

**Is this part of your child's  
summer fun?**

**More teens drink during the summer  
than any other time of the year.**



**Start talking to your kids  
before they start drinking.**



**Tri-Town  
Community Action Agency**

**Coordinator of the North Providence, Smithfield,  
and Johnston Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions**

# The Facts

**Most young people who start drinking before age 21 do so when they are about 13-14 years old. Kids who drink before age 15 are 5 times more likely to have alcohol problems when they're adults. That's why it's important to start talking early and often about underage drinking.**

- 10% of 12-year olds have used alcohol.
- By age 13, alcohol use doubles.
- By age 15, 50% of teens have had at least one drink.
- By high school graduation, 75% have used alcohol.
- Many teens take their first drink during the summer months.

# The Dangers

- On average, young people drink more than adults when they drink – about 5 drinks on a single occasion.
- The rate of alcohol dependency is four times greater for teens than for adults
- Drinking is a major cause of death from injuries among young people – including auto crashes, alcohol poisoning, homicides, suicides, falls, burns and drowning.
- Alcohol increases the risk of carrying out or being a victim of sexual or physical abuse.
- Alcohol use can cause bad grades, run-ins with the law and drug use.
- Alcohol plays a role in risky sexual activity.
- Excessive alcohol consumption can harm the growing brain.

# Why Teens Drink

- Desire to take risks.
- Less connection to parents and more independence.
- More time spent with friends and by themselves.
- Increased stress.
- Peer pressure and desire for acceptance.



## I'm Peter

In eight years I'll be an alcoholic. I'll start drinking in middle school, just at parties. But my parents won't talk to me about it until high school. And by then, I'll already be in trouble.



## I'm Megan

I started drinking to be accepted. It got out of hand. Now I drink too often and too much. Sometimes I don't remember what I did. Why did I ever think this would make me happy?



## I'm Josh

I thought I could drink and nothing bad would happen. That was before I crashed my parents' car, my friends were injured, and we all ended up in trouble with the law.



## I'm Aisha

I didn't believe it when they said drinking would make me take risks I wouldn't otherwise take. I was wrong. I can't risk having my grades fall. I can't risk pregnancy. I can't risk injury. The biggest risk I can take is continuing to drink.

# Guide for Parents: Tips to Avoid Summer Underage Drinking

## Support your teens and give them space to grow:

- Unsupervised children have more opportunities to experiment with risky behaviors. Keep your child busy with sports, summer camps, jobs, household tasks, and other activities.
- Get involved in your child's life, share your values, be loving and caring.
- Make it easy for your teens to share information about their lives.
- Make clear, sensible rules and enforce them.
- Set a good example through your own behavior.
- Teach your teens what to look for in a friend and advise them about what to say if offered harmful substances.
- Know what your teens are listening to, where they are, what they're doing, who they're with, and who their friends are.

## Talk about alcohol use:

- When talking about drinking, listen to your kids and respect what they say.
- Make it clear to your teens that your expectation is that they will not drink.
- Discuss the dangers and laws about underage drinking.

## Help your teens make good decisions about alcohol:

- Help them find ways to have fun without alcohol.
- Do not give alcohol to your teens or let them attend parties where alcohol is served.
- Tell your teens not to ride in a car driven by someone who has been drinking.
- Get professional help if you're worried about your teens' involvement with alcohol.
- Reward your teen's decision not to drink.

**It's time  
to change ...**

**It's time to change how we all think, talk and act when it comes to underage drinking. We need to stop accepting it and start discouraging it. Start the discussion long before your child starts thinking about drinking.**

## Free Guide

- *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking, Guide.* For a free copy, call Tri-Town Community Action Agency, 519-1937.



## Together we can keep alcohol out of the hands of kids.

### Police enforcement

The Smithfield, North Providence and Johnston police are enforcing laws pertaining to:

- Possession of alcohol by a minor.
- Sale of alcohol to minors.
- Responsible Beverage Service.
- Allowing consumption of or furnishing alcohol to underage persons.
- Social Hosting.

### Parent and Community Responsibilities

- Obey the laws regarding social hosting and purchasing alcohol on behalf of minors.
- Help monitor neighborhood underage drinking activities by calling the police.
- Leaving teens home alone? Notify the police. You may fill out a request for periodic check of your home for suspicious activity. Forms are available at the Smithfield and North Providence Police Departments.

### Be aware, you can be arrested for:

- Buying or possessing alcohol if you are under age 21.
- Buying alcohol for underage persons.
- Hosting a party where there is underage drinking.

## Need substance abuse counseling for someone in your family?

Call the Tri-Town Community Action Agency Health Center: 519-1940.

## Resources

- [www.cdc.gov/Alcohol/quickstats/underage\\_drinking.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/Alcohol/quickstats/underage_drinking.htm)
- [www.dontserveteens.gov/](http://www.dontserveteens.gov/)
- [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/)



North Providence  
Substance Abuse  
Prevention Coalition, 519-1937



Smithfield  
Substance Abuse  
Prevention Coalition, 519-1957



Johnston  
Substance Abuse  
Prevention Coalition, 519-1903



## Tri-Town Community Action Agency

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This public education brochure sponsored by Tri-Town Community Action Agency and the Smithfield, North Providence and Johnston Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions with funding from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) through the RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services and the Johnston Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition.

Information in this brochure includes excerpts from The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking, Guide to Action for Families; SAMHSA News, "Summer Means More Underage Drinking;" and Tips to Avoid Summer Underage Drinking, Prevention First Ocean.