



Alcohol & your kids.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

hpo health promotion
agency

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YOU
HAVE
INFLUENCE



You have influence

Many of us are concerned that at some stage we, and our teens, will come face to face with the issue of alcohol and teenage drinking.

It may be your teenager wants their first taste of alcohol or is planning a party and wants alcohol supplied or has arrived home sick and drunk after a party.

Teenagers drink for similar reasons adults do – to relax and wind down, for confidence when socialising, or for the buzz. However, adolescence is also a time for taking risks and experimenting.

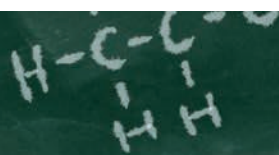
Whatever the reason, chances are high that your teenager will encounter alcohol – either through their own drinking or the drinking of someone else.

Helping them keep safe is your job – part of being a parent. Your advice and support is critical even though it may not always be welcomed.

As a parent or caregiver, there are things you can do to help reduce the impact of alcohol on your teenage children. They may not be easy for everyone but these are the things that are proven to make the most difference in young people's drinking.

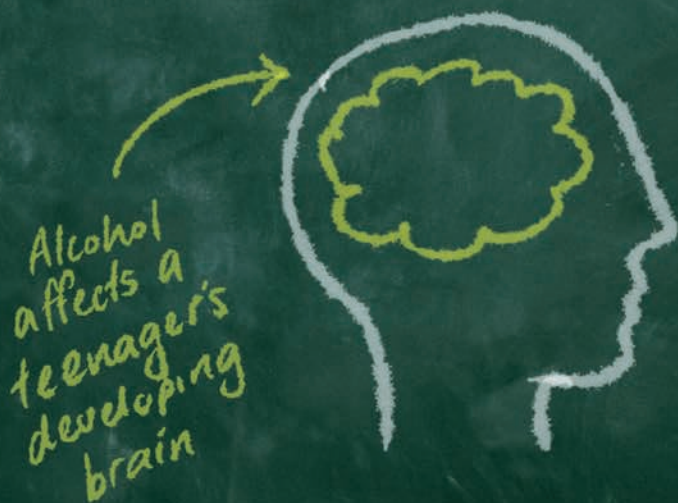
Some tips to make a difference in young people's drinking:

- 1 **Delay your teenager's introduction to alcohol as long as possible.**
- 2 **If you do supply alcohol, give only small amounts.**
- 3 **Make sure you, or someone you know and trust, is watching your teenagers when they consume alcohol.**
- 4 **Be a good role model around your kids – either don't drink alcohol, or drink only small amounts.**
- 5 **Have a good relationship with your teen and keep communication open.**



BE INFORMED

A few things you should know



Be informed

Alcohol is such an important issue for young people because:

Brains that are still developing are more susceptible to alcohol-related harm.

Teens have less physical tolerance to the effects of alcohol.

Even small amounts of alcohol can harm a young person.

Young people experience disproportionate harm related to their drinking or the drinking of someone else including:

*physical injury
violence and
sexual assaults
suicide and self-injury
dropping out of school
unemployment
job loss
social isolation
health problems.*

Find out more at alcohol.org.nz



What
can I,
DO?

a few tips to get started



What can I do?

Delay your teen's drinking for as long as possible

Most teens obtain alcohol from a parent, caregiver or other family member. Only one in ten purchase it for themselves. Although you may feel that introducing alcohol to your teenagers is a way of teaching them to be responsible, research shows that the younger your kids or teens start drinking, the more likely it is that they will go on to drink harmfully in their late teens and adult life. Delaying starting drinking can help them avoid a range of harms.

The Health Promotion Agency (HPA) provides advice on low-risk alcohol drinking including advice for parents of children and young people under 18 years.

LOW-RISK DRINKING ADVICE

Advice for parents of children and young people under 18 years

For children and young people under 18 years, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

- > *Those under 15 years of age are at the greatest risk of harm from drinking alcohol and not drinking in this age group is especially important.*
- > *For young people aged 15 to 17 years, the safest option is to delay drinking for as long as possible.*

If 15 to 17 year olds do drink alcohol, they should be supervised, drink infrequently and at levels usually below and never exceeding the adult daily limits.

If giving alcohol to teenagers supply low amounts

Teenagers have less tolerance to alcohol than adults and suffer disproportionally harm from alcohol use. Therefore if you decide to supply your teen with alcohol, never exceed the recommended daily amounts for adults. To find out more about standard drinks go to the **inside back cover**.

