

INSPIRED

To Make Healthy Choices

Don't Be a Party to Underage Drinking!

It's almost time for proms, Spring Break and soon, graduation. In other words, it's PARTY TIME! **Parents and other adults all too often agree to provide or allow alcohol at parties for older teens.** Many think they are making the best choice because they would rather let their child and other teens drink in the "safety of their home" than elsewhere. They think by collecting car keys they are reducing the risk of problems.

It is illegal to serve alcohol or allow others to provide alcohol to anyone (other than your own kids) under the age of 21. This includes:

- in your home.
- on your property.
- at any event you are hosting.

This is true **even if** other parents give their permission. Adult hosts can be fined up to \$1,000 and could actually serve time in jail – up to a year!

Consider this: Research has shown that teens and young adults who drink with parent or other adult approval are more likely to drink more heavily and to drink under other circumstances. That means **if you allow alcohol use at home under what you think is a safer and more controlled situation, your teen will be more likely to drink elsewhere, thinking you're okay with his/her drinking.**

Something else to consider is your liability. If an underage drinker causes injury or property damage at your party/event or after s/he leaves, **you could be sued.**

There are many reasons why allowing underage drinking is a bad idea. **Young people are particularly susceptible to problems associated with alcohol.** They are still young enough to have very poor impulse control. That part of their brain is one of the last to mature. Add alcohol to the mix, and you have teens and young adults who are more likely to engage in other risky behaviors, such as unplanned and unsafe sex, fighting, and driving under the influence.

The way teens drink puts them at greater risk for alcoholism. **Teens drink to get drunk.** The younger people are when they begin drinking, the more likely they will become dependent on alcohol.

The 2014 Gwinnett Coalition for Health and Human Services Youth Health Survey results highlight the fact that **youth who do not drink have better grades and are rarely involved in risky behaviors** such as speeding when driving, getting in fights, skipping school, stealing from a store, smoking and lying to parents about their whereabouts. You can help curb underage drinking by following some of these tips:

- **Set a good example.** Parents and adults are our teens' role models.
- Refuse to supply alcohol to anyone under 21 and ask other parents to not allow alcohol at their house or events.
- **Talk to your teens and listen to what they have to say.**
- Create alcohol-free opportunities and activities in your home so teens will feel welcome.

Our youth need us to support and guide them during their teen years. PLEASE, don't be a party to teenage drinking.

Learn more at savebrains.org

Most teens get their alcohol from home or from a friend's home.

Alcohol stimulates young brains, while it calms mature brains.

Underage drinking is associated with reduced academic performance.

For more information:
UNDERAGE DRINKING
www.guideinc.org

