



Big Brothers Big Sisters  
of Central Carolinas

# Alcohol Awareness

## NATIONAL ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

Do you remember the first time you were offered an “adult” beverage? Were you with friends? Did you feel pressured to drink it, to fit in? If you could go back and give your younger self advice about alcohol, what would you say? Underage drinking is a serious issue in our country, and even the best of kids can succumb to peer pressure. Learn more about alcohol and abuse disorders, and help your Little/child become alcohol aware this month with this month’s M.Ed.S. As always, Bigs, be sure to discuss with parents/guardians before discussing these important topics with your Little.



### Do you know what a “standard” drink looks like?



www.niaaa.nih.gov

### FAST FACTS

- » In 2010, more than 4,300 deaths among underage youth were caused by excessive drinking
- » In 2010, underage youth visited the emergency room roughly 189,000 times due to injuries and other complications related to alcohol
- » According to the CDC’s 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 33% of high school students admitted to drinking alcohol in the past 30 days, 20% admitted to riding with an impaired driver, and 8% admitted to drinking and driving.
- » Kids who begin drinking before age 15 are 4x more likely to develop dependence or abuse of alcohol than those who wait ‘til age 21 (NCADD)
- » High school kids who drink or abuse drugs are 5x more likely to drop out of school (NIDA)

Underage drinking is illegal and should **never** be condoned or encouraged by adults. However, kids do experiment with drugs and alcohol as they get older. Along with general alcohol education it is also important they know what to do should they come across an intoxicated individual whom they believe is in danger of an overdose. Research shows individuals do not call 911 when they witness someone passed out drunk due to fear of getting in trouble with police. The [911 Good Samaritan Law](#) was put in place in 2013 as an attempt to prevent drug/alcohol overdose deaths by providing amnesty to those who call for help in these situations, even if you are underage. Learn more about this law at the link above, or read the actual bill [here](#). Teaching your child/Little about this law could save another child’s life, or even their own.

### TALKING TIPS

Talking with your child about alcohol can be hard and the way you approach the conversation depends a lot on their age.

**Ages 4-7:** keep alcohol discussions in the present and relate it to things they understand, like a TV show or commercial you watch together. Be a good role model for them and display healthy habits with diet, exercise, and drinking to help them learn these things first hand.

**Ages 8-11:** this age group loves learning facts, especially weird ones! Feel free to openly discuss alcohol facts with them – consequences, effects, and how it can harm developing bodies. It’s also a good time to discuss alcohol and friends casually, like at the dinner table.

**Ages 12-17:** teens should know alcohol facts and their guardians’ views. During this time in their life, reinforce what you’ve taught them and maintain open communication by making them feel accepted and respected.

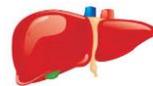
For more tips and resources, be sure to visit [KidsHealth.org](#).

### ALCOHOL & ME



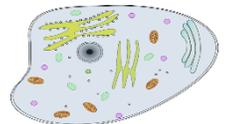
**BRAIN:** interferes with multiple brain pathways leading to slurred speech and decreased coordination; can cause physical changes in brain

**HEART:** arrhythmias (irregular heart beat), increased risk of stroke, high blood pressure



**LIVER:** impaired ability to remove toxins; fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, cirrhosis, and liver failure

**IMMUNE SYSTEM:** weakened for 24+ hours after drinking



Visit the [NIAAA’s page](#) to learn more!

Thank you for taking the time to be part of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Carolinas. Keep an eye out for next month’s topic: **Mental Health**