



Talk Early And Often About Alcohol, Tobacco  
And Other Drugs. Even When It Gets Tough

### Parent Tip

## Know! To Create A Family Contract For A Drug-Free New Year

When considering your New Year's Resolutions, put this one on the list; create a *family contract* about the rules regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

Studies confirm that children whose parents set and enforce clear rules on substance use, are much less likely to use in the first place. To help ensure these guidelines are remembered and followed, work together to put them in writing and ask all family members for their signature.

**Here's an example of a family contract adapted from the book, *How to Raise A Drug-Free Kid: The Straight Dope for Parents*, written by Joseph A. Califano, Jr.:**

Child: I (we), \_\_\_\_\_, agree this is a tobacco and drug-free household, and that alcohol will be used only in moderation by adults. I agree to refrain from using any substances inside or outside our home.

Parent: I (we), \_\_\_\_\_, agree this is a tobacco and drug-free household. I (we) agree to set the right example regarding substance use both inside and outside our home.

### **Our family agrees on the following substance-use rules and consequences:**

- Young people will not drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes or use any drugs.
- Young people will not stay at parties where alcohol and other drugs are available.
- Young people will not allow friends to bring alcohol, tobacco or other drugs into the house.
- Young people will not drive drunk or high (or accept a ride with someone who is high or has been drinking).
- Parents will pick up kids at any time if they need a safe ride home.
- No one (including parents) is to provide alcohol to anyone underage.
- Older siblings will encourage younger siblings not to drink, smoke or use drugs.

Talking regularly with kids reduces their risk of using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Know! urges you to encourage other parents to joining Know! by taking the [Parent and Caregiver Pledge](#). For more information log on to [www.HelpThemKnow.com](http://www.HelpThemKnow.com) or call 1-866-999-KNOW.

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(List rewards and consequences for each rule, if followed or broken.)

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Helpful Hints When Creating Your Family Contract:**

- Be precise in your wording.
- Create the rules as a family.
- Have everyone sign it.
- Post in a common area.

Sources: Califano Jr., Joseph A.: *How to Raise a Drug-Free Kid: The Straight Dope For Parents*, 2009. CESAR: *Students With Parents Who Set and Enforce Clear Rules Less Likely to Report Illicit Drug Use*, Oct. 2009.



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### Parent Tip

## Know! The Adolescent Brain

"Don't you trust me?" your child asks. Your answer may be "yes," on many levels. But when it comes to decision-making about the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, it's not just about trust; it's about understanding the adolescent brain.

There is a reason so many of our teens and preteens behave as if they are immortal, acting on impulse without considering the consequences. Blame it partially on their brain.

The part of the brain that promotes impulsivity and risk-taking develops early in teens, while the brain area responsible for thinking, planning, good judgment, decision-making and impulse control is undergoing the most change (and will continue to develop well into a person's mid-twenties). Because of this lack of brain maturity, teens and preteens do not have the ability to control impulses like adults do, which in turn increases an adolescent's chance of engaging in risky behavior, like smoking, drinking and illegal drug use.

In this critical stage of development, your child needs a parent, not a "trusting" friend, to step in, set clear boundaries and serve as that **impulse control**.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- Explain the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use
- Talk early and often
- Set clear non-use rules
- Know your child's friends (and their parents)
- Know where your child is at all times
- Play an active role in your child's daily life

Sources: American Medical Association: *Alcohol's adverse effects on the brains of children, adolescents and college students*. Califano, Joseph, Jr.: *How to Raise a Drug-Free Kid, The Straight Dope for Parents*, NY, 2009. ParentsEmpowered.org: Utah Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and Utah Prevention.

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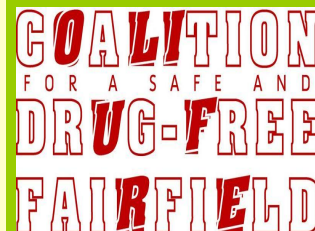
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## Know! Your Tween's Tech World

Keeping up with the Jones' is not an easy task for the average 11 to 14-year-old these days. In fact, it's a full-time job. Tweens are now spending about seven and a half hours a day tuning in to their cell phones, computers, iPods, gaming devices and other electronic devices (1). And while these gadgets do provide incredible learning and social networking opportunities, they open the door to many real and present dangers.