Low-risk alcohol drinking advice – daily amounts for adults.

Reduce your long-term health risks	
	
No more than...	
2	3
STANDARD DRINKS	STANDARD DRINKS
Daily	
and no more than 10 a week	and no more than 15 a week
And	
at least 2 alcohol-free days per week	

Adult supervision

If you are having a party where alcohol is allowed, you or a trusted adult need to actively supervise the party. Your involvement needs to be visible. You may ask that all guests come through the front door first so you know who is there.

Even if you don't stay in the same room all the time, young people will be safer if adults are moving through the party regularly. Serving food achieves this effortlessly.

If your teen is going to a party where alcohol is present, the adult hosts must have your express consent to supply alcohol to your teenager. This is the law. When contacting the host, it is also the perfect time to ask about time and place, supervision, alcohol and transport arrangements, and staying over. You may get a hard time on this front from your teenager but persist. Do it openly. Tell them it's not about lack of trust, but it is simply the law and you are looking out for their safety.



Serving food throughout the party allows you to monitor the state of the party and guests.

Role model

As parents or caregivers, you are probably the most important role model in your children's lives.

From the start, the attitude you model towards alcohol and the way you drink influences whether, or how, your child will drink in the future.

If you drink, model low-risk drinking by establishing and following your personal rules for drinking responsibly, and be prepared to explain these rules to your teenager.

When you don't 'walk the talk', this adds to the conflicting messages young people receive around alcohol.

Tips for modelling low-risk drinking

✓ DO

- > *Model responsible drinking around your children from when they are very young.*
- > *Make a point of sometimes refusing alcohol when your children are present.*
- > *Make sure you provide food and non-alcoholic beverages if making alcohol available to guests.*
- > *Model healthy ways of coping with stress without alcohol like exercise, listening to music, or talking things over.*

✗ DON'T

- > *Drink and drive.*
- > *Let other adults drive after attending a function at your place.*
- > *Portray alcohol as a good way to deal with stress, e.g. 'I've had a bad day, I need a drink'.*
- > *Convey the idea alcohol is fun or glamorous through stories about your own or others' drinking.*

If you're looking for help with your drinking, free and confidential advice is available on the **Alcohol Drug Helpline:**

0800 787 797

Your relationship with your kids

Having a close and supportive relationship with your teenager is a hugely protective influence. Teens are less likely to misuse alcohol if parents are involved in their life in positive ways. A good relationship with your teenager will influence how effective your efforts are in protecting them from alcohol misuse, and increase the likelihood that they will seek help from you if they are faced with an issue regarding alcohol.

DISCUSS YOUR EXPECTATIONS AROUND THEIR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

- > *Spell them out and discuss why they're important.*
- > *Be reasonable. Being either too strict or too easy-going doesn't work.*
- > *Decide together what should happen when rules are broken, such as a grounding, loss of privileges, extra chores.*
- > *Follow through and apply the consequences. Both parents need to agree on and stick to the same rules – particularly if they're not living together. If your partner or ex won't support you, get other family members or friends to help.*

WAYS TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR TEENAGER

- > *Set a good example.*
- > *Let them know they've 'got what it takes'.*
- > *Regularly demonstrate you care about them.*
- > *Being consistent and creating open communication between yourself and your teen is vital.*
- > *Following through on promises and enforcing rules builds trust.*
- > *Be involved in their life.*
- > *Help them feel good about themselves.*
- > *Help them deal with problems and stress.*



Build and maintain a good relationship with your teen. Keep talking to each other.



What factors influence a teenager's decision to drink alcohol?

The diagram below shows some of the factors which may influence teenage drinking:





What does the law say?

LEGAL

LICENCES / PERMITS

REGULATIONS / STANDARDS

FINANCIAL / TAXATION

What does the law say?

The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 controls the sale and supply of alcohol in New Zealand.

Selling alcohol

It is illegal to sell alcohol to anyone under 18 years of age.

Supplying alcohol

Someone under the age of 18 cannot be supplied with alcohol unless*:

- ▶ the person supplying the alcohol is **their parent or legal guardian AND** the alcohol is **supplied in a responsible manner, OR**
- ▶ the person supplying alcohol has the **express consent** of the teenager's parent or legal guardian **AND** the alcohol is **supplied in a responsible manner.**

*You could be fined up to \$2,000 if you don't follow this law.

Who is a guardian?

