



# THE CHAMPION

## UNDERAGE DRINKING... IT'S NON-NEGOTIABLE, NO USE – NO WAY!

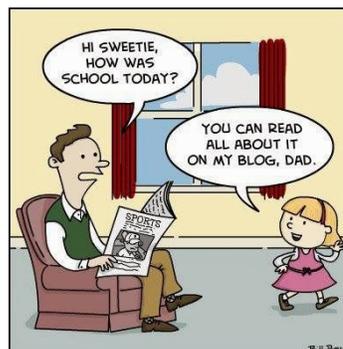
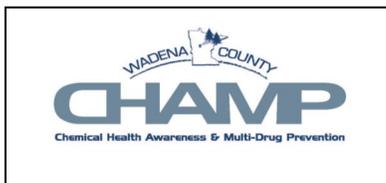
Many parents wrestle with the issue of underage drinking. Ideally, no parent wants their teen to drink or use drugs, but some parents are tempted to accept teen drinking as a harmless rite of passage. It's unhealthy and unsafe behavior. So how can you protect your child from harm?

Here are some tips:

- There is no “safe” level of alcohol or drug use when it comes to teenagers. To keep your kids safe, adopt a “no use” policy. Make sure your kids know they are not allowed to drink at other people’s homes as well.
- As parents or caregivers, be a united front, especially when it comes to issues regarding your teen’s safety and protection.
- Don’t send mixed messages by trying to “bargain” with your teen about drinking and other risky behaviors. Trying to limit use to home sends mixed messages, it tells your teen that drinking is okay, and puts him at great risk.
- Forget about being the “cool” parent. Parents who are permissive have kids who are more likely to get into trouble, including traffic crashes, engaging in violence, unsafe sex and substance use.

Your words and actions DO matter. Remember, silence isn’t golden, it’s permission—have a talk with your kids today—send this simple yet powerful message: underage drinking and drug use are unhealthy, unsafe, and unacceptable!

For information about how to talk to your kids about drugs and alcohol, visit our website at [www.champforwc.org](http://www.champforwc.org).



Become a CHAMP member, for more information, call Wadena County Public Health (218) 631-7629. Together we can make a difference!

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### **Our Vision:**

*We envision a county where adults support positive youth choices so they might develop into healthy, responsible adults.*

### **Our Mission:**

*To improve and enhance the health, safety, and quality of life for our children, teens and community by reducing substance use and abuse.*

Twitter: [@champforwc](https://twitter.com/champforwc)  
Facebook: [Champ of Wadena County](https://www.facebook.com/ChampofWadenaCounty)





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**Fast Fact**

Youth who start drinking before age 15 years are six times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse later in life than those who begin drinking at or after age 21 years.

*(Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD; 2016.)*

**We're on the web!**  
[www.champforwc.org](http://www.champforwc.org)

**What's Coming Up...Spring School Events**



**Sebeka**—Prom: April 8, 2017; Graduation: May 26, 2017  
**Wadena-Deer Creek**—Prom: April 22, 2017; Graduation: May 26, 2017  
**Menahga**—Prom: April 29, 2017; Graduation: May 26, 2017  
**Verndale** -- Prom: April 29, 2017; Graduation: June 2, 2017

**What Can Parents Do?**

Parents influence whether and when adolescents begin drinking, as well as how their children drink. Family policies about adolescent drinking in the home and the way parents themselves drink are important. For instance, parents should always model responsible alcohol consumption. But what else can parents do to help minimize the likelihood that their adolescent will choose to drink and that such drinking, if it does occur, will become problematic? Studies have shown that it is important to:

- Talk early and often in developmentally appropriate ways with children and teens about your concerns—and theirs—regarding alcohol. Adolescents who know their parents’ opinions about youth drinking are more likely to fall in line with their expectations.
- Establish policies early on, and be consistent in setting expectations and enforcing rules. Adolescents do feel that parents should have a say in decisions about drinking, and they maintain this deference to parental authority as long as they perceive the message to be legitimate. This makes consistency necessary.
- Work with other parents to monitor where kids are gathering and what they are doing. Being involved in the lives of adolescents is key to keeping them safe.
- Work in and with the community to promote dialogue about underage drinking and the creation and implementation of action steps to address it.
- Be aware of your state’s laws about providing alcohol to your own children. Never provide alcohol to someone else’s child.

Children and adolescents often feel competing urges to comply with and resist parental influences. During childhood, the balance usually tilts toward compliance, but during adolescence, the balance often shifts toward resistance as teens prepare for the autonomy of adulthood.

With open, respectful communication and explanations of boundaries and expectations, parents can continue to influence their children’s decisions well into adolescence and beyond. This is especially important in young people’s decisions regarding whether and how to drink—decisions that can have lifelong consequences. (Source: NIAAA)

***In every issue!***

**Something To Try And Talk About**

Here are some ideas for conversations for your next car ride or family meal.

- What are the best places to hang out in our community? Why?
- Name four things you like best about yourself?

- What is the hardest part of school this year? Is it homework? Getting assignments in on time? Tests? Class participation? Getting along with classmates? What makes this hard?

The benefits of eating together will last long after your meal ends, especially if you make family mealtimes a regular activity. For more ideas visit : <http://casafamilyday.org/familyday/tools-you-can-use/conv-starters/>.