

- If you don't drink, explain to your children why you have made this choice. Point out examples of low-risk drinking in case they choose to drink as adults.
- Show your kids you are a responsible host by having nonalcoholic drinks available for guests, never "pushing" drinks, and by serving food with drinks.
- Demonstrate positive ways to handle stress. Practice relaxing, exercising or working at a hobby instead of having a drink.
- Use prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication only as directed and necessary and never use illegal drugs. Don't give your kids the message that a pill— aspirin or otherwise— will "make you feel better."
- And of course, if you smoke, make a plan to quit and follow through.

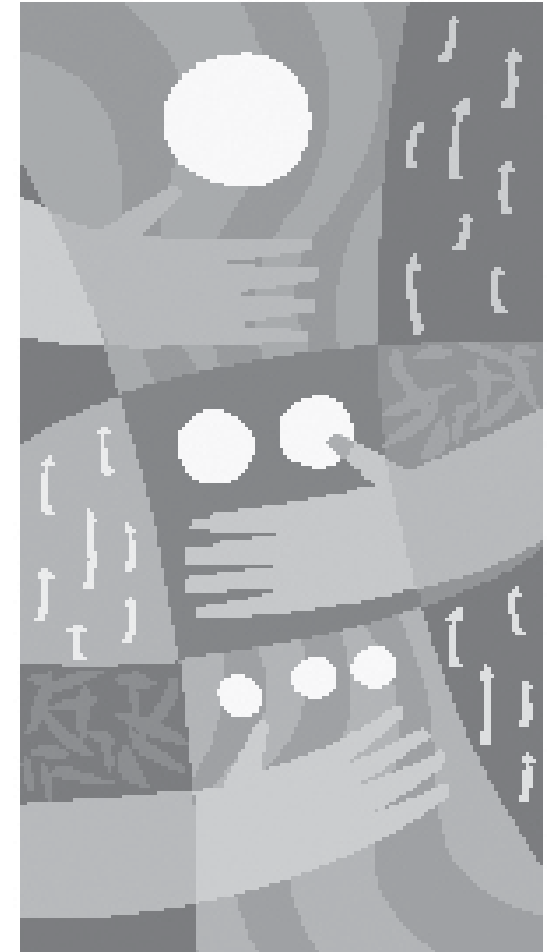
Remember....

Kids don't stay alcohol and drug-free by luck. It takes caring and effort. When it comes from you it makes a difference.

If you are concerned alcohol or other drug abuse in your family or community, take action by calling LCAD at 475-2694. We have access to local and national resources that will be of assistance to you. You can also visit our website at www.lcad.org and go to the links page.



Prevention Begins at Home



This brochure was produced by the Lincoln Council on Alcoholism & Drugs. For more information, contact:

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Prevention begins at home. Parents are the single greatest influence upon their children and have a major role in whether or not their kids will experience alcohol or drug problems.

The first step in helping kids is leaning what to do. To assist you, we've assembled this prevention guide.

Please save this, post it, and refer to it often. It works!

Start Talking To Kids Early

Attitudes about alcohol and drugs are formed early in life, so get your two cents worth in while you can. Look for triggers—times when an alcohol or drug related situation has caught your kid's interest—and use the opportunity to give them your views and accurate information.

For example, if your kids are watching a show that portrays drug use as funny or grown-up, you might say something like, "This program doesn't show the other side of drugs. Some of the bad things that could happen are..."

When an alcohol commercial catches your kid's interest you might ask, "Why do you suppose that beer ads use football players? Do you think drinking helps in sports?" Get them thinking about what the ads are implying.

Remember, most kids have their first alcohol or drug experience between the ages of 12 and 14.

The earlier you begin talking openly and naturally about alcohol and drugs to kids, the more likely they are to accept your views and information rather than those of peers or the media.

Help Kids Learn How To Say "No"

Help your kids practice ahead of time so they will know what to do or say when someone puts pressure on them to use alcohol or drugs.

Let them know that saying "no" is hard for everybody, even adults. Let them know this isn't a trust issue, it's a matter of being prepared.



Ask your child questions like:

- "What would you do if some older kids came up to you at the park and offered you some marijuana? What would you say to them?"
- "What could you say if you've finished baby-sitting and Mr. Jones wants to bring you home, but you know he's been drinking?"
- "What would you say if your best friends offered you some beer? What would you say if they called you a chicken?"
- Help them come up with responses to use, like "No thank, not tonight," or "My dad would ground me," or just plain "No." Then help them come up with ways to exit the situation.

If kids practice saying the words ahead of time, chances are they'll actually use them when the situation comes up. This works, for kids and adults.

Set Rules and Consequences

Kids are less likely to use alcohol and drugs if they are aware this behavior is unacceptable to their parents.

This means telling kids what you expect of them and imposing consequences if they don't honor these expectations.

Here is a simple four-step process:

1. Have in mind exactly what you expect. Come to an agreement with your child's other parent. (We recommend no use of illegal drugs or tobacco—ever, and no use of alcohol until of legal age.)
2. Sit down with your kids and tell them exactly what you expect and why. Make sure they understand. Let them know you are serious.

3. Tell them what will happen if they don't honor your expectations. Choose consequences that are immediate and important to your child.
4. Be prepared to follow through. Be realistic about consequences—if you make them too severe, you may be reluctant to impose them. Certainty and consistency are more important than severity.

Know What Your Kids Are Doing

- Make a real effort to be selective about TV shows, movies and concerts that present drug use and alcohol abuse as normal and fun.
- Check ahead to see if parties will be chaperoned and to make sure alcohol or other drugs will not be available. If you have doubts, don't be afraid to say "no" to your kids.
- Get to know your children's friends and their parents. Know where your kids will be, whom they'll be with and what they'll be doing.
- Set reasonable curfews for your kids and be clear about places and people who are off limits.
- Call other parents to let them know how you feel—they probably feel the same way you do and will be glad you called.
- Put reasonable limits on kids. It shows you care. They may not like it now, but they'll thank you later.

Set A Good Example

Kids often do what parents do. By setting a good example, you'll increase the chances that your children will make low-risk decisions about alcohol and other drugs.

- If you drink, let your kids see you drink small amounts that do not produce intoxication, see you abstain at times, and hear you say, "No thanks, I'm driving."