

**This educational module  
is provided (in part) by:**



**Pontotoc County Drug Free Coalition**

# Parents360

## You, Your Kids & Alcohol



THE PARTNERSHIP<sup>™</sup>  
AT [DRUGFREE.ORG](http://DRUGFREE.ORG)

# Alcohol

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- Of all of the substances that can be abused by teens and young people, **alcohol can be the most difficult** to talk about.
- It is legal for adults to consume. It is an intoxicant that most adults have used, or currently use. It is – in many ways – part of our culture.
- How do we help our kids understand the real risks of drinking? How do we help them make the decision not to drink?

# Alcohol Risks

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- Kids test boundaries and take risks, and they frequently make bad decisions. That's part of adolescence.
- Trying/experimenting with alcohol is one of the typical boundary testing behaviors adolescents engage in. Also, alcohol can exaggerate and magnify normal boundary-testing behaviors.
- Each year, 5,000 young people die as a result of underage drinking:
  - 1,900 motor vehicle crashes
  - 1,600 homicides
  - 300 from suicide and other injuries
- Kids who start drinking before the age of 15 are five times more likely to develop a problem as those who start drinking at 21

# Teen Brains More Vulnerable to Alcohol



Remember that the teen brain is **still growing** and **changing**. **Damage** to the brain from alcohol at this time **can be long-term and irreversible**. In addition, **short-term or moderate drinking impairs learning and memory** far more in youth than adults. Adolescents need only drink half as much to suffer the same negative effects.

# Teen Brains More Vulnerable to Alcohol

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Research comparing **adolescent drinkers** and **non-drinkers** shows that drinkers face a host of problems:



- Alcohol can cause short and long-term harm to a developing brain and body
- Adolescents need only drink half as much to suffer the same negative effects
- Perform worse in school
- Increased risk of social problems, depression, suicidal thoughts and violence

# Alcohol in Kids' Lives

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Alcohol use is “normalized.” In this country, it is embedded in our culture. The result of this is that among kids, the perceptions of risk and disapproval are low. Additionally, availability is high.



- Alcohol is legal for adults who model both good and bad drinking behaviors.
- We are a media-driven society and youth are among the biggest consumers of media.
- 58% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders say that alcohol is easy to get
- By 8<sup>th</sup> grade, kids see 100,000 ads for alcohol
- Super Bowl ads for alcohol are the 2<sup>nd</sup> most remembered by middle school students

# Pontotoc County Youth Access & Availability

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- Youth are accessing socially from parents and older siblings.
- Youth are stealing alcohol from local convenience stores.
- Youth are engaging in underage drinking on the weekends at parties and friends' houses.
- Youth are also engaging in underage drinking on the weekends while driving on back roads or at pasture parties.
- 69.7% of Pontotoc County 12<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed admitted to getting alcohol from someone they knew, age 21 or older.



# Teens' Perceptions of Alcohol Use

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- **Low Perception of Risk:** Almost half (44%) do not see a “great risk” in drinking 5 or more drinks nearly every day
- **Low Social Disapproval:** Only 34% strongly disapprove of “teens your age getting drunk”
- **High Availability:** 64% say beer or some other alcoholic beverage is very easy to get

# Teens' Perceptions of Alcohol Use

- Remember that when there is a low perception of risk, low social disapproval and high availability, use tends to be high – and that is exactly what is happening with alcohol.
- There is a low perception of legal risk or enforced consequences by Pontotoc County youth.

# Pontotoc County Parent Surveys

- 76% think schools should provide programs to prevent and reduce underage drinking and substance abuse.
- 8% do not monitor alcohol in the home.
- 40% do not secure or lock up alcohol in the home.

# Underage Drinking Today

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- Drinking today carries risks that did not exist, or were less prevalent, in years past.
- Most underage drinking is in the form of binge drinking
- Combination of alcohol & prescription medicines are especially dangerous. This puts them at a greater risk of violence and sexual assault.
- Facebook & YouTube create a “permanent record” of poor decisions
- 1 out of 10 teen drinkers say, “It is a habit; I can’t stop.”

