

WHEN TO TALK

Young Adults (18+)

Young adults are more likely than older adults to consume alcohol in risky or dangerous ways, without considering short- or long-term consequences. Even though the decision to drink alcohol is ultimately theirs when they turn 18, you are still a big influence in their life.

- Encourage your child to consume alcohol responsibly.
- Try to be aware and involved in their life, even if they aren't at home. Encourage them to watch out for their friends who have been drinking.
- Encourage your child to plan ahead if they will be drinking. Suggest having a designated driver, taking a taxi or bus, or sleeping at a friend's. Never tolerate impaired driving.
- Remind them to eat before they go out and while they're drinking. Invite them for dinner if you know they're planning to go out later.
- Encourage them to pace themselves, to be aware of their limits, and to keep track of how many drinks they consume.
- Tell them to never leave their drinks unattended.
- Remind them to keep their cell phones fully charged in case they need to call or text you for help.
- Avoid pre-event drinking.
- Avoid taking the car to the event - take a taxi instead.
- Measure your drinks - do not free pour.

Start the conversation early, and talk often. The more you talk about alcohol, the more your child will understand the effects of their decisions, and will be comfortable talking about drinking.

- Keep discussions in the present tense, and talk about short-term consequences.
- Encourage your child to share with you what they already know, or think they know, about alcohol.
- Challenge what they think is socially acceptable behaviour regarding alcohol consumption.
- Don't just talk about the negative physical effects – talk about emotional and social effects of alcohol consumption.
- Remember that straightforward, two-way communication is the best way to reach your child at any age.