When it comes to alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, kids are becoming far too educated on how to make, obtain and get high on a variety of dangerous substances, via the internet. While most parents say they recognize these potential risks, the majority of kids say their parents are not regularly monitoring their Website whereabouts or their time spent in cyberspace. And nearly one-third of youth surveyed say their parents would "disapprove" if they really knew what they were doing online (2).

### Make your family values known and set clear rules to safeguard your tween:

- Monitor (and limit) Websites visited and amount of time spent online
- Discuss what is and what is not acceptable for sharing, viewing and downloading
- Investigate your child's social networking sites (Facebook/MySpace)
- Be aware of pictures/postings (incoming and outgoing) with references to alcohol, drugs and other risky behaviors
- Let your child know you will randomly spot-check their text messages for unknown numbers and inappropriate conversations (Know that kids will warn each other if a parent is looming - for example, POS = parent over shoulder or P911 = parent alert)
- Listen to your child's music choices (iPod, MP3, etc) to see if they're hearing pro-drug or other unhealthy messages

Remember, you are your child's greatest influence. It's your right and responsibility as a parent to be a part of their everyday world, including their technology world.

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Sources: (1) "Teen Viewing of Drug and Alcohol-Related Videos Online: Custom Study Conducted on behalf of the Office of National Drug Control Policy." Nielsen Online, June 2008. (2) "The Tru Study." Tru.Cox Communications Teen Internet Safety, 2006. Parents.The Anti-Drug: *Teens and Technology*, 2010.

For more tween-texting lingo visit [www.netlingo.com](http://www.netlingo.com), click on *Top 50 Acronyms Parents Need To Know*.



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## Know! To Use The Super Bowl As A Teachable Moment

February 7, 2010, families across America (and worldwide) will be tuning in to watch this year's *NFL Super Bowl*. Last year's game was watched by 98.7 million Americans, making it the largest viewed television event ever.

But it's not just about football. The Super Bowl is known for its commercials almost as much as it is for the game itself. Of that wide viewing audience, about 18% will be youth under 21. If your child is one of them, he or she will be exposed to alcohol advertising.

Why the concern? Research shows that the more youth are exposed to alcohol in advertising, the more likely they are to consume alcohol underage (1). During last year's game, a beer company not only took top vote for producing the overall favorite commercial, but also earned the "Top Advertiser" title with more commercial time than any other sponsor (2). This year will likely be no different.

So if your child will be watching the Super Bowl, we encourage you to not only watch it with him or her, but to use the commercials as *teachable moments*, helping your child to understand and develop the ability to resist messages that should not be aimed at youth.

**Here are some questions to ask your child  
to get the conversation started:**

- What is this ad trying to sell you?
- Is this product healthy for you?
- How is this ad sponsor trying to get you to purchase their product?
- How do you feel about the product now?

Teaching your child to "read between the lines" of advertisements is called *media literacy* (3). For more information on helping your child identify, analyze and evaluate media messages, please visit:  
[www.ncadi.samhsa.gov/govpubs/phd711/fivesteps.aspx](http://www.ncadi.samhsa.gov/govpubs/phd711/fivesteps.aspx).

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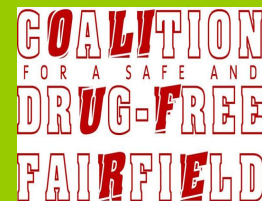
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Sources: (1) Marin Institute, Alcohol Industry Watchdog, 2009. (2) The Nielsen Company, 2009. (3) US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration, 2009.



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## Know! The Key To A Safe and Drug-Free Spring Break

Spring Break is highly anticipated for most children, as they look forward to some time off school. But for many parents this means kids at home alone or kids hanging out with their friends. In either case, supervision is the "key" to keeping your child safe, as research shows that *unsupervised tweens are three times more likely to engage in risky behaviors like smoking, drinking and using other drugs* (1).

For lots of tweens, spring break will be their first experience being without an adult for an extended period of time each day. Let's talk about some other "firsts" (2).

Everyday, **8,000** kids take their first **drink** of alcohol.  
Everyday, **8,000** kids use an **illicit drug** for the first time.  
Everyday, **6,000** kids smoke **marijuana** for the first time.  
Everyday, **2,000** kids try their first **prescription painkiller** (for non-medical purposes).