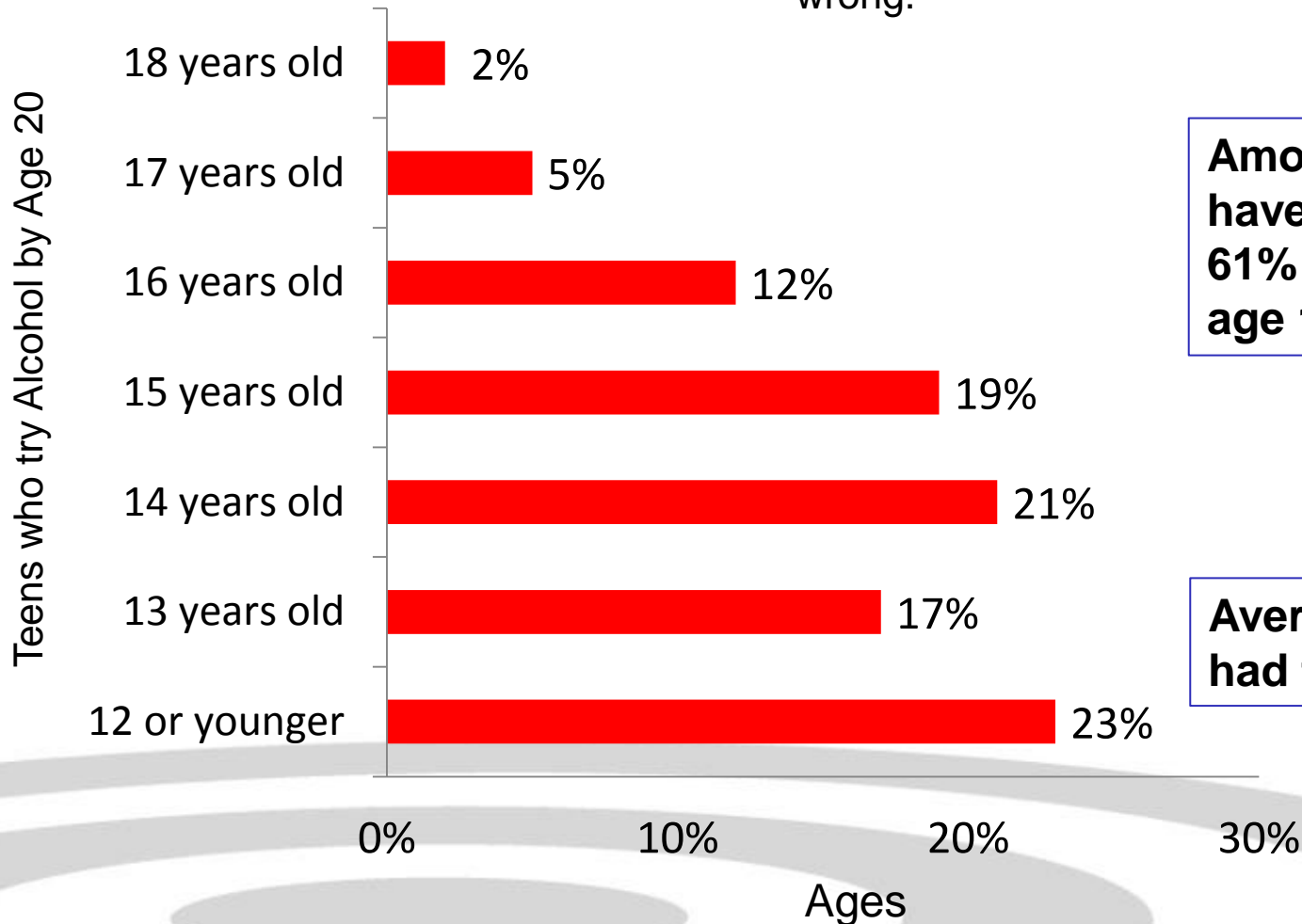
# Direct Quotes From Pontotoc County Youth

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- “The more access you have the higher you are on the social ladder”
- “High schoolers were like taking alcohol to class in water bottles.”
- “Pretty much you binge drink or you don’t drink at all”

# Age of First Use

This chart shows that the vast majority of teens who drink before the age of 19 start quite young. **23 percent** of teens who drink started drinking at **age 12 or younger**. So if we look at our young kids and say, “this isn’t something that we need to worry about with them,” we’re wrong.



