



Peer behavior, both positive and negative, has a powerful influence on adolescent decision making. When adolescents associate with positive social peers, they are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors and make responsible decisions. Talking about friendships/relationships in general makes it easier to also talk about not using alcohol.

Keep talking – they really are listening.

We are all influenced by what our friends say and do, so we should choose friends who will influence us to make healthy decisions and be the person we want to be. TRUE friends are people in our lives who encourage us, challenge us and care for us. TRUE friends are people who treat us well and are kind to others.

A TRUE Friend...

1. is interested in what's good for you.
2. cares about what YOU have to say.
3. encourages you to be yourself.
4. helps you feel better if you make a mistake.
5. doesn't pressure you to do more than you can do.
6. encourages you to find people you trust to help you solve your problems.
7. gives you space and privacy if you want it or need it.
8. lets you have other friends.



THE INTERVIEW

Our children learn a lot about life by watching how we navigate through ours. Allow your child to play reporter and interview you about your friendships. Be honest. We all learn from our mistakes as well as from our successes. Talk about things you would change if you could "go back". Use the following questions or create your own as a family.

1. What qualities do you think are most important to have in a friend?
2. When you were my age, who was your best friend?
3. What were the qualities that you admired about that friend?
4. Were there any qualities of that friend that you didn't admire?
5. Would you be friends with that person today? Why or why not?
6. Would you want me to have a friend like that person? Why or why not?
7. Who is your best friend now?
8. What are the qualities that you admire about that friend?
9. Are there any qualities of that friend that you don't admire?
10. What is the most important thing you think I need to know about choosing a friend?

Allow each member of the family to be the interviewer and take turns being interviewed. Talk about your answers. What did you learn as a family about friendship? What did you each learn about the friends that you have/had? Do you need to make any changes in any of your friendships?

TEENS SAY THEIR PARENTS ARE THEIR MOST RELIABLE SOURCE WHEN TALKING ABOUT NOT USING ALCOHOL