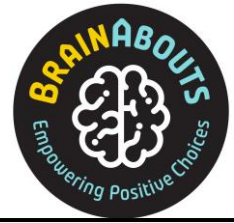


Alcohol Discussion Guide: Age-Based

Elementary School



Alcohol is the number one most abused substance by adolescents. Children start to think positively about alcohol around age 9-13, so the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends starting to talk to children about alcohol around age 9. However, parents can set the stage for these discussions by modeling healthy alcohol consumption and using this age-based alcohol discussion guide. Use the checklist below as a guide when your elementary school-age child is developmentally ready to learn the concepts.

ELEMENTARY AGE CHILDREN:

- ☐ Teach the difference between healthy food, poisons, prescription medications, drugs, and alcohol.
HEALTHY FOODS: Healthy foods and drinks are ones that give the body nutrients or the things our bodies need to maintain our health, make us feel good, and give us energy.
POISONS: A substance that could cause illness or maybe even die if eaten or drank.
PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS: A substance used to treat an illness or condition given by a doctor.
DRUGS: A substance that may have good and bad effects on the body. Sometimes drugs are given by doctors or bought at the drugstore (prescription medications).
ALCOHOL: A drug that is sold in liquid form. It is a depressant which means that it slows down or depresses the brain's functions. Alcohol may change a person's ability to think, see, speak, or walk.
UNHEALTHY SUBSTANCES SCRIPT: *'We eat healthy foods and drinks. We learn about and stay away from poisons, drugs, and alcohol. We only take medicine when prescribed by a doctor or when a parent or guardian says it is safe. We only use alcohol safely when we are 21 or older.'*
- ☐ Teach that alcohol can be used safely by adults only, in small amounts.
- ☐ Describe the short-term and long-term effects of alcohol.
SHORT-TERM EFFECTS: Alcohol can change the way someone sees, thinks, and acts. They may feel silly and happy, but they may also get angry and irritated.
LONG-TERM EFFECTS: If someone drinks too much alcohol for a long time, they may hurt their brain, have trouble with their memory, or have problems with their heart or liver.
- ☐ Talk about TV, social media, and Internet scenes that glamorize alcohol use.
ALCOHOL MEDIA SCRIPT: *'The TV shows people having fun when drinking, but they do not show the negative things that could happen when people drink alcohol. Their brain functions may slow down. they could get hurt, sick, or hurt others when drinking. Why do you think the media doesn't show the possible negative consequences of drinking alcohol?'*