**Among teens who have drunk alcohol, 61% have done so by age 15.**

**Average age when had first drink: 14**

# In Pontotoc County...

<b>Substance:</b>	<b>Average age of first use:</b>
Alcohol	13
Tobacco	13
Marijuana	14
Prescription Drug Misuse	13

# Being Clear Matters

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- Be clear with your children that you disapprove of underage drinking
- Most communities have social host liability laws
- Parental monitoring and supervision in high school can reduce drinking in high school and college
- Students whose parents allowed them to drink late in high school are more likely to have problems with alcohol in college



# Being Clear Matters

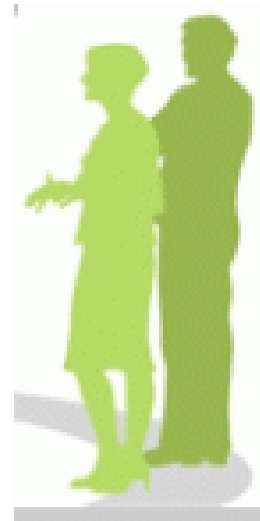
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Being clear with your kids about your disapproval for their alcohol use is very important.

**38%** of teens agree with the statement: “My parents would be ok if I drank beer once in a while”



*but*



Only **12%** of parents say “It is ok if my child/teen drinks alcohol sometimes”

There is a real **disconnect between** the perception teens have of their **parents approval** of use and their **parents' actual approval** of use.

# Being Clear Matters

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- Kids who agree with the statement, “My parents would be okay if I drank beer once in a while” are:
  - 67% more likely to try other drugs
  - 158% More than twice as likely to have used Ecstasy in the last 12 months
  - 110% More than twice as likely to be a current marijuana user
  - 92% (almost twice as likely) to try methamphetamine

# As parents...

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- The example we set also matters. If you choose to drink, **model responsible drinking behavior**
- **Think about what your kids hear**
  - Sometimes we unintentionally send kids the message that we need alcohol to cope with problems or have a good time. Be careful making statements like, “What a tough day. I need a drink.”
- **Think about what your kids see**
  - Kids notice if you drink and drive (even if it is only one beer or glass of wine)
  - Kids notice if your behavior changes when you drink
- **Limit access to alcohol** – in our homes by limiting access and monitoring how much we have, and in our communities by supporting efforts to make alcohol more difficult for teens to obtain.
- **Be conscious of your actions!**

# Tips from “Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don’t Be a Party to Teenage Drinking”

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- The Drug-Free Action Alliance, based in Ohio, has developed a program to help parents called “Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don’t be a Party to Teenage Drinking.”
- Too many parents feel alone when they tell their kids that alcohol use is unacceptable. Some parents think that they are creating a “safe place” for their kids to use alcohol. As we’ve seen from the research, this point of view is mistaken. Simply put, kids see a green light for alcohol use from you at certain times as a green light at any time. In addition, serving alcohol to minors is illegal.
- As a parent, you may be put on the spot when you host a party. Your kids and their guests can have fun, but you have to make it clear that the rules in your house are no alcohol, no drugs and no tobacco.
- If you are away from home or out of town, you don’t want your house to become the party house. Let your kids know that your rules apply whether you’re home or not, and set up a system to monitor their behavior.

**OKLAHOMANS  
WHO HOST  
STAND TO  
THE MOST**



*Don't give people under 21 a place to drink.*

# Oklahoma's Social Host Law

- **Property Owners are Accountable.** If people under 21 are gathered and drinking on private property, the person who provides the location is considered the Social Host, and will be held accountable.
- **Accountability Goes Beyond the Party.** A “Social Host” can be minor or adult and does not have to be physically present or the actual property owner.
- **Fines are Immediate.** Social Host violations carry a first-time fine of up to \$500.
- **Adults and Minors are Accountable.** If someone is injured or killed because of a Social Host violation, you can be charged with a felony, punishable by up to 5 years in prison and a fine up to \$2,500.
- **Repeat Offenders Can go to Prison.** Fines increase with additional violations — three strikes gets you a felony conviction with up to 5 years in prison and a fine up to \$2,500.

