

TEENS AND



Common questions. Simple answers.

WHY DO TEENS DRINK ALCOHOL?

- Teens use alcohol for many of the same reasons as adults, like dealing with challenges or escaping from reality — or just to feel good or have a good time.
- Teens often experience peer pressure from older siblings or friends who are 21+ years old to experiment with alcohol.

WHAT IS ALCOHOL USE DISORDER?

- Alcohol use disorder, also known as AUD, is when a person is unable to stop drinking, even when alcohol is negatively affecting their life.
- The younger people are when they start drinking, the more at risk they are of AUD or alcoholism.
 - A study of 43,000 U.S. adults conducted by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism found that those who began drinking in their early teens were at greater risk of not only developing alcohol dependence at some point in their lives, but also developing dependence more quickly and at younger ages, and developing chronic, relapsing dependence.

HOW DOES ALCOHOL AFFECT THE TEEN BRAIN?

- Poor decision-making
- Decreased motor skills and balance
- Increased risk for addiction
- Impaired learning and memory, including blackouts

WHAT IS A BLACKOUT?

A blackout is when alcohol harms long-term memory so that, when sober, a person can't remember things that happened when they were drunk.



How does underage drinking affect a teen's life?

- Impaired driving
- Violence
- Injuries
- Brain impairment
- Addiction
- Risky sexual activity
- Trouble in school
- Drug or alcohol poisoning
- Risk of suicide

HOW DO I RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF ALCOHOL ABUSE IN TEENS?

Keep an eye out for changes in mood, including anger or short temper; school or behavior problems; a change in groups of friend; less interest in activities; and lack of care for their appearance.

WHAT CAN HELP PREVENT A TEEN FROM AT-RISK DRINKING?

- Having friends who do not drink or use drugs
- Clear parental expectations about drinking

NOW I'VE GOT THE FACTS — WHAT'S NEXT?

You can visit talk2kidsaboutdrugs.com for trusted, factual information for families and educators.