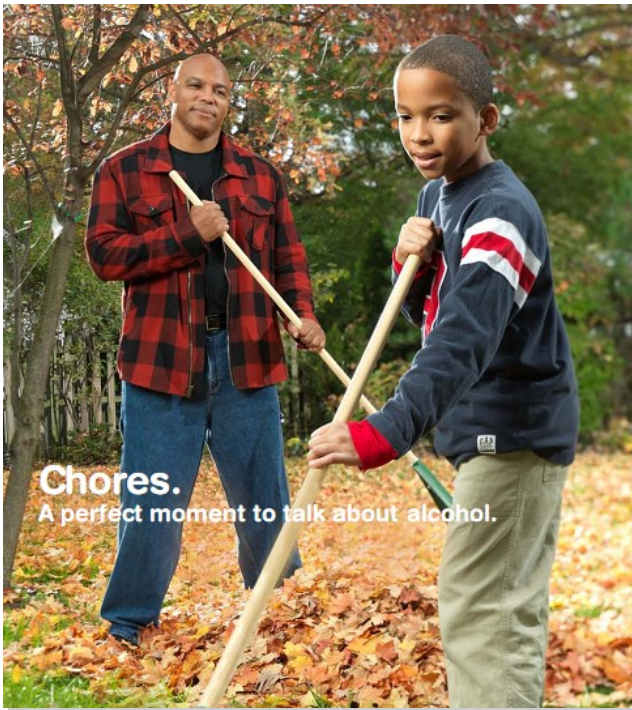


UNDERAGE DRINKING IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM

An alarming number of preteens are drinking alcohol. Parents have a big impact on whether or not their kids drink. Your kids really do hear you. For tips on how—and when—to start the conversation about alcohol, visit:

www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov

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You Are the Most POWERFUL Influence on Your Child's Behavior

START EARLY

The Chance That Children Will Use Alcohol Increases as They Get Older.

About 10 percent of 12-year-olds say they have tried alcohol, but by age 15, that number jumps to 50 percent. The sooner you talk to your children about alcohol, the greater chance you have of influencing their decision not to drink.

Some Children May Try Alcohol as Early as 9 Years Old.

Most 6-year-olds know that alcohol is only for adults. Between the ages of 9 and 13, children start to view alcohol more positively. Many children begin to think underage drinking is OK. Some even start to experiment. It is never too early to talk to your children about alcohol.

SAY SOMETHING

What you say to your child about alcohol is up to you. But remember, parents who do not discourage underage drinking may have an indirect influence on their children's alcohol use.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO



- Be a positive adult role model.
- Be aware of risk factors.
- Support your kids and give them space to grow.
- Be prepared. Your child may become curious about alcohol; he or she may turn to you for answers and advice.
- Use “natural” opportunities such as dinner time or while doing chores to start open, honest conversations about drinking.
- Work with schools, communities, and the government to protect children from underage alcohol use.

SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

Over the last several decades, the scientific understanding and knowledge of the dangers of underage drinking have increased substantially. Underage drinking is associated with various negative consequences for children and can affect and endanger the lives of those around them.

Children who drink alcohol are more likely to:

- Use drugs;
- Get bad grades;
- Suffer injury or death;
- Engage in risky sexual activity;
- Make bad decisions; and
- Have health problems.

