



**Underage Drinking Community Forum**  
**March 2010**

**Facilitation Guide**

**Conversation Sector: Parent/ Teen Communication and Rule Setting**

	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time limit</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	1 minute
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Topic Introduction – Parent/ Teen Communication and Rule Setting</b></p> <p><b>Open Communication:</b> A recent study from the Partnership for a Drug Free America showed that parents are the most powerful influence in a child’s life –greater than peers, popular music, television, celebrities and the media! Their research shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids who consistently learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are <b>50% less likely to use drugs and alcohol</b> than those who do not.</li> <li>• Only <b>30% of teens report</b> learning a lot from their parents about the risks of drugs and alcohol.</li> </ul> <p>Maintaining <b>open communication</b> within the family system between parents and teens creates an atmosphere where parents are able to offer support to their teenagers by <b>establishing rules</b> with them about drinking.</p> <p><b>Parental Support and Rule Setting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>What is it:</u> Parental support includes monitoring an adolescent’s activities and supporting his or her independence while setting appropriate limits.</li> <li>• <u>Why it matters:</u> Teens of parents who set and enforce clear rules are less likely to drink alcohol. Setting clear rules against drinking, consistently enforcing those rules, and monitoring the child’s behavior all help to reduce the likelihood of underage drinking.</li> </ul>	2 minutes
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Let’s Talk About Talking...</b></p> <p>Successful, comfortable, frequent communication happens when there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Opportunity</b>...make time for each other! Any ideas for creating more conversation opportunities in the family? Suggestions: <b>Parents</b> – set a time to talk to your child every day. <b>Teens</b> – invite your parent to go out and do something with you that you would both enjoy.</li> <li>✓ <b>Established rapport.</b> What can you do to get to know your parent or your child better? Suggestions: <b>Parents</b> – asking about your child’s activities can get the conversation started. <b>Teens</b> – ask about your parent’s day and what’s going on with their job.</li> <li>✓ <b>Trust.</b> What are some ways to increase trust in parent/teen relationships?</li> </ul> <p><i>Allow open discussion at table</i></p>	8 minutes

4.	<p><b>“Mixed Messages” Activity</b> – spoken and unspoken rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participants briefly write down one rule they have in their family about alcohol consumption. (1 min.)</li> <li>• Have participants share their rule with the group and answer the following questions about their rule (4 min.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Is this a spoken or unspoken rule?</li> <li>✓ Is it enforced?</li> <li>✓ What are the consequences if it’s not followed?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Allow open discussion at table</i></p>	5 minutes
5.	<p><b>Setting the Record Straight</b> – establishing a clear set of family/personal rules about alcohol consumption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear set a family rules can be as simple as answering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What the law is:</li> <li>✓ What our family rule is:</li> <li>✓ What behavior we expect:</li> <li>✓ Who will support us:</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Let participants share their own ideas about how to answer these questions.</li> <li>• Here is an example to share, if needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <u>What the law is:</u> “Alcohol is for adults.”</li> <li>✓ <u>What our family rule is:</u> “Do not drink alcohol until you are 21.”</li> <li>✓ <u>What behavior we expect:</u> “Our family follows the law.”</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>*Tip: When talking about drugs and alcohol, approach with the facts to start meaningful dialogue. Steer clear of judgments and accusatory language.</p>	4 minutes
6.	<p><b>Wrap It Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are some of the difficulties you anticipate in talking with your parent or child about alcohol and rule setting?</li> <li>• How could you make the conversation more comfortable?</li> <li>• Encourage people to actually share what we’ve talked about with their parent or child at home.</li> </ul>	If time permits