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Talking regularly with youth about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs reduces their risk of using in the first place.

Know! encourages you to share this Parent Tip with friends and family.

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Drug Free Action Alliance
6155 Huntley Road, Suite H
Columbus, Ohio 43229
PH: (614) 540-9985
FX: (614) 540-9990

Know! To Put Words Into Action This Holiday Season

"10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death." 2 Corinthians 7:10

One of the greatest gifts we can give our children this holiday season is the gift of our positive influence. Believe it or not, our parental influence carries more weight than any famous actor, athlete or musician. The way we live and the choices we make mean more to our children than any alcohol ad or drug-related internet video they may see, or even the negative pressure they might get from a misguided peer at school.

According to Joseph A. Califano, Jr. (author of *How to Raise a Drug-Free Kid*), when it comes to influencing our children, the most important facet is our own conduct. Califano says that children are much more impacted by what they see us do than what they hear us say. In other words, our actions speak louder than our words.

The holiday season presents an ideal opportunity to put your positive influence into practice. Here's the scenario: You are at a family gathering with your children. The party's host offers you a beer or glass or wine. Your children are tuned in for your response. What do you do and how can you make this a positive parenting moment?

If you are recovering from alcohol dependence or addiction, the best answer is a straight, "No thank you," with no further explanation needed.

If you are responsible for driving yourself, your children or anyone else home after the party, teaching by example, you also should not drink. And when you make that positive choice, let your children hear it, "No thanks, I'm driving tonight." Then let your children see your words in action. As you enjoy the evening, you will also be conveying the message that you do not have to have an alcoholic drink in hand to have a good time.

Now say your spouse or another adult is your family's designated driver for the evening and you do choose to have an alcoholic beverage. Number one, you don't have to be a nondrinker to be a good parent. Number two, you can use this choice as an opportunity to teach your children about responsible consumption, so long as you stay within your limits. However, proceed with caution, because your children are watching, learning and forming their attitudes and beliefs based largely on your behavioral choices.



Talk early and often about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Even when it gets tough.

Empowering Parents To Raise Their Children To Be Substance-Free



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Parents, we have the power to influence our children to make healthy, lifestyle choices when it comes to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Give them the gift that keeps giving; the gift of our positive influence.

For information on determining your individual alcohol limitations, visit [Rethinking Drinking](#)

Other Verses to Consider:

Hebrews 10:22

Visit starttalking.ohio.gov to get the conversation going !!!