

What topics could parents talk about?

There are some topics that all parents should try to talk about with their children.

- Explain the risks of alcohol and focus on the immediate harmful effects of intoxication.
- Explain why alcohol can have a strong effect on young people.
- Identify and discuss ways to socialise and relax that don't involve alcohol.
- Discuss and practice ways to turn down offers of alcohol.
- Discuss how drinking too much alcohol can sometimes lead to behaviour they may later regret. Ask them if they have seen their mates like this.
- Discuss how mates could look after each other when they are out in a group.
- Discuss family rules about drinking alcohol. Most young people expect and appreciate some ground rules. Allow them to take part in setting the rules as this encourages young people to take more responsibility for their actions. Once you agree on rules enforce them, but talk about "withdrawing privileges" not "punishment".
- If your teenager is allowed to drink alcohol, set limits about how much, how often and the type of alcohol. Discuss what they can do to reduce harm - eating food, drinking slowly, using mobile phones to check in with parents, making arrangements to get home safely, and having a buddy system with a friend.
- Discuss drink-spiking and ways to prevent this from happening. For example, opening/pouring your own drinks, never leaving your drink unattended, looking after your friends.
- Explain that when a person collapses after drinking alcohol that an overdose has occurred and this is a life threatening situation requiring first aid. Discuss first aid strategies. For example, the importance of placing an intoxicated person who has collapsed in the recovery position to maintain their airway, get help from an adult or call an ambulance.
- Discuss the laws and legislation about alcohol possession and consumption and secondary supply what this means. You may find the www.lawstuff.org.au website useful.