A legal guardian is not another family member like an aunt, uncle, older brother or sister, older boyfriend or girlfriend, sports coach or anyone else acting temporarily in the place of a parent.

A person is only considered a teenager's legal guardian if he or she is recognised as a guardian under the Care of Children Act 2004.

What does express consent mean?

If you're supplying alcohol to an under 18 year old who is not your teen, you need to ensure you have express consent from their parent or legal guardian before giving them alcohol.

Express consent may include a personal conversation, an email or text message that you have good reason to believe is genuine.

WHAT DOES RESPONSIBLE MANNER MEAN?

TO SUPPLY ALCOHOL TO TEENAGERS UNDER 18 RESPONSIBLY YOU SHOULD:

- > *supervise the drinking of alcohol*
- > *provide food*
- > *provide a choice of low-alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks*
- > *ensure safe transport options are in place.*

ALSO CONSIDER:

- > *the nature of the occasion*
- > *the time period over which the alcohol is supplied*
- > *the strength and amount of alcohol supplied*
- > *the age of the teenager.*

Drinking and driving

There is a zero alcohol limit for anyone aged under 20. Anyone under 20 could be charged with drink driving if they consume any alcohol and then drive.

Handling things that go wrong



Handling things that go wrong

Most teenagers will experiment with alcohol. Getting it wrong is fairly common, but that doesn't mean they will become an alcoholic or alcohol-dependent.

Drunk and unconscious

Call 111 for an ambulance.

Vomiting continuously

Don't leave your teenager alone. Lay them on their side in the recovery position. Monitor their breathing and heart rate and make sure their mouth is empty. Keep them warm. If there is no improvement, dial 111 for an ambulance.

Going to parties they're not allowed to

If your teenager is sober when they arrive home, and you can control yourself, discuss things that night. If they are drunk, or you are too tired or angry to talk reasonably, wait until morning.

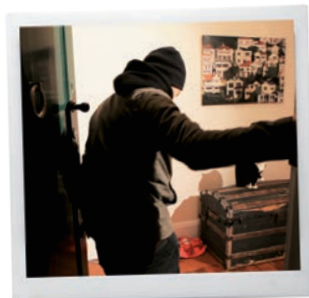
Tell them how you feel about what they've done, including your worries for their safety. Give them a chance to explain. Go back over the rules you agreed to and take action – such as a grounding which includes the following weekend.

Taking alcohol from you

Handle it just like any stealing within your family. Discuss what has happened. Follow through by taking suitable action like making your teenager pay for the alcohol taken.

Getting violent when drunk

You don't need to put up with violence from anyone, even family members. If you can't control the situation, call someone who can come quickly, like a friend or the police.



If you have concerns
please call the Alcohol
Drug helpline:

0800 787 797

IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR TEEN IS ABUSING ALCOHOL

There are a range of signs and behaviours which may indicate a teenager is drinking excessively, including:

- > ***Repeated health complaints like vomiting.***
- > ***Changes in sleeping patterns.***
- > ***Mood changes, especially irritability.***
- > ***Starting arguments, withdrawing from the family or breaking family rules.***
- > ***Failing exams, missing assignments, frequent school absences or discipline problems at school.***
- > ***Changes in social activities and social groups or friends.***
- > ***Coming home drunk.***
- > ***Smell of alcohol on their clothes, breath, skin, etc.***
- > ***Missing sport, school, family events, etc.***
- > ***Changes in behaviour – not being where they say they are going to be, etc.***

! NOTE

Some of these signs can also result from other issues. If you believe your teenager is abusing alcohol, consider discussing your concerns with your GP to rule out other potential causes.

If you feel like things have moved passed this point and you need extra help, the Alcohol Drug Helpline will be of assistance –

0800 787 797

The Bewildered DVD, another HPA resource for parents and caregivers may also be helpful. You can get this by ringing the Alcohol Drug Helpline on the number above or at:

alcohol.org.nz

Find out more at alcohol.org.nz

Where to go for help

HPA's alcohol website

On this website you can test your drinking, get practical advice and lots of other information regarding alcohol.

alcohol.org.nz

Alcohol Drug Helpline

For free advice and details of alcohol services in your area.

0800 787 797

adan.org.nz

Barnardos

Barnardos believes children come first. Barnardos offers a range of child and family services and early childhood care and education in communities.

0800 422 762

barnardos.org.nz

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

CAB stuff can put you in touch with the helping services in your community.

