th graders has tried alcohol.
- Drinking may lead young people to engage in risky behaviors that result in illness, injury or even death.
- More than 67% of young people who start drinking alcohol before the age of 15 will try an illicit drug.
- It is illegal for anyone to purchase or possess alcohol under the age of 21.

Information provided by:

