UNDERAGE DRINKING . . . START TALKING KEEP LISTENING

THE SIX G’s

These 6 questions can help you talk to your child about underage drinking.

1. Can you think of any **GENETIC** reasons that might put you at risk for developing alcohol problems?

2. Do any members of the **GROUP** you hang out with drink alcohol?

3. Has anyone ever offered to **GIVE** you alcohol or encouraged you to try drinking?

4. Have you ever been tempted to **GET** and try alcohol, or do you disapprove of drinking by young people?

5. Do you understand the **GREAT** dangers associated with underage drinking?

6. Do you feel you receive enough **GUIDANCE** about drinking?

For further information about underage drinking visit these web sites:
- www.maineosa.org
- www.maineparents.net
- www.alcoholfreechildren.org
- www.niaaa.nih.gov
- www.stopalcoholabuse.gov

Recognize that family history of alcohol or drug problems increases a young person’s risk of addiction.

Help your child understand that, even without obvious family history, some people may have genes that put them at higher risk for developing alcohol dependence.

Know who your child’s friends are, and ask if any of them drink alcohol.

Know where your child hangs out and whether there is adult supervision.

Ask your child what she and her friends do when they are together and what it takes for them to have a good time.

Ask your child what his opinion is of drinking.

Let your child know that even though alcohol may be available (at home, at someone else’s home, at school, at a party, etc.) you expect her NOT to drink.

Encourage your child to avoid being with kids who drink and get away from the situation if someone is urging him to do so.

Find out if your child has ever thought about trying alcohol or has had even a single sip – or whether she is just totally against it.

Periodically inquire about other risky behaviors, and let your child know that you expect him to make good choices and not to take chances, especially with alcohol.

Help your child to develop strategies to be able to say “NO” without feeling self-conscious.

Remind your child of the great dangers associated with underage drinking – both short term (accidents, school failure, unwanted pregnancy, etc.) and long term (health, social, economic, legal, etc.)

Understand and talk with your child about how alcohol affects the young developing brain compared to its effects on adults who drink responsibly.

Use the media to point out examples of alcohol’s dangers – car crashes, drug busts, irresponsible behavior, etc.

Help dispel the media myths that drinking is glamorous and that drinkers are more likeable, attractive, sexy and fun than non-drinkers.

Re-enforce the fact that underage drinking is dangerous and illegal.

Regularly remind your child about your hopes and expectations for your child around not drinking.

Remind your child that, in fact, most kids don’t drink, that the behavior is unacceptable and will result in significant consequences.