

Facts About Underage Drinking in Washington State

- **The good news is that the 2006 Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) finds that most kids don't drink.** Since 2000, prevention programs have helped to drive down alcohol use:

	<u>Regular Use</u>	<u>Binge Drinking</u>
○ 6th graders	Down by 53%	Not asked
○ 8th graders	Down by 31%	Down by 42%
○ 10th graders	Down by 13%	Down by 15%
○ 12th graders	Down by 10%	Down by 18%
- **Unfortunately, there are still too many students risking their health and education. About one in every five 10th and 12th graders** reported being drunk or high at school during the past year (HYS).
- **Alcohol is used more than any other drug by children and teens, and some are drinking heavily.** One in every four 12th graders (26%), one in every five 10th graders (20%) and one in every ten 8th graders (9%) reported binge drinking (having five or more drinks in a row in the last two weeks) risking alcohol poisoning, traffic crashes, school failure, and alcoholism. (HYS)
- **Underage drinking can lead to addiction:** Every day in the U.S., 7,000 kids under the age of 16 take their first drink. Kids who drink before age 15 are 5 times more likely to develop alcohol problems as adults (National Institute on Drug Abuse).
- **Alcohol has a greater impact on the developing teen brain.** Alcohol impairs the areas that control motor coordination, impulse control, memory, and judgment. Kids who drink are at greater risk for school failure and dropping out. (SAMHSA)
- **Alcohol kills more kids than all other drugs combined.** Beer and other alcohol are implicated in the three top causes of teen deaths: accidents (including traffic fatalities and drowning), homicide, and suicide. (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration-SAMHSA).
- **Teen drinking increases the risk of STDs and pregnancy.** Teens who drink are seven times more likely to engage in sex and twice as likely to have sex with four or more partners than those who do not. Such behavior can result in an increased risk of AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse).
- **The good news is that parents are the #1 influence on their kids.** The key reason kids give for not drinking is that they don't want to disappoint their parents (Monitoring the Future survey). Parents can protect their kids from drinking by:
 - Not accepting alcohol as a rite of passage to adulthood
 - Setting clear rules about not drinking and helping them deal with peer pressure
 - Being a good role model – show kids you don't need a drink to relax or celebrate
 - Talking with them early and often about the ways alcohol can harm them, and being a good listener
 - Staying involved in their lives and knowing who their friends are
 - Getting help fast if your teen is already drinking or dependent on alcohol. Call the Alcohol/Drug Helpline for a free, confidential information and referrals: 1-800-562-1240.
- **Start talking before they start drinking.** Don't wait until your child starts failing in school, becomes a teen parent, or needs addiction treatment. Find out how to talk with your child at www.StartTalkingNow.org