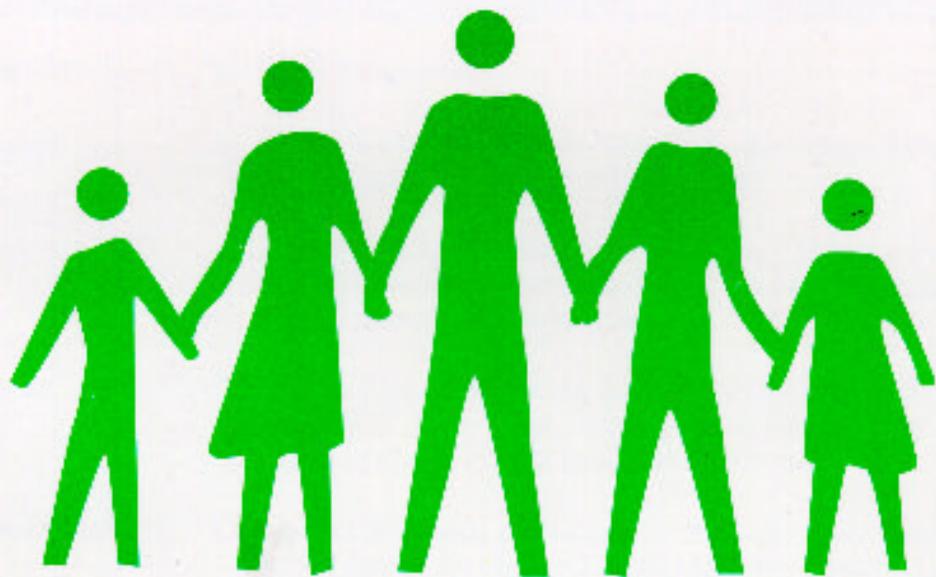


Part 3

# *Alcohol and Tobacco Rules Are Family Matters*



**FAMILY MATTERS**

*A Program to Prevent Teen Alcohol and Tobacco Use*

## Part 3: *Alcohol and Tobacco Rules Are Family Matters*

**W**elcome to Part 3 of *FAMILY MATTERS — Alcohol and Tobacco Rules Are Family Matters*. *FAMILY MATTERS* is a program to help families prevent young teens from drinking alcoholic beverages, like beer, wine, wine coolers, and mixed drinks, and from smoking cigarettes or using smokeless tobacco.

Part 3 focuses on ways families can help keep teens from using or abusing alcohol and tobacco.

### **Part 3 Instructions**

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Parents      | 1. Read the <b>Q &amp; As</b> .   |
| Parents      | 2. Set aside time soon to do Activity 1: <b>Are You a Partner to Teenage Alcohol and Tobacco Use?</b>   |
| Parents      | 3. Do Activity 2: <b>The Rules of the House</b> . This is a very important activity for you to do. It can be done right after Activity 1 or at a later time.      |
| Whole Family | 4. Choose a convenient time for your whole family to do Activity 3: <b>Story Time</b> . Be sure to read the activity ahead of time so you'll know what to expect. |
| Whole Family | 5. Later in the week, plan a time to do Activity 4: <b>Family Rules About Alcohol and Tobacco</b> . This activity is a key focus of <i>FAMILY MATTERS</i> .       |
| Parents      | 6. Read the <b>RECAP</b> of Part 3.   |
| Parents      | 7. Do the <b>NEXT STEPS</b> listed at the end of Part 3.  |



## **Answering Your Questions**

Even though almost all families want to keep their young teens from using alcohol and tobacco, they're not always sure how to do it. Talking frankly with your teen about using alcohol and tobacco and setting firm family rules about tobacco and alcohol use will help keep your teen from using or abusing these drugs.

### ***How can we let our teenager know how we feel about alcohol and tobacco use?***

Tell your teenager! Young teens care a lot about what their parents think. Let your teenager know that you care about him or her very much and that it's important to you for him or her not to become involved with alcohol or tobacco. Find opportunities to talk with your teen about alcohol and tobacco. There are many good times to do this — when you're watching TV, when you are talking about school, and when you see someone drinking alcoholic beverages or smoking. Don't bring up alcohol and tobacco use in one big lecture — make talking about these drugs an ongoing topic of conversation with your teenager.

