



Promoting Health and Wellness in our Community

June 2022

Summer...long days at the beach, backyard barbeques, kicking back with family and friends and for teens just out of school, the chance to experience the freedom that comes with more unstructured, unsupervised time. Whether they're cruising Ocean Drive, sitting around the backyard firepit, or hanging at Second or Third beach with friends, it's an opportunity for them to let loose and put the pressure of school behind them for a few months, but it can also open the door for risky behaviors including underage drinking.

Fourth of July, historically one of the biggest drinking holidays in America, is just around the corner. It's a perfect time for parents and caregivers to talk with their teens about the danger of underage drinking and to discuss family expectations with their child. A study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA, says daily underage drinking-related visits to hospital emergency rooms are nearly 90% higher during a three-day Fourth of July weekend than on an average day in July.

Another important fact to remember is that in most school surveys, kids report that their parents are the #1 influence on their decision whether to drink alcohol or not. When parents set clear rules that alcohol is unacceptable, teens are **80% less likely to drink** than those whose parents have a more casual attitude, according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). So, remember to *Talk. They Hear You.*

Parents should also prevent underage access to alcohol at home. In **Middletown's 2021-22 Report on Adolescent Drug Use**, the **Point-of-Access of Alcohol** graph shows that **20.2% of 7th - 12th graders reported they got alcohol from parents or guardians without their knowledge. 17.8% got alcohol at a party where no adult was in the house.** Take steps to secure or, at least, monitor alcohol in your home, including any kept in your refrigerator.

Summer months are a well-deserved time for relaxation, getting together with family and friends to enjoy all the season has to offer. The Middletown Prevention Coalition wishes all families in our community, and on our island, a fun, healthy, and safe summer!

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