OKLAHOMANS  
WHO HOST  
STAND TO  
LOSE  
THE MOST  
*Don't give people under 21 a place to drink.*

# Tips from “Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don’t Be a Party to Teenage Drinking”

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- Having a party

- Set rules ahead of time such as no alcohol, drugs or tobacco
- Set a start and end time for the party
- Make sure an adult is at home during the party *AND* regularly checking up on the party

- When you’re away from home or out of town

- Set and communicate rules to be followed in your absence.
- Don’t leave your child alone – ask someone to stay with him, have him stay with a relative/friend or have someone check-in

OKLAHOMANS  
WHO HOST  
STAND TO  
THE MOST



*Don't give people under 21 a place to drink.*

# Tips from “Parents Who Host Lose the Most, Don’t Be a Party to Teenage Drinking”

- If your teen is attending a party
  - Know where your child will be. Call the parents in advance to verify the occasion and location
  - Indicate your expectations to your child and the parent hosting the party.
  - If the activity seems inappropriate, express concern and keep your child home
  - Assure your child that they can call you to be picked up whenever needed. Their safety matters most!

OKLAHOMANS  
WHO HOST  
STAND TO  
LOSE  
THE MOST

*Don't give people under 21 a place to drink.*

# In Pontotoc County...

% of youth using... in the past 30 days:	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	12 <sup>th</sup> grade
Alcohol	6%	18.7%*	28%	26.7%
Cigarettes	1.4%	12.5%*	14.8%*	17%*
Marijuana	2.5%*	9.8%*	18.8%*	13%
Prescription Drug Misuse	2.2%	4.9%	8.6%	6.0%

**\*Higher than state average for this grade in Oklahoma**



# How to spot alcohol & drug use:

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**Here are five changes to watch for...**

- Declining school work and grades
- Abrupt changes in friends, groups or behavior
- Sleeping habits and abnormal health issues
- Deteriorating relationships with family
- Less openness and honesty

13  
Average  
age of first  
use

# How to spot alcohol & drug use:

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## **Be aware of special vulnerabilities, such as:**

- Family history – predisposition to drug or alcohol problems
- Close friends who use drugs or alcohol
- Early first use
- Diagnosed or undiagnosed depression/ other mental health disorders
- Problems in school/learning disabilities

# What To Do When You Spot Alcohol And Drug Use.

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**1. Focus, you can do this.**

- Act right away.

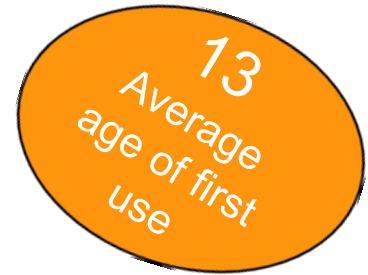
**2. Start talking:**

- Let your child know you are concerned.
- Communicate your disapproval.

**3. Set limits, rules and consequences.**

**4. Monitor – look for evidence, make lists, keep track.**

**5. Get outside/professional help – you don't have to do this alone.**



# Pontotoc County

## Resources

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- Visit [www.pcdfc.org](http://www.pcdfc.org) for more information about Pontotoc County Drug Free Coalition, STAND Youth Coalition, prescription drop box locations, and more local resources.

### Treatment

- Addiction & Behavioral Health Center, Inc.:  
Location: 124 S. Broadway Ste. 200,  
Ada, OK  
Phone: (580) 332-3001  
Fax: (580) 332-8774  
Email: [vorsburn@addictionbhc.org](mailto:vorsburn@addictionbhc.org)

- STAND (Students Taking A New Direction) Youth Coalition contact information:

DFC Coordinator

AshLee Griffin

Phone: (580)559-5990

Email: [jesagri@ecok.edu](mailto:jesagri@ecok.edu)

- Brandon Whitten Institute for Addiction & Recovery at ECU:

Office: (580) 559-5720

Director: (580) 559-5815

Email: [bwainstitute@ecok.edu](mailto:bwainstitute@ecok.edu)

- [Pontotoc County Resource & Referral Manual](#)

# Resource Partners

**NIAAA** NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON  
ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM

*of the NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH*

**Make a Difference (NIAAA)**

**[www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications)**

# Resource Partners



POWER of  
PARENTS

madd™

**Mothers Against Drunk Driving**  
**(MADD)**

**[www.madd.org/underage-drinking/the-power-of-parents/](http://www.madd.org/underage-drinking/the-power-of-parents/)**

# Resource Partners



Federal government

**[StopAlcoholAbuse.Gov](http://StopAlcoholAbuse.Gov)**



Leadership to Keep Children  
Alcohol Free

**[alcoholfreechildren.org](http://alcoholfreechildren.org)**

# Resource Partners

Oklahoma Department of Mental Health  
and Substance Abuse Services

Oklahoma Department of Mental  
Health and Substance Abuse  
Services

<http://ok.gov/odmhsas/>

OKLAHOMANS  
WHO HOST  
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“Parents Who Host, Lose The Most:  
Don’t be a party to teenage drinking”

[http://www.oklahomasocialh  
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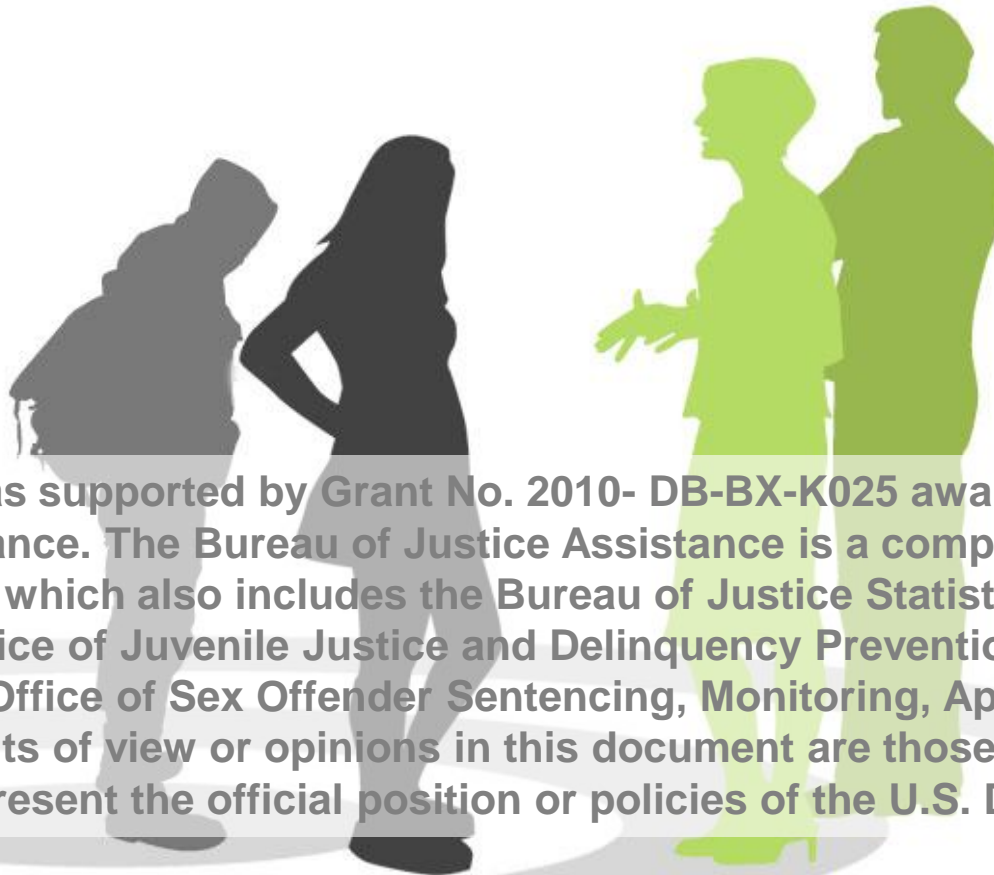


# How Do I Get My Completion Certificate?

[Please click here to take a brief assessment through Survey Monkey to receive a certificate.](#)

- This assessment is confidential and your name will not be tied to any results or shared with any other entities. However, you will be asked to provide your name and email at the end of the assessment if you would like to receive a certificate of completion for this module or if you wish to be added to PCDFC's contact list. Alternately, you can email [holrwit@ecok.edu](mailto:holrwit@ecok.edu) with a copy of the assessment completion page to receive a certificate if you do not wish to leave your name at the end of the assessment. You can also send an email request to be added to PCDFC contact lists
- Certificates are **emailed within 7-10 business days** of completing the module (if not sooner).

# ***Acknowledgement***



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