### ***What should we talk about?***

When you talk with your teen, discuss alcohol and tobacco facts frankly, openly, and without anger. Given the chance, many teens will tell you what they know about alcohol and tobacco, what experiences they've had, what pressures they've faced, and what fears they have. Talk with your teen about some of the harmful consequences of using alcohol and tobacco. (Look again at Activity 2: **These Things Happen** in Part 1.) Talk about things that could happen as a result of other teens drinking and smoking, like getting into trouble at school or being in a car accident with a driver who had been drinking. Let your teen know why it's important to you that he or she not use alcohol and tobacco.

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### ***What difference does it make if some members of our family drink and smoke?***

It makes a difference. Many teens take on the alcohol and tobacco use habits of other family members. If a parent, older brother, or older sister smokes cigarettes, drinks alcohol, or uses smokeless tobacco, then your teen is more likely to become involved with these drugs too.

Even if some family members use alcohol and tobacco, you probably do not want your teen to drink and smoke. It's important for you to tell your teenager how you feel about teens using alcohol and tobacco. Talk with your teenager about why you do not want him or her to use these drugs.

Be sure you don't encourage your teen to use alcohol and tobacco in ways you might not even realize, such as by asking your teen to bring you a beer from the refrigerator or pick up a pack of cigarettes at the store. If you have alcohol and tobacco in the house, don't make it easy for your teen to use them. Some parents put a lock on a cabinet or drawer to keep alcohol and tobacco away from their teenagers.

### ***Should we have rules for our teenager about alcohol and tobacco use?***

Yes. Family rules can help keep your teenager from becoming involved with alcohol and tobacco. For the rules to work, your teen needs to understand exactly what the rules are, you need to consistently enforce the rules, and your teen needs to be rewarded for following the rules.

Many teens don't know the rules because the family hasn't spent enough time talking about them. If you want to help prevent your teen from using alcohol and tobacco, your family should talk about the rules, rewards, and consequences for using these drugs. Two of the activities in this part of *FAMILY MATTERS* are to help you decide on rules, rewards, and consequences that will work best for your family and to suggest how to talk with your teenager about the rules.

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#### ***What are appropriate rewards for following the rules and appropriate consequences for breaking them?***

One of the best rewards is telling your teenager how proud you are he or she does not use alcohol and tobacco. Another good reward is to compliment your teen's maturity in this decision. Some parents give their teens extra privileges or small rewards, such as an extra hour of TV or staying up an hour later on a weekend night. You could give your teen some extra money or a present for following the rules.

The consequences should fit the rule broken, and should be ones you would actually use. Some examples of appropriate consequences are extra chores, not being able to watch TV, not being able to call friends on the phone, and being grounded.

#### ***How can we know if our teenager is following the rules?***

You need to know if your teenager might be using alcohol or tobacco. There are many clues to watch for:

- Alcohol or tobacco on your teenager's breath or clothes.
- Bottles of alcohol or packs of cigarettes or smokeless tobacco hidden in or near the house.
- Missing alcohol or tobacco from your house.
- Changes in your teenager's friends, having friends you think might use alcohol or tobacco, not wanting you to meet friends.
- New problems in school such as being tardy or absent, making lower grades, or losing interest in school. Teachers may express concerns.
- Changes in mood, withdrawal, nervousness, rebelliousness.
- Changes in sleep patterns such as always being sleepy, sleeping at unusual times, and not sleeping well.
- Acting like he or she isn't telling you everything.

If your teenager does some of these things, do not accuse him or her of using alcohol or tobacco. Instead, listen carefully to your teen's explanations and review your family rules about drug use. If you find out that your teenager is using alcohol or tobacco, be sure to enforce your rules right away.

## Activity 1

# Are You a Partner to Teenage Alcohol and Tobacco Use?

- **WHY:** To point out things parents do that may encourage their teens to use alcohol and tobacco
- **WHO:** Parents
- ▲ **HOW LONG:** 5 minutes

*Sometimes parents can encourage teen alcohol and tobacco use without ever realizing it. Read the list below and check any things you have ever done.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Asked your teenager to light a cigarette for you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Asked your teenager to mix an alcoholic drink for you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Let visitors smoke in your house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Served liquor at parties that included your teenager.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Had liquor or tobacco easily available in your house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Not told your teenager how you feel about teenagers using alcohol or tobacco.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Asked your teen to bring you a beer or other alcoholic drink.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Put lots of ashtrays around the house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Said something like "I sure could use a cigarette" or "I'd really like a drink" when you were tired, stressed, or hassled.