### To avoid these "firsts" for your child this spring break:

- Safeguard all over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Lock the liquor cabinet and make any other alcohol inaccessible
- Make clear your expectations regarding smoking, drinking and using other drugs
- Set rules as to which friends (if any) are allowed over while you're gone
- Know where your child is and who he/she is with at all times
- Check in with your child throughout the day with a quick call or text

Do your best to reserve some time with your child this break, even if it's just an evening at the movies or family game night at home. The more involved you are, the closer your child will feel to you. And kids who are close with their parents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors (3).

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(1) TheAntiDrug.Com:  
Monitoring Skills. (2) National  
Survey on Drug Use and  
Health: National Findings.  
U.S. Dept. of Health and  
Human Services: SAMHSA,  
2008 (3) TheAntiDrug.Com:  
Teens and Free Time.

# Know! That Kids Are Dying From Everyday Products In Their Homes

By the time kids reach eighth grade, one in five will have *huffed, sniffed, banged or popped* to get high (1). Though dangerous and addictive, we're not referring to kids using drugs, we're talking about kids using inhalants; legal, yet toxic products guaranteed to be throughout your home.

Inhalant use is the intentional breathing (through the mouth or nose) of gas or vapors for an immediate high. The speed and force at which these fumes are taken into the body can be not only dangerous, but also deadly. Inhalants starve the blood of oxygen and can throw the users heart off rhythm (with first use or 100<sup>th</sup> use), resulting in "sudden sniffing death syndrome." Other inhalant deaths have resulted from suffocation or users choking on their own vomit. The practice of huffing can also cause permanent damage to the brain, liver, lungs and kidneys, as well as the loss of hearing and smell.

Many common household products are a source for this dangerous activity. The other scary part is that the rate of use is highest among younger kids (preteens), because these products are cheap, legal and so common that kids need only open their home pantry or garage door for a quick and undetectable high.

The signs of use are difficult to detect as well. But parents can look out for: unusual breath odor, slurred speech, drunk or dazed appearance, paint stains or chemical smell on their child's body or clothing, excessive vomiting and red or runny eyes and nose.

Though it's nearly impossible to secure all potential inhalant products, here's what you can do:

**Reduce Availability:** Know which products can be used as inhalants. Secure the more dangerous chemicals while monitoring the others.

**Educate Your Child on the Dangers:** Arm your child with knowledge by discussing the many risks associated with using inhalants.

**Rule-Out Use:** Be clear that inhalant use (just like alcohol and other drugs) is not permitted.

For more information visit: [www.inhalants.org](http://www.inhalants.org).

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Sources: (1) CADCA: Get Ready for National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week, Feb. 2010. SAMHSA: Inhalant Use: Prevention in the Home. NIPC: Inhalants.



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## Know! To Talk About and Safeguard Prescription Medications

### Know the Perception:

According to youth, prescription medications are **cheap** and **easy to obtain** (*forget the drug dealer, I just open my parent's medicine cabinet*), are **legal** and **less dangerous than illicit drugs** (*a doctor prescribed these pills for my friend's little brother, how dangerous could they be*) and **do not carry the negative stigma like many other substances** (*it's fine to use a prescription medication every once in a while to keep me awake to study longer or to just help me relax*).

This type of youth "logic" contributes to the fact that **one in five teens abuse prescription drugs**; and that prescription medications are now being abused more than cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and methamphetamines combined.

### Share the Reality (let your child know):

"While prescription drugs may be cheap and easy to obtain, they are far from safe."

"Prescription medications can be just as addictive and dangerous as illicit drugs bought off the street (with a wide range of negative side effects, including death)."

"Though prescription drugs may be legal, it is illegal and unacceptable for you to ever use them without a doctor's (and my) permission."

### Safeguard Prescription Medications:

**Monitor:** Keep tabs on your medications and be the control (personally handing out the medicine) if your child is prescribed a drug.

**Secure:** Lock up prescription and over-the-counter medications (and share the word with family/friends to do the same).

**Dispose:** Discard expired and unused prescriptions by mixing it with kitty litter or coffee grounds in a can or bag and placing it in the trash (for environmental purposes, it is not safe to flush most medications down the toilet).