For your nearest CAB office phone

0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222)

cab.org.nz

Personal Help services in your White Pages

A section in the front of your phone book that lists the names and phone numbers of the helping agencies in your community. Support topics covered includes health, violence and alcohol.

Relationships Aotearoa

For advice on building successful relationships within your family.

0800 RELATE (0800 735 283)

relationships.aotearoa.org.nz

Toughlove

Toughlove is a non-profit, self-help organisation that provides ongoing education and active support to families, empowering parents and young people to accept responsibility for their actions and stop destructive behaviours.

toughlove.org.nz

Drinking & your teenager

HPA has a series of videos that illustrate some helpful tips for parents.

Setting expectations around your teenagers behaviour toward alcohol from an early age can have large impact on their behaviour later on.

These videos show examples of situations you may find yourself in and offer tips to maintaining a healthy relationship with your teenager while limiting the damaging effects of alcohol on your child and your family.



Video 01 **Delaying drinking**

Research shows that the younger your child starts drinking, the more likely it is they will go on to drink harmfully in the future.

Lucy wants to go to a party where there will be alcohol. This video looks at how to maintain the boundaries you have agreed around drinking with your child, even when it is hard going.



Video 02 **Supervised drinking**

As your teen gets older, you might find that their social lives begin to incorporate alcohol.

Aizak's Mum wants to ensure that if her son is going to be drinking then it is happening in a supervised environment. This video looks at the steps you can take, so that if your child is going to be drinking, they do so in a safe and controlled environment.



Video 03 **Excessive drinking**

Mistakes with alcohol can happen, no matter how much guidance you try to give your teen.

This video looks at what happens when Josh slips up with alcohol and how the situation can be handled to help your teen to drink responsibly and stay safe in the future.

**visit alcohol.org.nz for
more information**

What is a standard drink?

A 'standard drink' contains 10 grams of pure alcohol. Knowing how many standard drinks you're consuming is the key to understanding how much alcohol you're drinking, and to avoiding alcohol-related harm.



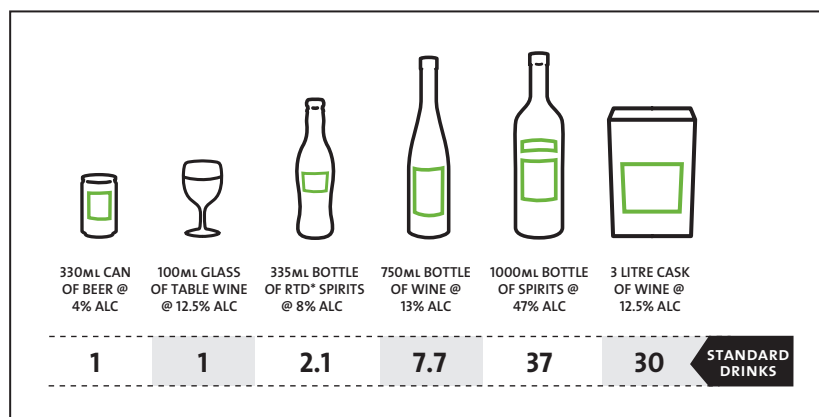
Read the label

Under New Zealand law, all alcoholic drinks containers must state the number of standard drinks they include. Check the label to see how many standard drinks are inside.

Know your numbers

If a bottle of wine states it contains eight standard drinks and you empty the bottle into four glasses, then each glass you've poured will equal two standard drinks.

A guide to standard drinks



* RTD (READY TO DRINK)

Playing the game

HPA's interactive tools and games

Can you pour a standard drink? and *How much alcohol is that?* are available on alcohol.org.nz and are a fun way to understand how many standard drinks and the amount of alcohol there is in a range of alcohol options.



Find out more at:

alcohol.org.nz/alcohol-you/whats-standard-drink



Your DVD Resource

.....
Your DVD here

Three common scenarios parents may
find themselves in with their teenagers
are played out on the attached DVD.
For more information visit:

alcohol.org.nz

ISBN/EAN 978-1-927138-39-7 (print)
ISBN/EAN 978-1-927138-40-3 (online)

For help, contact the
Alcohol Drug Helpline on
0800 787 797

Free confidential information, insight and
support for you and your family.

Māori line
0800 787 798

Free confidential information, insight and
support for you and your whānau.

Whaka-tu-tangata
stand tall – It's your call



Pasifika line
0800 787 799

Free confidential information, insight and
support for you and your family.

It's your call



For up-to-date statistics and information check out:
alcohol.org.nz



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