

Parents have a powerful voice in their teen's lives

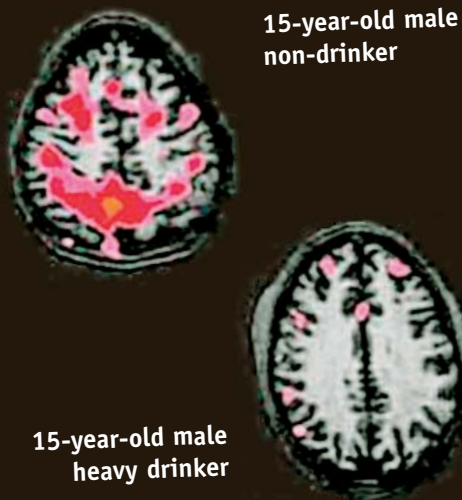
Parental Guide to hosting responsible teen parties



Every Parent...

...needs to be informed about Alcohol and Youth Brain development research.

Reduced Brain Activity During a Memory Task



(Susan F. Tapert, Ph.D., University of CA, San Diego)

Did You Know?

- The average age reported for the initiation of drinking alcohol is 12 years old and alcohol is the main cause of death for youth under the age of 21.

(NIAAA 2003)

Underage Drinkers are at Higher Risk of Brain Damage than Adults

Adolescents 14- to 21-year-olds who abuse alcohol have a smaller hippocampus--the area of the brain that handles memory and learning, than non-drinkers. This reduction is significant and possibly irreversible according to the American Medical Association. Our brains go through important transformations during adolescence and studies show alcohol use during adolescent years associated with damage to memory and learning capabilities as well as to the decision-making and reasoning areas in the brain. Alcohol takes a greater toll on brain development of those under twenty-one than on any other age group. Adults would have to consume twice as many drinks to suffer the same damage as adolescents and even occasional heavy drinking injures young brains. Adolescent drinkers score worse than non-users on vocabulary, visual-spatial and memory tests and were more likely to perform poorly in school, fall behind and experience social problems, depression, suicidal thoughts and violence.

(AMA, 2002)

Straight Talk

Each year, approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking.

(NIAAA, 2007)

What Every Parent Needs to Know...

...before hosting a party for their teen in Virginia

KNOW THE LAW!

Parents have the right to provide alcohol to their own children in their own home. However, it is illegal to purchase, aid and abet or give alcohol to other minors. Violators can be charged with a **Class 1 Misdemeanor, which carries a fine of \$2,500 and/or up to one year in jail.**

Virginia law recognizes parents' liability for negligence if alcohol is provided to a minor who causes injury to another or him/herself. You have civil liability (meaning you can be sued to pay damages) if a partygoer is hurt or a third-party is injured.

Parents may be held responsible if a teen, as a result of alcohol use in their home:

- Gets into a fight and hurts someone or themselves.
- Falls and hurts him/herself or someone else.
- Sexually assaults someone.
- Damages property.
- Dies from drinking too much.
- Injures or kills someone while driving after leaving the party.

Did You Know?

- On an average day in 2006, of adolescents ages 12–17, nearly 8,000 drank alcohol for the first time.

(SAMHSA, 2007)

+ Hosting

When you throw a party for your teen:

Make it a great party by planning for everything...

