



What is Drawing the Line?

Drawing the Line is a slogan used by Montgomery County Ca. coalitions working to prevent underage alcohol use by changing community perception of and reaction to underage alcohol use. In contrast to 1992, most people now realize that underage drinking is:

illegal; unhealthy; and: unacceptable

“Isn’t it time that we Draw the Line?”

Parents Are the *“Prevention Specialists”*

General Advice

- Encourage Conversation
- Listen without interruption
- Ask open- ended questions- encourage your teen to tell you how he/she thinks and feels about the issue
- Control your emotions – try not to respond with anger
- Make every conversation a “win-win” experience, don’t lecture or try to “score points”
- If you respect your teen’s viewpoint, he/she will be more likely to listen to you

Talking With Your Teen About Alcohol

- Teens are often misinformed about alcohol and its effects.
- Share some important facts during your talk.
- Alcohol is a powerful substance that slows the body and mind, impairing coordination, reaction time, vision, thinking, and judgment.
- Beer and wine are not less potent than hard liquor. A serving of each type of alcohol will have the same effects.
- Discuss the images you see on television and in magazines portraying alcohol as a key factor in having a good time. Alcohol is not a ‘magic potion’ that will make a teen popular, happy, or attractive.
- Give them ideas about ways to say “NO” to a drink.
- Let them know that there will be consequences for using alcohol
- Read to them from the paper local accidents and tragedies involving alcohol
- Let them know of any family history of problems with alcohol and other drugs

What if they ask about your choices as a teen?

- You can be honest if you did drink, let your teen know it was a mistake, and give an example of how your teenage drinking had negative consequences.
- You can tell your child that you choose not to discuss it if you feel it should not be a part of the conversation.
- Set a good example if you use alcohol.
- You are still your child's most important role model.
- Children will notice your actions and remember what you do, as well as what you say.

Specific Strategies

- Get to know your children's friends and their parents
- Know where your children are at night- check up on them
- Make a contract for not drinking with consequences if broken and a reward for following through.
- Driving and having a car is a privilege and delayed ability to get a license or taking away driving privileges have power on teen's behavior.
- Know how much money your child has and how much they are spending and what they are spending it on. If they have their own job, make them pay into the house account and give them an allowance. Save it for them for the future.
- Let them know your expectations and remind them that they have a choice but let them know what will happen to them – Be consistent with the consequences.

For further information on teen drinking:

<http://family.samhsa.gov/default.aspx>

<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/aa68/aa68.htm>

<http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/parents.aspx>

For further information on college drinking:

http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/NIAAACollegeMaterials/TaskForce/TaskForce_TOC.aspx

<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/HSParentStudents/>

<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/OtherAlcoholInformation/makeDifference.aspx#Introduction>

<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/NIAAACollegeMaterials/parentBrochure.aspx>

If I can be of any further help feel free to contact me at:

Donna Lynn Darmody, Director of Health Education, AOD Prevention Coordinator
Roger Williams University (401) 254-3413; ddarmody@rwu.edu