

# Preventing underage drinking – it starts now

Take the lead in substance abuse prevention with the tips below.

## **Spend time outside**

Ride bikes. Play catch. Fly a kite. Catch bugs. These are healthy ways for your child to grow and explore. Playing outside together also provides supervision and gives your child the quality attention and relationship they need.

## **Communicate values**

Social, family, and religious values give children reasons to refuse alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and help them stick to their decisions.

## **Set rules**

Research shows children are more likely to follow rules that they have helped create. Hold a family meeting to allow your kids to share their opinions about certain rules. Remember, though, you still are the parent and have the final say in setting rules. Focus on clarity and consistency.

## **Monitor TV**

Teach your child to be consumer conscious by talking about how advertisers persuade children to buy products that may not be good for them (e.g., candy or cereals named after cartoon characters). Limit TV to one to two hours a day, and watch programs with your kids so you can address any objectionable material they see.

## **Teach problem solving**

Help your kids find long-term solutions to homework or friend trouble. Listen and give your child an active role as you guide them in finding a solution. Be sure to point out that quick fixes are not always lasting solutions.

**PARENTS LEAD.ORG**

