



Substance Rules

I would be remiss as your parent if I didn't tell you ...

(Wendie's Talking Points for drinking)

1. Alcohol is a drug. It is no different from marijuana or any other drug, except that it is legal in our country for use by people over the age of 21.
2. As your parent, you need to know that I do not condone the use of alcohol by anyone under the age of 21.
3. However, I am not stupid or blind. I know that some of your peers are drinking. I also know that you have probably been offered alcohol at parties or sleepovers. I remember being a teen myself, and I know about some of the temptations and risks of both accepting and refusing these offers.
4. I am more concerned about your safety than I am about setting up a standard of behavior (no drinking until age 21) that you may not care about upholding. I also want to make sure you have enough information to make good choices when you are in difficult situations.
5. Therefore, I would be remiss as your parent if I didn't pass along some very important rules for drinking. If you follow these rules, you will be more likely to stay safe. You will probably avoid getting so drunk you pass out or get sick. You will not lose control and/or make a fool of yourself. You will avoid being taken advantage of by others. You will also probably not get a hangover.
6. The first important thing to know is that even though everyone else is drinking, you do not have to drink. A red cup is a red cup, and no one has to know that yours is filled with soda. A rum and cola looks exactly the same as a cola.
7. If you make the choice to drink (see rule #2), Please follow the rest of these rules as closely as you can. They will keep you safe, alive and get you home no worse for the wear.
8. Do not drink and drive (duh!).
9. Don't get into a car with a driver who has had even just one drink. Any amount of alcohol impairs judgement and reflexes.
10. I would rather pick you up in the middle of the night than scrape you off the side of the road. If you call me and tell me you need a ride because of alcohol related reasons, I promise that I will not lecture or yell, and there will be no punishment or consequences. I am more concerned about your safety than anything else.
11. Never drink on an empty stomach. Even a piece of bread or junk food is better than nothing.
12. Alternate a full glass of water in between every alcoholic drink. This will dilute the alcohol in your system, and counteract the dehydration that can have serious consequences. It will also slow you down.
13. Don't drink the punch or anything that you haven't seen being mixed yourself. It may taste good, but the punch or anything else could contain grain alcohol, date rape drugs or even just an overly potent combination of alcohols.
14. Don't leave your cup unattended. If you go off to the bathroom, toss out your old drink and get a new one. You don't know if anything has been added to your drink or even if it really is your drink.
15. Don't mix alcohols. If you do, prepare yourself for a wicked hangover, and lots of vomiting. Sticking to one is the safest way to go.
16. Learn your "stopping point." This is the point in time when you are pleasantly intoxicated, but still in control of yourself. (You still cannot drive at this point.) When you reach your "stopping point," STOP. At this point, you will still have the common sense not to have random sex with a stranger. Yes, you learn this by trial and error, but if you are following the previous rules, your errors won't be too big or life-threatening.
17. If you don't have a "stopping point," drink by the clock. This means you limit yourself to one drink an hour. By spacing out the drinks, it gives your body a chance to process the alcohol before you add to the total.
18. If you see someone who has passed out, don't leave them there to "sleep it off." They may never wake up. Get them to a hospital.
19. Make sure that you have friends that you trust with you at all times when drinking. That way, you can look out for one another, come what may.