

## Reasons to Talk with Your Teen

- Research shows teens who talk openly with parents about alcohol use are less likely to drink alcohol. <sup>4</sup>
- Parental involvement with teens has shown to decrease drinking. <sup>7</sup>
- Early alcohol use affects brain development. <sup>2</sup>
- Media and peers may portray drinking in an inaccurate way. <sup>7</sup>



• Parental involvement with teens has shown to decrease drinking. <sup>7</sup>



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Alcohol Use  
Among Teens  
in Benton  
County



A Parent's Guide to  
Reducing the  
Problem

## Facts on Benton County Teens

- More than 46% of 12th graders reported drinking on one or more occasions during the past 30 days.<sup>5</sup>
- Of 12th graders, 12% of females and 30% of males participated in frequent binge drinking\* within the last year.
- Of 9th graders, 16% of males and 19% of females reported accessing alcohol through their parents.
- ½ - ¾ of 9th and 12th graders accessed alcohol through friends.
- By 12th grade, over 20% of students have reported riding in a vehicle with a friend who had been drinking alcohol.
- Over 60% of 12th grade students report not talking with their parents about the dangers of alcohol during the last 12 months.

\*Frequent Binge drinking: "typically drank 5 or more drinks at a time and drank on 10 or more occasions during the past year."



## How to Talk with Your Teen....

- Develop a healthy relationship with your teen<sup>3</sup>
  - \*Have an active interest in at least one thing your child loves.<sup>3</sup>
  - \*Praise your children for the accomplishments they have made.<sup>1</sup>
  - \*Help your child find extra curricular activities that they enjoy.<sup>6</sup>
  - \*Support a wide sample of your child's interests.<sup>4</sup>
  - \*Encourage age appropriate independence and decision making.<sup>4</sup>
- Consistently reinforce a no alcohol policy and be sure to follow through with promised punishment if rules are broken.<sup>7</sup>
- Being strict about alcohol use at a young age correlates with a decrease in use later in life.<sup>7</sup>
- Inform your child to never get behind the wheel and never let a friend get behind the wheel after drinking alcohol. Tell your child if they or a friend has been drinking to call you and you will pick them up with no negative words that night.<sup>3</sup>

## Warning Signs of Alcohol Use:<sup>7</sup>

- Decline in personal hygiene
- Changes in relationships among peers
- Changes in behavior
- Problems in school

## If Alcohol Use is Suspected...

- Ask about use, be forthright, ask what substances have been used and what child experienced with use
- Share your concerns
- Reiterate expectations for your child
- Ask your child to stop using alcohol
- Provide education on alcohol use/abuse
- Set up an appointment with your primary provider for a substance abuse evaluation
- Find support for your child and family in the community