Prescription drug abuse is on the rise. It is important to talk to your child about the dangers of these drugs as well as to secure, monitor and properly dispose of these medications in your home.

For more info on preventing teen prescription drug abuse visit:  
[www.TalkAboutRx.org](http://www.TalkAboutRx.org)

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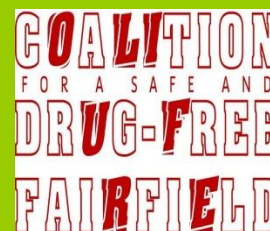
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**Sources:** Join Together, 8-6-09. NCPPIE: Maximizing Your Role as a Teen Influencer: What You Can Do to Help Prevent Teen Prescription Drug Abuse 11-5-09.



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Parent Tip

## Know! About K2: Legal Doesn't Equal Safe

K2 is said to mimic marijuana in appearance and effect, yet is legal in Ohio, undetectable in drug tests and being sold in head shops and online (as incense). This chemical combination is a mix of dried herbs and spices sprayed with a synthetic compound similar to THC (the mind-altering ingredient in marijuana). And it's causing youth to wind up in emergency rooms across the country with side effects ranging from elevated heart rates to hallucinations.

While K2 is currently legal and available in Ohio, it is illegal in most European countries and has recently been banned in Kansas and Missouri (with several other states working to do the same).

**Parents:** We encourage you to not only be aware of this new drug, but to talk to your child about its dangers.

- K2 was first created as part of a scientific study on marijuana. The recipe made its way into the wrong hands and has since been growing in popularity.
- There are no regulations in Ohio on K2. A minor could currently purchase this drug legally.
- Just because it's legal does not mean it's safe.
- Side effects include: rapid heart rates, elevated blood pressure, severe agitation, anxiety, vomiting and hallucinations.
- K2 toxic levels and long-term effects are yet unknown.

Sources: CADCA: Researchers Warn About Dangers of Synthetic Marijuana, Mar. 2010. Live Science: Fake Weed, Real Drug: K2 Causing Hallucinations in Teens, Mar 2010.

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Parent Tip

## Know! to Practice Positive Parenting

Communication that nurtures feelings of "warmth" between parent and child is a critical component of your child's positive development. In fact, the "warmth" factor is scientifically shown to aid in a child's choice not to use drugs or drink alcohol while underage.

Praising your child's good behavior choices is important, as it creates feelings of parental warmth. But even when your child makes a poor choice in behavior, and intervention is called for, there is opportunity to not only make it a teaching moment, but to further nurture those feelings of warmth. The way you interact with your child and help him/her solve conflict is vital.

The *Life Space Interview* was originally developed for teachers to use in the classroom, but can be applied at home as well.

In a situation where your child has made some type of poor behavior choice and you are stepping in to address the issue, just remember, "I ESCAPE":

- I - Isolate the Conversation: Take the child to a "quiet space" to talk.
- E - Explore the Child's Point of View: Get as many details as you can about what happened. Practice active listening, not problem solving!
- S - Summarize the Feeling and Content: "This is what I hear you saying." "You're telling me you felt...right?"
- C - Connect Behavior to Feelings: Though you are not excusing the behavior, show you understand what your child was feeling and why a poor choice was made.
- A - Alternative Behaviors Discussed: Together, talk about ways your child could have handled the situation differently, resulting in a more positive outcome.
- P - Plan and Practice New Behavior: Acknowledge that your child may feel a bit silly role-playing, but explain that practice will help him/her put it in action. Anticipate and plan for obstacles.
- E - Enter Child Back into his/her Routine: Your child should feel hopeful and encouraged when your conversation is finished.

The goal, through the *Life Space Interview*, is to provide your child new ways of thinking, feeling and behaving so that better choices can be made when the opportunity presents itself next time.

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Source: *Life Space Interview*: Fritz Redl and David Wineman



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## Parent Tip

# Know! Alcohol Advertising Impacts Youth

Did you watch the Super Bowl? What was your favorite commercial?

- Two questions you were likely to hear the Monday morning following the big game. In fact, studies show that just as many people watch the Super Bowl for the high-priced commercials as the game itself. And of the record-breaking 111 million American viewers, about 18% were youth under 21.

