

Friends don't Let
Friends Drive
Drunk

How can your teen help a friend?

- Try to arrange for a non-drinking friend to drive.
- Arrange for the friend to stay over.
- Try to reason with the friend.
- Do not get into the car with the friend.
- Distract the friend and call someone to pick them up.

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

One of the most difficult situations your teen could face would be what to do if these efforts fail. It is hard to make a decision in a heated situation. The best-case scenario would be for your teen to call 911. As a parent, you should make a plan with your teen for what he or she could do if they are in this situation, such as calling 911 or calling a parent and asking them to call 911.

These materials were developed/funded by:

- Individual community members
- Centre County Community Foundation
- Knight Foundation
- ONDCP Drug Free Communities
- Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, Bureau of Alcohol Education
- Prevention Research Center, the Pennsylvania State University

Selected References

Hingson, R., & Winter, M. (2003). Epidemiology and consequences of drinking and driving. *Alcohol Research and Health*, **27**: 63-78.

Turrisi, R., Jaccard, J., Kelly, S. Q., & Valera, E.M. (1995). Parent and teen perceptions regarding parental efforts at controlling teen drunk driving. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, **24**: 1387-1406.

For more information:

www.CentreCares.org

Parents are
the Solution

Part 6 in a Series of 6

TALKING TO YOUR TEEN ABOUT DRUNK DRIVING

Tips for Enhancing
Discussions to
Prevent your Student
from Drinking and
Driving

A Collaboration of the
State College
Communities that Care
Partnership

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WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS TO TALK TO THEIR TEENS ABOUT DRUNK DRIVING?

- A large percentage of the number of individuals killed in drunk driving accidents are teens.
- Most parents underestimate the amount of drinking and driving and riding with drinking drivers that their teens engage in.
- Many teens (roughly 1 in 3) engage in one of these activities within months of receiving their driver's license.
- Even if your teen never drinks and drives, he or she may be faced with a situation where they have to decide whether or not to ride with someone who has been drinking.
- Riding with someone who has been drinking is just as dangerous as driving drunk.

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

One popular strategy for avoiding drunk driving is the “designated driver.” Research shows that it is difficult to get teens to take the role of being a designated driver, and in the end, teens must rely on the behavior of another individual, which is risky.

Plan Ahead!

Our research shows that many teens drive drunk because they see no alternatives to doing so. **Work out an acceptable and viable plan with your teen for what to do in such circumstances. For instance, what would your teen do if he or she is responsible for driving and decided to drink? What if your teen was dependent on a ride from someone who was drinking?**

The Facts

- Alcohol increases the risk of an accident, no matter how good a driver someone is.
- Alcohol alters the brain's ability to make accurate estimates about how each of the body's systems is working.
- Often, people feel OK to drive even if they are over the legal limit.
- Research has shown teens often do not think that drunk driving accidents are serious, and the consequences are not long lasting. It is simply not the case that a good lawyer can “get you off.”



Zero Tolerance— it's the Law

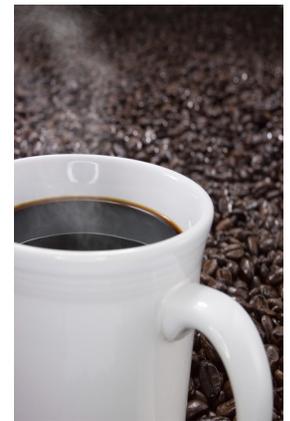
In most states, it is illegal to drive when your blood alcohol level is 0.08. However, in Pennsylvania, if you are under 21, the legal limit is 0.02. If a teen is pulled over after consuming alcohol (even just one drink) they will most likely be charged with a DUI.

Myths about Sobering Up

The only way to sober up is to allow ample time for your body to process the alcohol. Some teens incorrectly believe the following strategies will allow them to sober up:

- Drinking black coffee or an energy drink
- Mixing energy drinks into alcohol
- Exercising or taking a walk
- Eating food
- Taking a cold shower or washing their face
- Getting fresh air

These activities only create a temporary illusion of sobering up and in some instances increase drunkenness.



Research has found that teens who drive drunk think that their chances of getting into an accident or getting stopped by the police are minimal. It is important to convey a sense that drunk driving accidents are far too common and that drinking can dramatically raise the likelihood of an accident.