*If you made any checks, what changes could you and other family members make to be sure you're not a partner in encouraging your teenager to drink alcoholic beverages or use tobacco?*

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### Activity 2 The Rules of the House

- WHY: To help parents make their own family rules about alcohol and tobacco use
- WHO: Parents
- ▲ HOW LONG: 15 minutes

*Every family has rules about behavior — what's okay to do and what's not — even if the rules are not written down. Rules about alcohol and tobacco use can be confusing for teens and parents. Adults have a legal right to use alcohol and tobacco, but young teens do not. Some rules might apply to both teens and parents, and some might be for teens only. Rules for alcohol might be different from rules for tobacco. Some rules change as teens grow up. Rules for some families may not work for others.*

*Think about rules for alcohol and tobacco use that you want for your teen. Write the rules on the next page. Choose from the following examples or make up your own. Use as many or as few rules as you want. Choose rules that you think are firm, fair, and reasonable for your teen now. You'll use these rules in Activity 4: **Family Rules about Alcohol and Tobacco Use.***

#### **Examples of Rules about Alcohol and Tobacco Use**

- No smoking cigarettes except for one puff to try it.
- No smoking cigarettes ever, not even a puff.
- No using chewing tobacco ever.
- No drinking alcohol except for a sip of wine when you go to church.
- No drinking alcohol except for a taste with an adult family member.
- No drinking alcohol until you are 21.
- No riding in a car driven by a person who has been drinking alcohol.
- No staying at parties where other teens are drinking and smoking.
- Older teens in the family cannot give alcohol or tobacco to younger siblings.

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Now write your own:

<b>Family Rules about Teen Alcohol and Tobacco Use</b>	
1. Rule:	<hr/> <hr/>
2. Rule:	<hr/> <hr/>
3. Rule:	<hr/> <hr/>
4. Rule:	<hr/> <hr/>
5. Rule:	<hr/> <hr/>
6. Rule:	<hr/> <hr/>

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### Activity 3 Story Time

- WHY: To help families talk about harmful consequences of teen alcohol and tobacco use
- WHO: Whole Family
- ▲ HOW LONG: 30 minutes

*Sometimes it's hard for parents and teens to talk about alcohol and tobacco use. To get a conversation started, it might be easier to talk about "someone else" instead of your own family. Read the following stories out loud, and use the questions after each story to discuss the situation as a family.*

**Hint: Use the Tips for Successful Family Meetings to plan this activity.**

#### **Tips for Successful Family Meetings**

1. Include your teenager and as many other family members as you can.
2. Plan a time that doesn't conflict with other important things.
3. Choose a place where there will be few interruptions and the TV won't be on.

## Story 1

*Andy is in the sixth grade. His Uncle Jack visits their family a lot and stays with Andy when his parents go out. Andy has a great time goofing around with his uncle. Uncle Jack smokes, but Andy's mom recently quit smoking. Now no one is supposed to smoke inside the house. Andy's parents have gone out to dinner and Uncle Jack has come over to stay with Andy. He lights up a cigarette while they are watching TV together and tells Andy not to tell his parents — it will be their secret.*

What might happen if Andy doesn't say anything to his Uncle Jack or his parents about Uncle Jack smoking? What are some of the good things? Bad things?

If Uncle Jack smokes in the house whenever Andy's parents are gone, how will this affect Andy's relationship with his uncle? His relationship with the rest of the family?

## Story 2

**Choose story A if your teen is a girl; story B if your teen is a boy.**

**A** *Kristen is in the seventh grade. She has a lot of friends, but is not part of the most popular group at school. Sarah is one of the most popular girls in her class. Kristen thinks Sarah is beautiful and wants to be friends with her. One day Sarah asks Kristen to skip gym class with her and drink a wine cooler. Sarah has stolen a wine cooler from her mother. Kristen has seen other kids skip class and knows it will be easy to get out of gym. She is so excited that Sarah has asked her to go. But Kristen has never drunk a wine cooler before.*

What might happen to Kristen if she skips gym to drink with Sarah? What are some of the good things? Bad things?

