

# *Get to know the parents of your teen's friends*

All teens are at risk for alcohol use. Talk often with the parents of your teen's 4 closest friends.

Getting to know other parents is important – but it may seem hard to do. You can keep contact information on this form, and there are suggestions on the back to help you get to know other parents.

***Keep in mind these important facts:***

- Regular contact with the parents of your teen's friends can help keep your teen from underage drinking.
- Talking with other parents about their rules will help you enforce your rules.
- Most parents want to talk with the parents of their teen's friends – remembering this may make it easier for you to pick up the phone.

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**FRIEND**

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**PARENT/GUARDIAN**

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**ADDRESS**

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**TOWN**

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**PHONE** **CELL**

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**EMAIL**

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**RULES**

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# Getting to Know Other Parents

## How to connect:

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- Take advantage of any opportunity for contact: sports events, school concerts, parent nights, dropping off and picking up.
- Introduce yourself to other parents: find out what you have in common, discuss the friendship between your two teens and make it a point to occasionally ‘touch base’.
- Take advantage of events – ask your teen to introduce you to their friends and their friends’ parents.
- Go to the door and say ‘hello’ when dropping your teen at a friend’s house. Go out to the car and introduce yourself if another parent is dropping off their teen at your house.
- Call parents who are hosting teen gatherings and ask if you can contribute food to the event.
- When picking your teen up after school, break the ice by chatting with other parents who are doing the same thing.

## How to build a relationship:

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- Ask for advice about they would handle a situation.
- Invite your teen’s closest friends and their parents for an activity everyone can enjoy – like bowling, minigolf, or a barbecue.
- Invite them for a walk around the neighborhood or the school track.
- Invite them over for coffee and cake, or have a get together with several parents and include the teens as well.
- Invite your teen’s friends and their parents to an event your family will be attending.

## How to talk about underage drinking:

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- Bring up the subject, casually at a get together, as one of the issues that worries you as a parent.
- Mention a commercial you saw on T.V. and ask their opinion.
- Mention a newspaper article on the topic, ask if they heard about the incident.
- Share the anxiety that it may cause you and how you are trying to address it.
- Ask how they handle conversations about alcohol with their teens.
- Ask what their rules are about underage drinking and share yours.
- If the opportunity comes up for a sleep over or party at their house, call ahead of time to ensure parental supervision and no alcohol present.
- Be honest about your concerns and see if it is a concern with them.

### Discussion starters:

“Underage drinking is a huge issue, and I’ve heard that all Maine teens are at risk so I’d like to compare our rules on alcohol use with yours.”

“Do you mind if I check in with you regularly? It is easier to know what they are doing if we are all talking. We encourage you to call us as well.”

“Do you want to know when your teen leaves my house to go home? Or do you want your teen to check in with you while they are here?”

“Please contact us if you ever find our teen drinking or doing anything that concerns you. We would want to know. Let us know if we should do the same for you.”