



Time to *Check In*

When teens head off to college, they often look and sound like adults ready to take charge of their destiny. Even with the best preparation for their success, however, they probably need their parents now more than ever, but in a different way. From what research and experience tell us, as children head to colleges, they will be entering an environment with far fewer rules and supervision. Their sense of responsibility and confidence will grow from how they manage this newfound freedom.

As parents, our role may be changing, but our influence is *just as important*. Talk with them before they head to college, and communicate through the early challenges and at times of peak risk. Listen. Reflect with them on how their new experiences may or may not be consistent with their values and goals. Emphasize that working hard, staying safe, being healthy, and building positive social and academic networks will support them during their college years.

Share – Ask – Listen

Studies show that parents continue to have significant influence on their college-age children.



TIMING MAY BE EVERY- THING

Critical times to have conversations about alcohol use are in the first six weeks of school and before events such as homecoming, holidays, concerts and sporting events.



SHARE

your expectations about:

- Class attendance
- Involvement in co-curricular activities
- Drinking and other drug choices
- Peer group choices
- Academic performance
- Use of spare time



ASK

how your son or daughter intends to deal with social situations that might arise:

- A roommate who is intoxicated
- Feeling pressure to drink or use drugs



LISTEN

to how your son or daughter is managing their college transition.

TALK with your son or daughter about:

- Exploring ways they can avoid drinking, if they choose not to drink or choose not to be around those who drink.
- * Finding peers who don't use alcohol or other drugs and finding substance-free activities.
- Identifying ways for them to be assertive about not drinking should they choose not to drink.
- Guiding them to their college or university website to find out about current and future alcohol-free events.
- Empowering them to advocate for themselves and express their right to stay safe and be in a positive academic environment.



Get Information

Make sure you and your child know and understand the code of conduct at the college.

- Review the College/University Alcohol and Other Drug Policies
- Understand there can be serious consequences to violating these policies, including suspension, eviction from housing, loss of scholarships and/or financial aid
- Encourage attendance at substance free activities and involvement in campus organizations
- Know the resources available on your student's campus (counseling services, wellness center, etc.)



Be a Role Model

It is important to explore your own attitudes, values and beliefs.

- Listen to how alcohol and other drugs are referenced or discussed in your family.
- Note the number of alcohol products in the home.
- Has drinking and/or other drug use become ritualized in any way?
- Talk with other family members and friends about how they view alcohol and other drugs.
- Recognize the influence that role modeling has on your student's attitudes, beliefs and values.

If you think your son or daughter may be involved in high-risk partying, consider talking to him or her about...

Low risk strategies if he or she is 21 or older

- Keeping food in his or her stomach
- Pacing his or her drinking to one drink/hour or fewer
- Keeping track of drinks
- Avoiding drinking games
- Pouring his or her own drink and not leaving it unattended
- Alternating alcoholic beverages and non-alcoholic beverages
- Avoiding mixing alcohol with other drugs, medications or energy drinks
- Choosing not to drink

Avoiding risky drinking

such as pre-gaming, or "drinking before drinking" when alcohol consumption starts early, ends late, and involves high and dangerous levels of alcohol consumption in combination with a social, sports or other event.

Steering clear of street and designer drugs,

either through intentional or unintentional use. Drugs such as Ecstasy or its stronger version, Molly, have been known to be passed around or sold at dances, raves or other music events. Molly is a dance club drug that has been linked to tragic deaths in the college-aged population.

Sources for Parenting Though the College Years

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