

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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Alcohol and Young Adults

What is the best way to teach teens about alcohol so that they grow to have a healthy and non-destructive relationship with alcohol?

For the past 30 years, teens who do not use alcohol and other drugs in high school have been a statistical majority. Yet, the widespread belief is that everyone is doing it. Mainstream media supports this belief with movies and shows like Super Bad, The Jersey Shore, & The Hangover. Why is the silent majority not represented in the media or school life? Why are they portrayed as nerds or social misfits more often than not? Why is abstinence and moderate use of alcohol rarely seen as desirable? What are the benefits of not drinking or using other drugs? What are the drawbacks of not drinking or using other drugs (weed)?

Alcohol use on college campuses is a huge problem. Each year colleges experience close to 1,700 deaths, 500,000 alcohol-related injuries, and 60,000 alcohol-related sexual assaults. Why is there such a dramatic increase in alcohol use in college and what is the best way to prepare young adults for college and the related risks? Are secondary schools doing enough?

How do we know when students are struggling with emotional distress here at school (alcohol, drugs, mental health, family)? Is the overall environment here one that promotes reaching out for help? If not, what are the explicit and implicit rules that serve as obstacles against reaching out for help? How can we let students and adults know it's okay to ask for help?