It is important that your teen understands underage drinking laws and your rules about the behaviors you will and will not allow. You can use the safety agreement below to ensure that the rules are clear and understood.

- Explain you are making the agreement so your teen knows the rules.
- Explain you’re doing this to keep them safe.
- Have the agreement in writing.
- List all laws and rules you expect your teen to follow.
- Agree on appropriate consequences for breaking the agreement.
- Sign the agreement.
- Stick to the agreement.
- Show them you have rules to follow, too.

Your teen’s recognition of safety risks related to underage drinking and the understanding of related laws may have a positive influence on his/her choices and the choices made by his/her friends.

SAFETY AGREEMENT

TEEN
I agree to take actions to keep me safe. I will not use, attempt to purchase, or transport alcohol. I will find a sober ride or call you rather than ride with a drinking or drunk driver. I recognize that you care about what happens to me and will keep this agreement.

SIGNATURE  DATE

PARENT/GUARDIAN
I agree to take actions to keep me safe. I will not provide alcohol to anyone under the age of 21. If I choose to drink alcohol, I will not drive and will only ride with a sober driver. I will find a sober ride or call you rather than ride with a drinking or drunk driver. I recognize that you care about me and will keep this agreement.

SIGNATURE  DATE

The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board
Bureau of Alcohol Education
offers a variety of materials free of charge.

For more information:
ra-lbeducation@pa.gov
www.lcb.pa.gov
800.453.PLCB (7522)
Hearing Impaired TTD/TTY: 717.772.3725
Like us on PLCB Alcohol Education

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This information is not intended to be legal advice, but merely conveys information pertinent to alcohol-related offenses. For more information or further clarification, please contact your local District Attorney’s Office or a private attorney.

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DID YOU KNOW...

PA 8TH GRADERS
• 33.9 percent of PA 8th graders reported having used alcohol?
• 24.8 percent of PA 8th graders reported obtaining alcohol by taking without permission, stealing, or finding it?

PA 10TH GRADERS
• 22.3 percent of PA 10th graders reported having used alcohol in the last 30 days?
• 88.9 percent of PA 10th graders reported that their parents would disapprove of them using alcohol?

PA 12TH GRADERS
• 18.0 percent of PA 12th graders reported engaging in binge drinking?
• 6.4 percent of PA 12th graders reported driving after consuming alcohol?
• 71.3 percent of PA students who reported using alcohol indicate that their family does not have clear rules about alcohol and drug use?

Source: Pennsylvania Annual Youth Survey, 2015

KNOW THE LAWS

A youth (under the age of 21) commits a summary offense if he or she purchases, attempts to purchase, consumes, possesses, or knowingly and intentionally transports any liquor or malt or brewed beverages. The penalty for a first offense of this nature is a maximum fine of $500 and up to $1,000 for each subsequent offense, as well as a license suspension.

Knowingly and falsely misrepresenting your age for the purpose of buying alcohol is punishable with up to a $300 fine for the first offense and up to $500 for each subsequent offense.

Manufacturing, altering, or selling an identification card to falsely represent identity, birth date, or age is punishable with a fine of not less than $1,000 for a first offense and a fine of not less than $2,500 for subsequent offenses as well as up to two years imprisonment.

A youth driving under the influence will face DUI charges of a mandatory $500 for a first offense and up to $1,000 for each subsequent offense as well as license suspension.

Source: PA Crimes Code, Section 6307, 6308, Section 6310.2

WHAT YOU CAN DO

• Have the alcohol conversation
• Set and enforce guidelines
• Maintain an open line of communication
• Be a positive role model
• Suggest and provide alternatives to underage drinking
• Familiarize yourself with the parents of your teen’s friends

Source: Pennsylvania Annual Youth Survey, 2015
TELL THEM THE FACTS

Children are less likely to use alcohol if they know their parents don’t approve. Tell children what you expect of them and the consequences if they break the rules. Here are four steps you can use:

• Establish clear rules and consequences about alcohol. Remember, it is illegal for anyone – even parents – to provide alcohol to anyone under 21.

• Explain your expectations to your children, make sure they understand the rules, and make it clear that alcohol is a serious topic.

• Be sure to choose consequences that are appropriate, immediate, and important to your children. Be realistic. If you make consequences too severe, you may not enforce them.

• Be prepared to follow through.
TEACH THEM HOW AND WHEN TO SAY “NO.”

Because children are facing decisions about alcohol use earlier than ever, it’s important to begin practicing refusal skills at a young age.

Tell your children you expect them to refuse alcohol if someone offers it to them. Let them know refusing can be difficult, so you want to help them prepare. Work together to come up with ways to say “no” that are natural for them.

Here are some practice scenarios:

• “What would you do if older kids tried to give you alcohol? What would you say? What would you say if they made fun of you for refusing the alcohol?”

• “What could you say if Mrs. Jones offers to drive you and her son home after basketball practice, but she’s been drinking?”

• “What would you do if an adult offered you alcohol? What would you say?”

The best answer is “no,” but work with your children to come up with answers that aren’t likely to be questioned like, “No way, my parents would ground me if they found out. And don’t tell me they won’t find out – they always find out.”

Listen and show you care. If your children practice their answers, they will be more likely to use them when needed.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Research shows that parents and caregivers are the most influential people in children’s lives. You play a big role in whether or not they will try alcohol before they’re 21.

Whether you’re talking with them about it or not, your children are getting messages about alcohol — from their friends, mass media, and even your behavior. You can prepare them to recognize peer pressure and the pro-alcohol messages that are everywhere.

Here are some ways to help your children stay alcohol-free until they’re 21:

• Be conscious of TV shows, movies, and concerts that show alcohol use as normal and fun.

• Make sure your children know and understand your family’s rules. Set consequences and stick to them.

• Be a good role model. Remember, even the most casual comments can be important.

• If you see something on a TV show, ad, or movie that shows alcohol use as funny or attractive, talk to your children about the facts.

• Get to know your children’s friends. Make sure their parents are responsible and not providing alcohol or allowing its use in their home.

START WHILE THEY’RE YOUNG

It is common for parents and caregivers to wait until their children are in high school or driving before talking about alcohol. However, many children have formed ideas about alcohol before starting school. It’s best to start talking with them about it when they are younger. As a responsible parent or caregiver, it is important you talk openly and naturally with your children about alcohol when they are young. It’s best they learn the facts from you and know your views, rather than relying on media or peers.