



Rules about alcohol

Studies show that parents and families are strong influences in what young people think about alcohol and how they use it.¹ Research also tells us that attitudes to alcohol are formed early in life and parents are their kids' most positive role models.

With alcohol playing a prominent role in Australian culture it can be difficult for parents to set boundaries and establish rules around alcohol use for their teenage children.

Here are some tips that may help

- Talk with your child about the family rules you have around alcohol use and explain why they are in place.
- If you drink alcohol, your child will be watching so be a positive role model eg don't drink and drive, and drink water in between alcoholic drinks.
- If you don't drink alcohol, talk about why you have made this choice with your child. Share stories where you have had to deal with others trying to influence you to drink alcohol.
- Try to limit your children's access to alcohol. The longer teenagers delay drinking alcohol, the best chance they give their brains to develop fully and reach their full potential in life.
- Don't be afraid to answer your child's questions about alcohol.
- Hold non-alcohol family and social occasions.
- Don't glorify alcohol and intoxication.
- Talk to your child about the laws of alcohol. For example, did you know that it is illegal:
 - ⊙ To purchase alcohol for young people under 18 years?
 - ⊙ For young people under 18 years to possess alcohol (open or unopened) in a public place?
 - ⊙ To obtain alcohol for an intoxicated person to drink?
 - ⊙ To help an intoxicated person to obtain or consume alcohol?
 - ⊙ To drink in public, such as on the street, in a park or at the beach?

Resilience and alcohol use

Young people who are resilient or able to bounce back from stressful experiences are less likely to become involved in long-term substance abuse.² You can help your child develop resilience by encouraging them to:

- manage their anger
- make their own decisions
- set and achieve goals
- have an optimistic outlook
- make positive relationships
- manage their own difficulties with friendships.



1 Shanahan, P. and Hewitt, N. Developmental research for a National Alcohol Campaign: Summary report, Department of Health and Aged Care, ACT, 1999.

2 Fuller, A., McGraw, K. and Goodyear, M. The mind of youth: Resilience – A connect project, Turning the Tide Project, Victoria, 1998

Thank you for playing a vital role in your child's health and drug education.