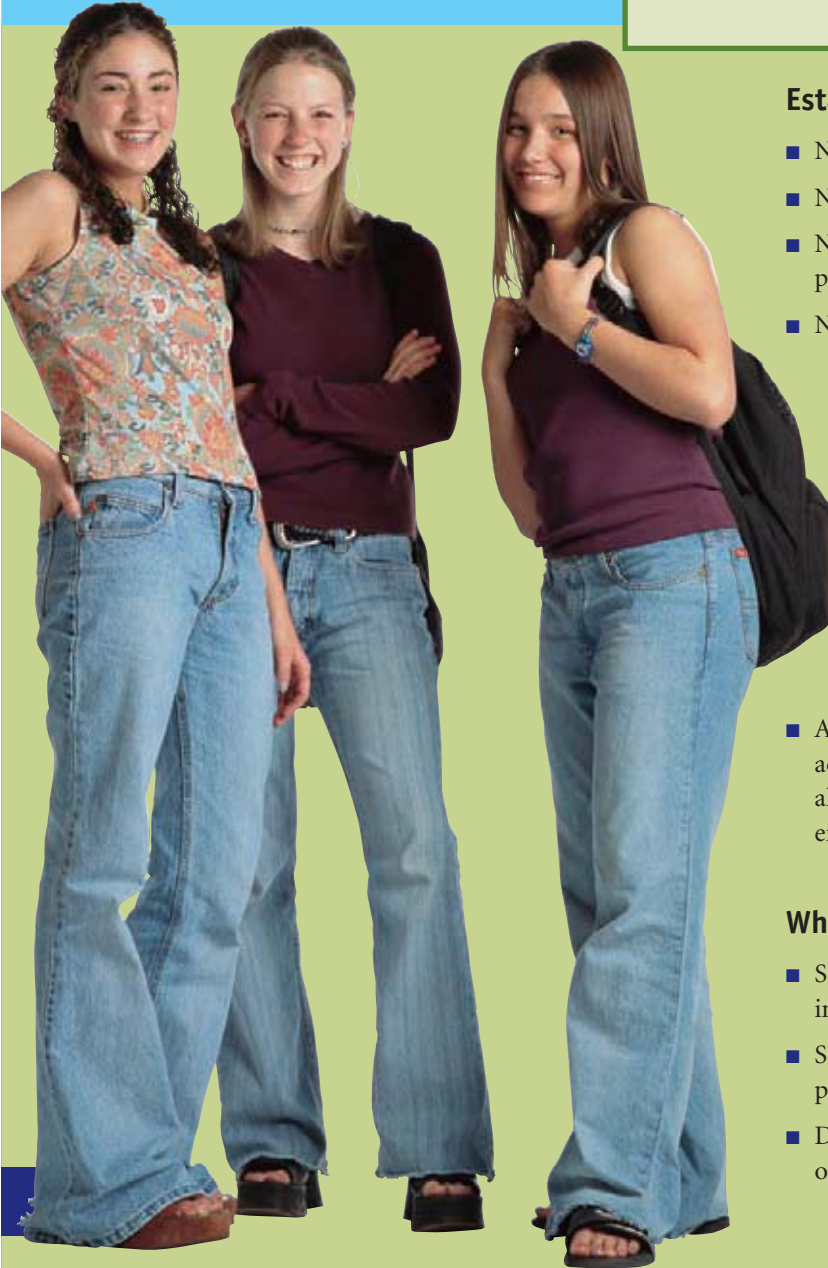
- Decide on a guest list. Give your teen a maximum number to invite. Set an age limit for guests. Keep a copy of the guest list for your records.
- Send invitations! Have your teen inform his/her guest that the party is by invitation only. Don't send e-mail invitations. Avoid the "open party" situation.
- Set a party time, inclusive of a start and end time.
- Put your phone number on the invitation and welcome calls from parents.
- Inform parents/guardians about the party and explain your expectations of partygoers. No Alcohol!
- Have parents or responsible adults drop-off and pickup teens. If teens drive to the party, plan to hold all keys to eliminate the temptation of leaving and returning to the party.
- Stay at the party. Your presence is important. Walk through the party area frequently. Have additional adult supervision onsite during the party.
- Ask all uninvited guests to leave immediately. If necessary, call the police to escort unwanted guests out.
- If you suspect a teen guest is intoxicated, contact his or her parents/guardians immediately.
- Have guests remain in the party location; do not allow teens to go back and forth to a parking lot or their car.
- Hold the party in an area you can monitor party guests from inside and outside.
- Watch for strange behavior. Pay attention if a guest frequents the bathroom after getting a drink. This could indicate the use of illegal substances or alcohol.



Did You Know?

- Youth who begin drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who wait until age 21.

(Source: Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America)



Establish rules ahead of time

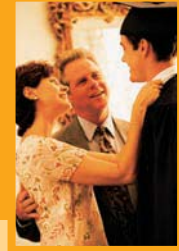
- No drugs or alcohol.
- No smoking.
- No leaving the party & returning without adult permission and supervision.
- No uninvited guests.
 - Party area should have ample lighting for the time of the day; keep lights on throughout the party.
 - Parent(s) will be providing supervision by serving refreshments, etc.
 - Make some rooms in your home off limits to guests; insist on partygoers staying in designated party areas.
 - Secure all forms of alcohol, firearms and other hazardous items in your home in a safe place.
- Avoid combining adult and youth parties. Remember adults are role models, teens will get the message that alcohol is not the “life of a party” when no alcohol is present at the party.

What’s on the menu?

- Serve a wide variety of foods that appeal to teens, including healthy options.
- Serve a variety of drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid serving punch or soft drinks in cups.
- Do not allow teens to bring outside drinks, cups or open bottles into the party.

K Know the Facts

...before you send your teen out to party



If you are a parent of a high school student, soon your teen will be experiencing three of the most anticipated events in his or her life: spring break, prom and graduation. Most teens will celebrate by attending a party with their friends. Before you send your teen out to celebrate, be prepared for what they may encounter before they return to the safety and comfort of your home.

