**Setting Your House Rules**

*Setting specific rules* about alcohol is a necessary step in preventing underage use. *Establish rules early* and make sure that you review and amend as your teen matures. *Sit down with your teen* and communicate the consequences if he/she were to break one of your house rules. *Make sure consequences are realistic* so enforcement is easy.

**Sample “House Rules”**

- No drinking alcohol before age 21.
- Stay clear of ALL drug use, including prescription medicines that aren’t your own.
- No riding in a car with an underage driver who has had any amount of alcohol or other drug use.
- Be home by curfew (one set by the “House Rules” or by law enforcement).
- Call home if someone is in trouble.

**Useful Strategies**

Implementing these strategies will complement your house rules:

- Help your teen find ways to have fun without alcohol.
- Do not give alcohol to your teens. Tell them that any alcohol in your home is off limits to them and to their friends.
- Don’t let your teen attend parties where alcohol is served. Make sure alcohol isn’t available at teen parties in your own home.

- Set clear rules about not drinking and enforce them consistently.
- Help your teen get professional help if you are worried about their involvement.

**Family Meetings**

Family meetings are a great way to establish a safe environment to discuss important issues, like pressures, demands, and problems your teen is facing. Here are some basic guidelines to get you started:

- Set a regular schedule for family meetings, including a specific time.
- Make the meetings a “judgement free” zone.
- Set a time limit for each meeting to respect everyone’s busy schedules.
- Resolve any problems or issues discussed by the end of the meeting. If it can’t be resolved, make it a priority for the next meeting.
- If there is time for open discussion, ask “What would you do if...?” questions. These allow everyone to share experiences and discuss family values.

Adapted from information at parentupkc.com, 2014
MINIMIZING YOUR TEEN’S RISK

An adolescent’s brain does not fully develop until they are between 23 - 25 years old. The last part of the brain to develop controls impulsive behaviors and guides good judgment.

That’s one reason why it is so important for you to be involved in your teen’s life. Get to know the people they are with and establish relationships with their friends and their friends’ parents. Explain to your teen that you love them and you are concerned about their safety.

Below are some questions to help you gain information about what your teen is doing and determine how much risk is involved with each activity. Remember: It is okay to say “no” to an activity, but explaining your reasons to your teen will help them better understand why you have made that decision.

1. Where will you be?

2. How can I reach you?

3. Are adults chaperoning the event?
   Consider the following:
   • Have you ever met the parent or guardian?
   • Are they the parent or guardian of the young person hosting the event?
   • Will they be present during the entire event?
   • Do you consider them responsible?
   • Do they allow underage alcohol, tobacco, or drug use?

4. Who is attending the event?
   Consider the following:
   • How old are they?
   • What is the gender mix?
   • Do they attend the same school or different schools?

5. What will you be doing?
   Consider the following:
   • Is this activity age appropriate?
   • Will teens be served alcohol?
   • Will adult chaperones be drinking?
   • Could teens sneak alcohol there?
   • Will teens be coming and going from the event?
   • Is the event/activity dangerous? If yes, what precautions will be or have been taken?
   • Are you comfortable with this type of activity? Is any part of this activity illegal?