

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, Talk to Your Teen About Drinking

Submitted by Brenda Arntzen, Coalition Coordinator
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Through the Roseau County Prevention Coalition, we get the opportunity to visit with many parents of teenagers. We encourage them to set clear rules and boundaries and to talk with their teens about not using alcohol. While parents may believe they have no impact on their teens' behavior, teens consistently cite their parents as the most powerful deterrent to drinking illegally. The good news? Your teens want you to talk to them! 70% of Roseau County High School students think parents and other adults should clearly communicate with their children the importance of not using alcohol and other drugs.*

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Use this opportunity to have the discussion with your teen about alcohol. The conversation doesn't need to be a formal one, try using "what if" questions to get the conversation started. Remind them that not all kids drink, in fact most choose not to. Results from a survey given to Roseau County 9-12 graders show that 7 out of 10 youth do not drink in a typical month.*

And as parents, know that most parents in Roseau County support the decision to not serve alcohol in their homes. 88% of Roseau County High School students say their parents do not allow them or their friends to drink alcohol at home.*

What else can you do? Take the Pledge. Become a Safe Home. RCPC is encouraging parents of 6-12 graders to register in the Safe Homes Directory to proudly proclaim that you are doing your part in keeping teens from using alcohol. By registering you can declare that your home is a safe home where youth will NOT have access to alcohol! It's also an opportunity to connect with other parents who proudly proclaim that they will not give youth access to alcohol in their home. *(Note: The signing of this pledge does not change your legal responsibilities, rather, it is meant to show your commitment to keeping all our children safe.)*

For more information on how to talk to your teen about alcohol or to register in the Safe Homes Directory, visit our website at www.rcpcoalition.com. For more information on keeping our teens safe contact Brenda Arntzen @ 469-0551 or Tammie Doebler @ 689-5120.

**Data taken from the Most of Us Student Survey given to Warroad and Roseau Students grades 9-12 in February 2008. Roseau County Prevention Coalition is funded through a grant from the MN Dept of Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division*