Things to know when your teen is a guest at a party

- Before giving consent for your teen to attend, call the adult host to confirm party location, time and whether alcohol is being served. Obtain a land line number for the party location.
- If you do not know the host parent or on-site designated adult, take the time to introduce yourself. Get to know the parents of your teen's friends. Make sure they share your expectations of drug and alcohol-free parties. Consider entering into a parents pledge to provide safe homes. See informedfamilies.org.
- Make sure your teen knows that you will be checking with the parents of any other teen who is hosting a party. Don't trust that other parents will have the same "no-use" expectations as you.
- Confirm that no alcohol will be served and adult supervision will be on-site. Make sure that the parent is trustworthy; mention that you may be stopping by to check on how the party is going. It is unfortunate, but **NOT ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS CAN BE TRUSTED** with your teen's safety and well-being.
- Discuss drop-off and pickup expectations with your teen. Make sure your teen has money or a cell phone for an emergency phone call. Be sure your teen knows who to call.
- Make it easy for your teen to leave a party if there are drugs/alcohol. Practice refusal techniques with them. Make arrangements for them to call you or another trusted adult if they need to be picked up. Emphasize they should never ride home with **any** driver who has been drinking.
- Discuss with your teen the dangers of drinking and driving or riding in a car with an impaired person. Even though alcohol is not supposed to be served at the party, there is no guarantee that a party guest will not try to sneak alcohol in.
- Stay up and greet your teen when they return home. This lets your teen know you care and are paying attention to what they are doing.
- Be clear about consequences (in advance) if your teen chooses to drink alcohol.

Straight Talk

Among underage drinkers in 2007, who did not pay for the alcohol the last time they drank, parents, guardians, or other adult family members provided the alcohol 19.5% of the time.

(SAMHSA 2008)

Did You Know?

- Only 31% of parents of 15 to 16 year olds believe their child had a drink in the past year, compared to the 60% of teens in that age group who reported drinking.

(American Viewpoint Results of a National Survey of Parents 2003 camy.org)

Straight Talk

Be specific when setting house rules. Make sure your teen knows your non-alcohol policy and that it is in effect at all times, even in your absence.

Youth between the ages of 12–20 exposure to alcohol advertising on television has risen by 38% from 2001 to 2007.

(Center for Alcohol Marketing and Youth camy.org)



Going out of town

Before you go out of town and leave a teen alone or in charge, consider the following:

- Can your teen handle the responsibility?
- Make it clear that throwing a party is not an option!
- Ask a trusted adult such as a close neighbor to check on your teen and your home while you are gone.
- Be clear about consequences (in advance) if your teen chooses to have a party while you are gone.

Spring Break! Beach Parties!

Things to remember before you send your teen to the beach or on a spring break vacation

- Do not send your teen to the beach without adult supervision. Send your teen with a group of friends and at least one adult that you have met and trust.
- Write down the hotel name, address, phone number and the contact information for the adult accompanying the teens.
- Prepare a list of emergency numbers such as the police departments, hospitals, and other such emergency contacts for your teen to carry with them. Include phone numbers of family or friends for emergencies. Keep a copy for your home records.
- Have your teen keep a list of phone numbers to call in case your teen's credit cards or traveler's checks are lost or stolen, as well as the traveler's check numbers.
- Include an emergency/safety kit containing things such as aspirin, bandages, disinfectants, cold compress and sun block.
- There's safety in numbers. Talk to your teen about staying with his/her friends. Three or more people watching out for each other are better than one.
- Talk to your teen before the trip about the dangers of drinking and drinking and driving.

P Parent Power

Research shows that parents have a powerful voice in their teen's lives and decisions. Teens who say their parents strongly disapprove of underage drinking and know there will be consequences are less likely to use alcohol.



Did You Know?

- In 2005, 2,035 youth (aged 15–20) were killed in alcohol-related crashes.

(NHTSA 2006)

P Prevention Strategies for Parents

Maintaining open lines of communication, especially listening, is the single most important thing you can do to prevent your teen from using alcohol and other drugs. But it isn't enough!

Stay active and involved

- Know your teen's friends and favorite hangouts.
- Know the parents/guardians of your teen's friends.
- Keep track of and support your teen's participation in school and community activities.
- Do not allow any unchaperoned parties or other gatherings in your home.
- Monitor alcohol use by adults in your home.
- If you keep alcohol in your home, keep track of the supply.

