

# Tips for Teens:

## The Truth and Consequences of Alcohol Use

### Know the Truth

**Alcohol affects your brain.** Some issues that may occur are: loss of coordination, lack of judgment, slower reflexes, blurry vision, slurred speech, memory loss and blackouts.

**Alcohol affects your body.** Alcohol is a poison which is absorbed directly into your blood stream. It depresses your central nervous system and affects basic functions.

**Alcohol can lead to death.** Drinking large amounts of alcohol can result in alcohol poisoning, which can be deadly. Drinking and driving is a HUGE risk, and in Kansas during 2007, there were 118 fatalities and 1,944 injuries due to drinking and driving.

**Drinking at a young age increases your chances of being an abuser.** People who start drinking by age 15 are five times more likely to have alcohol abuse problems later in life than those who wait until they are 21.

### Signs of alcohol abuse

Alcohol abusers and their families and friends are often in denial that there is a problem. Here are some things to look for:

- Drinking on a regular basis
- Lying about how much alcohol is consumed
- Constant hangovers
- Mood changes
- Anger, aggression and/or depression
- Lack of interest in activities that do not include alcohol
- Declining grades
- Reduced social interaction

### Know the Law

**It is illegal** to buy or possess alcohol if you are under age 21.

**It is illegal** for anyone over the age of 21 to provide alcohol to a minor or to allow drinking to occur on his/her property.

#### Minor in Possession

- You can lose your license just for holding an alcoholic beverage.
- First offense: 30 day suspension of driver's license.
- You will also face a fine of up to \$500.
- You could be required to complete an alcohol education program and to perform 40 hours of public service.
- You face exclusion from participation in extra-curricular activities.
- You could lose pending scholarships.

#### Zero Tolerance

- If you are under 21, it is **illegal** to operate a motor vehicle with a BAC of **.02** or higher.
- One drink can push you over the limit.

### What can you do?

Here are some tips if you find yourself in a situation with underage drinking:

- **Abstain from drinking.** It's your body and your choice. Stay healthy and sober.
- **Take away the keys.** If a friend is drunk around you, DO NOT LET THEM DRIVE. NEVER ride with someone who has been drinking.
- **Call the ANONYMOUS underage drinking line.** Dial 1-866-must-b-21 to report underage drinking parties. No one will know you made the call, and you could be saving a life.

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