

UNDERAGE DRINKING

Montana parents share healthy protective beliefs about underage drinking.

A recent 2017 survey revealed that:

- Most Montana parents (91%) disapprove of high school students drinking.
- Most (74%) agree parents should not let their high school age children drink.
- Most (94%) agree that parents should establish rules and consequences about not drinking.¹

When individuals under the age of 21 drink, they experience disproportionate harm from alcohol compared to older adults. The negative effects of alcohol on a developing brain can be significant and long lasting resulting in changes to the structure and function of the brain.

Youth who drink are:

- over 7 times more likely to smoke cigarettes;
- over 6 times more likely to use marijuana;
- over 4 times more likely to use prescriptions drugs without a prescription;
- over twice as likely to have been hit or slapped by a boyfriend or girlfriend;
- over 7 times more likely to have had sex.²

Parents play a crucial role.³

- Teens who learn about the risks of alcohol and drug use from their parents are less likely to use alcohol and drugs.
- Teens desire the approval of their parents, and two-thirds of youth ages 13 to 17 say that losing their parents' respect is one of the main reasons they don't use alcohol or drugs.
- Teens who feel closely connected to their parents are less likely to use alcohol.



1. Center for Health and Safety Culture. (2018). 2017 Montana Parent Survey Key Findings Report, Bozeman, MT: Montana State University.

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 1991-2017 High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data. Available at <http://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/>.

3. The U.S. Department of Education, The Drug Enforcement Administration. (2014). Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention. Justice.Gov.

Strategies to Delay Alcohol Use

Talk and listen

- *"I do not want you to use alcohol. Why do you think it is important not to drink until you are over 21?"*
- *"I don't want you in a car with a driver who's been drinking. If you are at a party and see that alcohol is being used, call me and I'll come and get you. How would you respond if your friend insisted on driving even though you know your friend had been drinking?"*

Model positive behaviors

- *"You have probably noticed that we never drive if we have had anything to drink. Why do you think that is?"*

Establish clear rules

- *"I want us to be really clear about what the rules are given you are going to this party..."*
- *"Tell me what you understand about our agreements regarding drinking as well as drinking and driving."*
- *"Let's talk through why it is so important that you are where you say you are, and what happens if you are not."*

Monitor and enforce the rules consistently

- *"Thank you for telling me where you will be this evening. I will follow up by calling you as well as calling the house where you will be."*
- *"I know we agreed to an 11pm curfew, and you were back later than that. Let's talk through what happened, what you could have done differently, and the consequences of your actions."*

Clarify misperceptions

- *"It sounds like you think most teens drink regularly. In fact, most Montana teens don't drink regularly. Let's talk more about that."*
- *"I'm worried we don't see eye to eye on this. Let's talk through it."*

**Learn about preventing underage drinking
and more by visiting
ParentingMontana.org**

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underage drinking and drugs at LetsFacetMt.com.**