Tips

- Establish healthy beliefs and set clear standards.
- Encourage healthy, creative activities.
- Help your teen develop strong values.
- Create a comfortable and supportive atmosphere at home.
- Value your teens opinions and feelings.
- Be a good role model in your own use of alcohol.

Curfews

- Set a blanket curfew. Time can be added or restricted if teen has something special to do or parent needs them home earlier.
- Allow some flexibility on special occasions such as proms and graduations.
- Do not allow your teens to walk out the door and say, "I'll be back at such and such a time." Teens should tell their parents where they are going and call home if their plans change.
- Do not allow teens to call home 1/2 hour before curfew and ask to sleep over at a friend's. This is generally a red flag saying "something is up."
- Do not give in to what "everyone else is allowed to do."

If your teen holds a learners permit or driver license under age 18 in Virginia the following curfew restrictions apply by law, effective July 1, 2003.

Virginia's curfew laws prohibit drivers under age 18 who hold a learner's permit or driver's license from driving midnight to 4 a.m. If you hold a driver's license, you may drive during these hours:

- In the case of an emergency.
- When traveling to and from work- or a school-sponsored event.
- When accompanied by a parent or other adult acting in place of a parent.
- When responding to an emergency call by volunteer firefighter and rescue squad personnel.

Teen drivers are restricted to the number of passengers under age 18 traveling in vehicle, effective July 1, 2003.

If you are under age 18, you may carry only one passenger under 18 during the first year that you hold your driver's license. After you have held your license for one year, you may carry only three passengers under 18 until you reach age 18. Learner's permit holders may not carry more than one passenger under age 18. Passenger restrictions do not apply to family members. For more information please visit www.dmvnow.com.

Send a Clear Message

It's All About What You Say or Don't Say

You may not want to embarrass or alienate your teen by discussing the issue of underage drinking. But drinking and driving is only one of the many problems associated with illegal underage alcohol use. Other potential problems are unplanned sexual activity, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol poisoning, and sexual assault. Before sending your teen out to a party, talk to him or her about the consequences of using alcohol while underage. It is far better to be safe than sorry.

- Be prepared to talk about the issue of underage drinking. Take some time to really think about what you want to say and key points to go over with your teen. Anticipate how your teen might respond to your questions. Remember teens do not want a lecture. You do not need to cover everything at once. This should be an ongoing conversation with your teen throughout adolescence.
- Send a clear message that underage alcohol use is not accepted. Enter into a family contract. (SAMHSA's Family Guide to Keeping Youth Mentally Healthy and Drug Free.)
- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Have your teen practice saying "no" to illegal activities. Discuss ways to get out of uncomfortable situations. Help your teen think of ways to respond when they are offered alcohol. For example, "No, I don't want a beer, I have to stay in shape for my team." or, "Nah, I'd rather have a soda" or just say, "no thanks".
- Listen to your teen. When you listen, you create a safe environment where your teen will feel comfortable talking with you about his or her concerns.
- Set firm rules. Make it clear that drinking is illegal under any circumstances until they are over the age of 21. Discuss what the consequences will be if they choose to drink, (i.e., loss of car privileges, phone, dating, computer and misdemeanor charge if caught).
- Be alert for possible signs of alcohol use. Watch for problems like dropping grades, withdrawal, missing money, or a new set of questionable friends.
- Remind your teen of Virginia's "You Use, You Lose" law. If he/she uses, buys or possesses alcohol or drugs, he/she can lose their driver's license or learner's permit for six months to a year and be charged with a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Did You Know?

- There are an estimated 10.8 million underage drinkers in the U.S. (SAMHSA 2006)
- By the time young people graduate from high school at age 18, 75% have had their first drink. (SAMHSA 2007)
- Approximately 10% of 12 year olds say they have used alcohol at least once. (NIAAA 2003)□

Key Points to Mention



- Don't drink alcohol or use other drugs.
- Stay away from teens who do use alcohol or other drugs.
- Resist pressure to use alcohol or other drugs; saying "No" is the norm.
- Leave the party if it is unsafe because drinking or drug use is happening.
- Refuse to ride with friends who have been drinking, even if they act sober.

Did You Know?

- When youth between the ages of 12 and 20 consume alcohol, they drink on average about 5 drinks per occasion about 6 times a month.

(Surgeon General's Call to Action)



This brochure was developed by the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Education through federal funding provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. If you have any questions about this brochure, please contact ABC's Education at (804) 213-4688 or e-mail: education@abc.virginia.gov. Visit us on the Web at www.abc.virginia.gov. © 2009 Virginia ABC. All Rights Reserved.



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Talk to your teens; they will listen

Parental Guide

to hosting
responsible
teen parties



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