

Media Talking Points for Partners

Use this Q&A guide to help spread the word about our newest initiative in your community.

Q: “Why is your organization partnering with the Wisconsin Cancer Collaborative and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services?”

A: Only 30% of adults are aware of the connection between alcohol use and cancer. That’s why [NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION] is partnering with the Wisconsin Cancer Collaborative and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ underage drinking prevention campaign, Small Talks, to raise awareness about the link between alcohol use and cancer. Together, the organizations aim to reduce the burden that cancer causes on Wisconsin communities and systems through the prevention of underage drinking.

Q: “How serious is the risk of cancer from alcohol use?”

A: Alcohol use has a greater effect on cancer risk than occupational hazards, UV radiation, or protective behaviors like physical exercise. Drinking alcohol increases a person’s risk for at least seven types of cancer: mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, liver, colorectal, and breast cancer.

Q: “Why focus on the link between cancer and underage drinking?”

A: The more alcohol a person drinks and the earlier in life they start, the higher their cancer risk. In Wisconsin, 90% of underage drinking is binge drinking. That’s just one of the many reasons why we want to prevent underage drinking, and why we’re educating parents and young people about the link between cancer and alcohol.

Q: “Is underage drinking a problem in Wisconsin?”

A: 65% of Wisconsin teens report that they’ve tried alcohol. While Wisconsin has been successful in reducing underage drinking, preventing youth and young adults under the age of 21 from using alcohol remains a challenge that affects all Wisconsin communities and families, particularly due to the state’s drinking culture. For many people, Wisconsin’s alcohol-friendly culture masks the risks alcohol use poses to our children and adults. That may be one of the reasons why Wisconsin underage drinking rates have remained steady while other states are reporting promising declines.

Q: “How will the Small Talks campaign’s message help Wisconsin kids?”

A: Small Talks is a statewide campaign encouraging adults—especially parents and caregivers—to have short, casual conversations about the dangers of underage drinking with the children in their lives, starting around age 8. That’s when prevention experts say children form their earliest opinions about alcohol and alcohol use. Wisconsin parents and other caring adults can find alcohol and cancer risk facts, small talk tips, and more at SmallTalksWI.org. For more information about the connection between alcohol and cancer, visit wicancer.org.