

MAKING THE TALK COUNT AT EVERY AGE

One size does not fit all. This is especially true when talking about alcohol, drugs, and gambling. What you say to a 9-year-old differs from what you say to a 15-year-old. A clear, no-use message is the most effective way for parents to keep their kids safe.

REMEMBER: Children can't learn all they need to know from a single discussion – many little talks are more effective than one "big talk."



PRESCHOOL

By preschool, many kids have noticed adults enjoying a drink, whether in person, on TV, or online.

These early observations can shape their future decisions as they eagerly absorb and interpret what they see, forming their ideas of "good" and "bad" behaviors.



AGES 5-9

At this age, children become more curious about the world outside their home. It's a great time to discuss topics like alcohol, drugs, and gambling, emphasizing their risks and consequences. When you and your child encounter intoxicated individuals on TV or in public, use it as an opportunity to talk about the dangers of such behaviors.



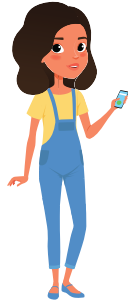
AGES 10-12

As kids assert their independence and question authority, they still rely on your guidance. Tweens grasp the importance of rules and boundaries, so make sure they understand yours and the consequences of breaking them. Discuss real-life scenarios and solutions, like having a way to contact you if they're in a tough spot. When addressing topics like alcohol, drugs, and gambling, focus on factual information rather than instilling fear. Remember, this is a challenging time for tweens, so offer plenty of positive reinforcement and praise to boost their confidence and resilience amidst peer pressure.



AGES 13-18

Teens may have friends who drink, do drugs, or gamble. Talk about the dangers, like driving drunk or getting in trouble with the law. Tell them it's okay not to join in, even if others do. Encourage them to think about how these things affect society. Trust them to make good choices and help them handle peer pressure. When they come home from hanging out, ask about their day with care. If you find out they've been involved in these activities, talk about it honestly.



AGES 18+

Even as your child grows up, your support still matters. College students often encounter drinking and drug use. Before they enroll, check the college's history with these issues and discuss it with them. Remind them about the risks of binge drinking, alcohol poisoning, and drug use. Stay connected and open with your young adult to understand how you can support them best.



RESOURCES

Scan the QR code or visit babyloncares.org/prevention-resource-directory/ to access additional information and resources:

