

# All role models can make a difference.

Together, we can make an impact on underage drinking.



## Start with Small Talks

Having small talks with kids, starting around age 8, can make a big impact on underage drinking. These short, casual conversations help role models connect with kids on the important stuff, like alcohol and other drugs. And they can happen anywhere, and at any time. Together, parents and other role models in the community can keep the conversation going and give kids the confidence to grow up alcohol-free.

## You can be an effective role model!

Think kids won't listen? Think again. Research shows that parents and other caring adults are the most powerful influence on children's choices about underage drinking and other substance use.



### Educators and Counselors

Research shows that many children identify educators in their lives as trusted adults. This means that teachers and staff can play a large role in prevention. Use this time to continue the messaging about the dangers of underage drinking.

### Coaches

Millions of American kids play organized sports every year. And most kids look up to their coaches. Take the time to educate your athletes on how drinking affects their performance and health, and overall well-being.



### Community Leaders

Local leaders are everywhere in the community. These are the people dedicated to the public's health and safety of the places they live. From government and business leaders to volunteers and faith and spiritual leaders, you can all make an impact.

### Youth Organization Leaders

Kids look to youth organizations to find mentors. These leaders help teach kids life skills and prepare them for success. Take the time to educate them on how underage drinking can affect their future.



### Law Enforcement

Law enforcement is only part the job. Officers are an important part of the community; they interact with kids all the time around the neighborhood and at school. This is the perfect opportunity to connect and develop positive, trusting relationships with kids.



## What can you do as a role model?

### Be an open book

Share some of your experiences with underage drinking or peer pressure. Give kids ideas for healthy coping strategies.

### Listen to what kids are saying

When kids are away from their parents, they talk about a lot of stuff and ask a lot of questions. Be a good resource for nonjudgmental answers.

### Be a good source of information

Know the facts about underage drinking. Share how making poor choices can affect their health long term.

### Let kids know you're available

There are always topics that kids find hard to discuss with their parents. Let kids know you're always there to talk about anything.

### Know what influences kids

Alcohol companies spend \$2 billion per year on advertising. Meaning, kids are exposed to messages about alcohol and other substances constantly in ads, on social media, in videos, television, magazines, and music. Talk to kids about what they watch and listen to and stay up to date on their influences and get their opinions.

As a role model, it's important to stay up to date about the facts so you can keep the small talks going.

Learn more by visiting [SmallTalksWI.org](http://SmallTalksWI.org)



### A role model is an ally!

Parents are always the greatest influence on kids, and it's important they stay involved and informed. A role model can serve as a source of support and helpful resource outside of the home. But it's always important to work with parents and respect their boundaries and parenting choices. Here are some ways you can work together:

- Talk with parents about the importance of small talks.
- Help parents learn by sharing useful resources about underage drinking.
- Keep parents informed about what kids are talking about.
- Reach out if your concerned about their child.