

02 ◀ Tips for Fostering Communication

The key to building a positive relationship and sorting out any communication difficulties with your teenager is to keep the channels of communication open. Keep talking, they really are listening. Keep in mind, though, that productive communication with your teen should not feel like you're giving them the third degree. Remain calm, relax and follow the tips below to ensure that your child hears what you have to say — and so that you can hear what they have to say as well.

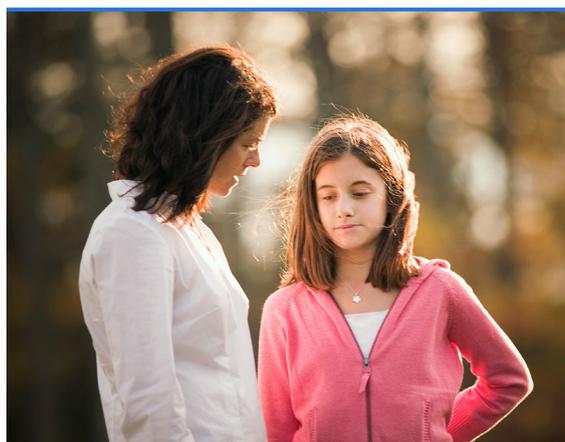
- » **Try to be objective and open.** If you want to have a productive conversation with your child, do your best to keep an open mind and remain curious. Your child is more likely to be receptive this way.
- » **Ask open-ended questions.** These are questions that elicit more than just a “yes” or “no” response and will lead to a more engaging conversation.
- » **Let your teen know they're being heard.** Use active listening and reflect back what you are hearing — either verbatim, or just the sentiment. For example, you can say, “I'm hearing that you feel overwhelmed, and that you think drinking helps you relax. Is that right?”.
- » **Discuss the negative effects of alcohol** and what that means in terms of mental and physical health, safety and making healthy decisions. Talk about the short & long-term effects.
- » **If your child is interested in drinking, ask why** – it will also give you insight into what's important to them. Talk about what might happen if they do drink. This gets your teen to think about their future – and some of the possible negative consequences (they may be late to practice, do something stupid in front of their friends, feel sick the next day or face consequences at school and home).
- » **Offer empathy and compassion.** Let your child know you understand. The teen years can be tough. Acknowledge that everyone struggles sometimes, but alcohol is not a useful or healthy way to cope with problems. Let your child know that they can trust you.
- » **Remind your child that you are there for support and guidance** – and that it's important to you that they are healthy and happy and make safe choices.
- » **If there is a history of addiction or alcoholism in your family, then your child has a much greater risk of developing a problem.** Be aware of this elevated risk and discuss it with your child regularly, as you would with any disease.
- » **Keep an eye on how your child is coping.** Do they seem withdrawn or uninterested in the usual activities? These are signs that your child might be hiding something, struggling or need some guidance.

Check out the latest PSA!

KEEP TALKING - KEEP THEM HEALTHY

Teens say their parents are their
◀ most reliable source when ▶
talking about the risks of using alcohol

FOR RESOURCES + TO LEARN MORE VISIT: THEPOWEROFCHOICE.INFO



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03 ◀ What You Can Do

If you choose to drink, model responsible drinking behavior. A child with a parent who binge drinks is much more likely to binge drink than a child whose parents do not. Binge drinking is the practice of consuming large quantities of alcohol in a single session, usually defined as five or more drinks at one time for a man, or four or more drinks at one time for a woman. Try to avoid sending any unintended messages — find ways to celebrate and relax without alcohol. Don't make alcohol available to your child or their friends. This isn't only a matter of safety, it's also the law.

“Kids ages 11-14 see approximately 1,000 alcohol ads a year.”

Discuss what you see and help put context around the alcohol messaging your child receives from friends and the media. Supervise any parties in your home to make sure there is no alcohol – and make sure your teens know the rules ahead of time. Learn more about social hosting laws and what they can mean for your personal liability in the event of underage drinking in the home.

Communicate your expectations and rules for when your teen goes out with friends, and include regular check-ins. Assure your child that they can call you to be picked up whenever needed. **For more resources and for future newsletters, please visit: www.thepowerofchoice.org**

Additional Resources for you ▶

Learn more here - **How To Address Alcohol and Underage Drinking:**
<https://bit.ly/2FZaQ8q>

Connect with The Power of Choice online and on social media:

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