



Oregon Partnership
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Dear Parent,

We are asking for your help in keeping teens safe during Spring Break. We want to prevent underage drinking, and the truth is that you, as a parent, have more influence over your teenager than we do! In fact, while it may not seem like it, research shows that youth care most about what you think.

Teens are drinking way too much in Multnomah County: over 30% of 8th graders report using alcohol in the last 30 days, and 11% of 8th graders report binge drinking. This is especially disturbing because of alcohol's impact on a developing adolescent brain. We know you want your kids to stay healthy. We also know that alcohol can damage their brain development, shrinking its capacity by up to 10%!

We also want to protect you from lawsuits if a party is held at your home. Don't fall for the idea that your child is safer if he or she drinks with friends in your home; research shows this practice backfires. Instead, it sends teens the message that drinking is okay and consequently, they are more likely to drink (and drink to excess) than other teens. Plus, adults who host underage parties can be arrested for Furnishing Alcohol to a Minor. And, if there is an injury or death, you could be sued.

The best message is "zero tolerance" for underage drinking (excepting family/religious ceremonies). During Spring Break, teens should enjoy their time off in healthy ways. Sports, outdoor adventures, art projects, supervised entertainment, and volunteering in the community offer safe activities while helping teens build valuable skills. Here are some additional suggestions:

1. Talk to each of your children and express your strong disapproval of underage alcohol and drug use. This is a very powerful step!
2. Tell your teens they may not go to parties where alcohol or drugs are consumed, but remind them that they can always call you if they get into a bad situation. Still, check with other parents before you allow your teen to attend a party.
3. Monitor your home alcohol supplies. Kids often get alcohol from homes. Consider a lock for your liquor cabinet or storing less alcohol in your home, and track alcohol supplies.
4. Report any suspected parties to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission's dispatch center at (503) 872-5070.
5. Plan fun activities for your teen and family. For activity ideas during spring break, visit www.orphnership.org. Don't be fooled when your kid says it's not cool to do things with parents; they really value the time you spend with them.

For more information about underage drinking and resources for families, visit www.FaceitParents.com.

We know how hard it is to be a parent these days. Working together, however, we can reduce the risks of underage drinking and create a healthier community for everyone!

Sincerely,

Chief Rosie Sizer
Portland Police Bureau

Sheriff Daniel Staton
Multnomah County