

Face it, Parents.

## HELPING PARENTS REDUCE YOUTH ALCOHOL USE

**PARENTS AND OTHER CAREGIVERS ARE THE KEY TO PREVENTING YOUTH ALCOHOL USE. HERE ARE SIX TIPS TO HELP YOU KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE, HEALTHY AND ALCOHOL FREE:**

### **REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE IN YOUR CHILDREN'S LIVES**

Talk with them about not drinking alcohol, and make it a recurring conversation. The more you connect with them, the less likely they'll be to give in to peer pressure. Educate yourself about the harms of underage drinking and share the facts with them. If you have young children, start the conversation when they are in grade school. Use everyday moments, such as riding in the car, to talk with them. Underage drinking is not always an easy subject to talk about, but the more you do it, the easier it will become.

### **DON'T THINK "IT'S NOT MY CHILD"**

Every parent should assume their child is as susceptible to drinking as other children. When high school students are surveyed about problems at their school, alcohol and other drugs often are at the top of the list. The good news: Most Oregon teens do not drink or use other drugs.

### **ESTABLISH EXPLICIT RULES AND CONSEQUENCES**

Articulate a clear family policy that underage drinking and illegal drug use are not tolerated. More often than not, when kids drink alcohol, no firm family rules have been established.

## **YOUTH ALCOHOL USE IS NOT A RITE OF PASSAGE**

It's against the law and, thanks to science, we know more today about the serious health consequences that can result. Research shows that youth who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to become alcohol dependent compared with those who wait until age 21. And, because our brains continue to develop into our 20s, new research shows that alcohol and other drug use affects kids' neurological makeup.

### **DON'T ALLOW YOUTH DRINKING IN YOUR HOME**

Allowing kids to drink at your or someone else's house gives them permission to drink anywhere and anytime. Studies show that children whose parents host teen parties where alcohol is served drink twice as much as kids whose parents have a no-tolerance policy. Remember, kids often drink to get drunk, and that's dangerous even if they don't get behind the wheel of a car.

### **BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL**

If you enjoy an occasional alcoholic beverage, talk with your kids about responsible drinking by adults. Let them see you decline alcohol from time to time as well, and explain why you abstain.

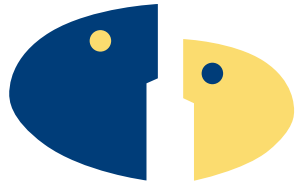
**FACE IT, PARENTS IS A STATEWIDE CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT YOUTH ALCOHOL USE IN OREGON AND IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, OREGON PARTNERSHIP AND THE OREGON MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.**



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