According to Drug-Free Action Alliance's **8<sup>th</sup> Annual BIG BOWL VOTE** (where more than 34,000 middle and high school students around the nation voted on their favorite Super Bowl ads), Doritos overwhelmingly stole the show, with their "Crash the Super Bowl" commercials.

### Question posed: What was your favorite commercial?

- #1 - Doritos: Dog (pug attack)
- #2 - Doritos: Cheese Lover (finger-licking/pant-sniffing good)
- #3 - Doritos: Back-to-life (house sitter)

### Question posed: What brand name products do you remember being advertised?

- #1 - Doritos
- #2 - Anheuser-Busch
- #3 - Pepsi Max

While Doritos ranked number one as the most memorable brand product among participating youth, the Anheuser-Busch brand (which included ads for Bud, Bud Light & Stella Artois) ranked as the second most "remembered" product.

Aside from the "fun-factor" of youth voicing their opinions and telling us what ads were memorable, what does this all mean?

Research tells us that the more youth are exposed to alcohol advertising, the more likely they are to start drinking or drink more if they are already consuming alcohol (source: Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth - CAMY).

While middle and high school students did not choose the alcohol ads as their favorite, those commercials definitely made an impression.

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Parents: We encourage you to use commercials such as these, as teachable moments; helping young people to understand and develop the ability to identify, analyze and evaluate targeted marketing.

Here are some questions you can use to get the conversation started:

- What is this ad trying to sell you?
- Is this product healthy for you?
- How is this ad trying to get you to purchase their product?
- How do you feel about the product now?

For more information on teaching your child to read between the lines of advertisements, [CLICK HERE](#).



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## Know! To Define Healthy Dating Relationships

Whether or not your tween appears interested in having a boyfriend or girlfriend, he or she is likely feeling (or is at the brink of feeling) peer pressure to "date." Though it is easy to make light of boyfriend/girlfriend relationships at this young age, it may be a risky notion; as statistics show that one in three teens experience an abusive dating relationship prior to high school graduation.

So while the conversation may feel a bit premature, it is critical to teach your child, at this early age, about healthy dating relationships.

### Share with your child that:

- A healthy relationship involves having your own friends and interests - NOT pressure to spend time only with your boyfriend/girlfriend or that person needing to know your every move (by calling or texting excessively).
- A healthy relationship involves maintaining your own voice and point of view - NOT changing your opinion to avoid conflict with your boyfriend/girlfriend.
- A healthy relationship involves mutual understanding, trust and respect - NOT jealousy, control or pressure to do things you do not want to do (like having sex, drinking alcohol or using other drugs).

Also, let your child know it is his/her right to end the relationship at any point - keeping in mind, that the other person does NOT have the right to harass, threaten or make you feel guilty for it.

Defining healthy relationships before "serious" dating begins is key. Teaching your child to expect respect and to not put up with anything less, will benefit him or her both in the short-term and in seeking a lifetime partner.

For more tips and information on teen dating, visit [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org).

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## Know! The Parental Alcohol Source

A recent study looked at how young drinkers obtain alcohol. It was no surprise to see that 15% of those aged 12 to 14, took alcohol from their own home, without their parents knowledge. However, it may be surprising to learn that 31% of 12 to 14-year-old drinkers report obtaining alcohol directly from a parent or other adult family member.

These findings suggest the need to remind parents and other adults to monitor alcohol at home, and to keep in mind the various health consequences and dangers of underage drinking:

- Alcohol use negatively impacts adolescent brain development; sometimes permanently damaging learning and memory capabilities.
- Youth who begin drinking before age 15 are five times more likely to abuse alcohol or become addicted to alcohol later in life, than those who begin drinking at or after age 21.
- Adolescent alcohol use is linked to delinquent behaviors; including stealing, illicit drug use and problems at home and school.
- Underage drinking is the number one contributor of death from injuries among youth.
- The more youth drink, the more like they are to become sexually active; including unwanted, unintended and unprotected sexual activity.

**PARENTS:** Know! that alcohol is the number one drug problem for youth under 21. Do not allow underage drinking and be sure to talk with your children about the health and safety consequences of underage drinking as well as your family rules.

For more information on not providing alcohol to youth, visit *Parents Who Host, Lose the Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking.*

Sources: 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NUSDUH). 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NUSDUH). National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

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