

UNDERAGE  
DRINKING

Not a minor problem

# Issues

## Health and Safety

### PARENTS MAY RATIONALIZE:

“ I’d rather my kids drink at home than in a car

**At least they’re not doing drugs**

Well, they are getting good grades

**I did it when I was young and I’m ok**

If I let them drink a little now, they won’t go crazy when they turn 21 ”

### MAKE NO MISTAKE. UNDERAGE DRINKING IS HAZARDOUS TO OUR CHILDREN:

- Alcohol use among teens is associated with the three most common causes of teenage deaths: accidental deaths (such as car crashes), homicides and suicides.
- On average 8 adolescents a day in the U.S. die in alcohol-related automobile crashes and 9 out of 10 teenage automobile accidents involve the use of alcohol.
- Each year, approximately 5,000 people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking; this includes about 1,900 deaths from motor vehicle crashes, 1,600 as a result of homicides, 300 from suicide, as well as hundreds from other injuries such as falls, burns, and drowning.
- Children who start drinking before age 15 are 12 times more likely to be injured while under the influence of alcohol and 10 times more likely to be in a fight after drinking compared with those who wait until they are 21.
- Underage drinking can cause alterations in the structure and function of the developing brain, which continues to mature into the mid- to late-twenties, and may have consequences reaching far beyond adolescence.
- Young people who began drinking before age 15 are 4 times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who abstained until age 21.

**See It. Hear It. Talk About It. Parents Do Make A Difference.**