What might happen if Kristen starts drinking everyday? How could it affect school, friendships, and her relationships with her family?

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**B** *Rob and Keith are best friends. They do everything together. They play basketball, listen to music, and hang out together every day after school. Rob is spending the night at Keith's house. The two of them have been playing computer games and it is very late. Keith's parents have gone to bed. Keith says that his parents have a lot of liquor in a kitchen cabinet. He suggests to Rob that they drink some liquor.*

What might happen if Rob agrees to drink with Keith? What are some of the good things? Bad things?

If Rob starts drinking with Keith, how will this affect his friendship with Keith? His friendships with others? His relationship with his family? His work in school?

## Activity 4

# Family Rules About Alcohol and Tobacco

- **WHY:** To help families set clear rules for teen alcohol and tobacco use
- **WHO:** Whole family
- ▲ **HOW LONG:** 30 minutes

*Hold a family meeting to agree on rules for your teen about alcohol and tobacco, and to decide on rewards for following the rules and consequences for breaking them. You will need the list of rules you wrote down in Activity 2.*

***Hint: Use the Tips for Successful Family Meetings on page 8. Use the tips below for rule setting.***

### Tips for Setting Rules About Teenage Alcohol and Tobacco Use

1. Clearly state the rules so everybody understands them.
2. Choose firm, fair, and reasonable rules.
3. Clearly state rewards for following the rules and consequences for breaking the rules.
4. Monitor to be sure the rules are followed.
5. Consistently enforce the rules, rewards, and consequences.

*Begin the family meeting by talking with your teen about why it is important to you that he or she not use alcohol and tobacco. Then show your teen the rules about alcohol and tobacco use you think are appropriate for your family. Talk about each rule, and listen to your teen's questions and concerns. Involve your teen in a discussion about the rules rather*

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than just saying what the rules are. Make sure your teen understands the rules, sees why they are important, and agrees that they are reasonable and appropriate. When you have agreed on a set of rules, write each rule on the next page, "**Family Rules about Teen Alcohol and Tobacco Use.**"

Then talk with your teenager about rewards for following the rules and the consequences for breaking them. Ask your teen what rewards and consequences work best for him or her. Next to each rule, write the rewards and consequences you would use. Teens who have been involved in identifying rewards and consequences may be more likely to follow the rules.

Hang the family rules on the refrigerator, a door, or some other place where they will be easily seen. Make sure to talk about the rules again, maybe as often as every month or so. It's important that you watch your teen to make sure the rules are being followed. Review some of the clues to teenage alcohol and tobacco use on page 4.

## Family Rules about Teen Alcohol and Tobacco Use

1. Rule:	_____
Reward:	_____
Consequence:	_____
2. Rule:	_____
Reward:	_____
Consequence:	_____
3. Rule:	_____
Reward:	_____
Consequence:	_____
4. Rule:	_____
Reward:	_____
Consequence:	_____
5. Rule:	_____
Reward:	_____
Consequence:	_____
6. Rule:	_____
Reward:	_____
Consequence:	_____

## **RECAP**

- Talk openly with your teen about alcohol and tobacco use and about why it's important not to use these drugs. Talking can help prevent your teen from using or abusing alcohol and tobacco.
- Sometimes family members encourage teen alcohol and tobacco use in ways they don't realize. Parents should not ask their teen to get them a drink or a cigarette. They should make it hard for teens to get these drugs by keeping liquor and tobacco out of the way.
- Setting family rules about alcohol and tobacco use can help prevent teens from using these drugs. For the rules to work, they must be firm, fair, and consistently enforced. That means rewarding your teen for following the rules and following through with consequences when rules are broken. To know if the rules are being followed, you must monitor your teen.

## **NEXT STEPS**

1. If you haven't already:
  - tell your teen how you feel about him or her using alcohol and tobacco
  - don't encourage your teen to use alcohol or tobacco
  - make it hard for your teen to get alcohol and tobacco
  - set and enforce family rules about teen alcohol and tobacco use
  - monitor your teen to be aware of clues to alcohol and tobacco use
2. A member of the *FAMILY MATTERS* staff will call you soon to answer any questions.

