

# WHEN TO TALK

## School-Aged Children (ages 5-9)

At this age, children learn about alcohol from other children, and from TV, movies and what they see in real life. Talk to them about what they've seen and heard. Be sure they're getting factual information.

Grades 3 and 4 are critical years for forming expectations about alcohol. This is a good time to start talking to children about alcohol use and to encourage them to think critically about depictions of alcohol use in advertising and other media.

Children this age also often enjoy learning about how the body works. This can include learning about things that might harm the body. You can discuss things like:

- The way alcohol enters and moves through the body, describing how:
  - Alcohol enters the bloodstream;
  - The bloodstream carries the alcohol to other parts of the body;
  - The liver breaks down the alcohol; and
  - The alcohol leaves the body through urine, sweat and saliva.
- How alcohol can impair walking, talking and making safe decisions.
- How too much alcohol can make people feel sick with headaches, throwing up and shakiness.

Don't be scary, be factual. Explain to your child that even though there can be negative consequences to consuming alcohol, drinking responsibly is not dangerous for adults. You don't want your child to think you're doing something wrong or to worry about your health. The important thing for your child to understand is that they shouldn't drink and adults who choose to drink should do so responsibly.