



EMPOWERING PARENTS TO RAISE
THEIR CHILDREN TO BE SUBSTANCE-FREE

Talk Early And Often About Alcohol, Tobacco And Other Drugs. Even When It Gets Tough



Know! What's Happening at Those Friday Night Football Games

It's Friday night, a father drops his teen off at the high school football game to meet up with her friends. He is not naïve; he knows that among some of his daughter's peers, there is likely to be drinking that occurs before or after the game. But this dad is going to do what he can to help his child remain alcohol-free. Not only did he drop his daughter off at the entrance and watched her walk in, he instructed her not to leave the stadium until he returns to pick her up following the game. Plus, there are plenty of adults looking on from the bleachers and walking to and from the concession stand during the game. Finally, as his daughter is getting out of the car he says, "Remember, answer your phone when I call and watch out for the Slurpees."

SLURPEES? What harm is there in a Slurpee you ask? Aside from the high sugar content and typical brain-freeze, not much, until vodka or other alcohol is added to the mix. It has become a Friday night ritual among some teens; stopping by 7-Eleven on the way to the game, grabbing giant Slurpees, spiking them with alcohol and then walking around sipping on them, undetected by adults. This is happening with Gatorade and other bottled drinks brought into the stadium as well.

So what is a teacher to do?

1. Advocate for your district's high school(s) to create a policy restricting outside drinks from being brought into the stadium (if there is not already one in place).
2. Warn your students that Slurpees and other drinks offered to them at the football game (or elsewhere) may be spiked, as some teens may find it amusing to try to get an unsuspecting peer or even a preteen to unintentionally drink alcohol. Tell students to stick to their own drinks.
3. It is up to the parents to monitor their children at the football games, whether they are physically present, or they are checking in with them through text or calling. However, as a teacher or school administrator at the game, you are in a unique position that the parents are not... You have the ability (and more likely the "right" – in your students' minds) to walk among them. Where most teens/tweens would fall over with embarrassment seeing their parents coming toward them while in their crowd of friends, a teacher is more likely to get a high-five. This is your opportunity to check in on students, and if something or someone seems off, you can take precautionary action (appropriate to your school's policy).

Talking regularly with kids about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs reduces their risk of using.

Know! urges you to encourage other parents to join Know!.

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Know! is a program of:



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4. Know the impact of alcohol on adolescents and share the facts with your students.
5. Engage in regular, on-going and open conversations in your classroom with students (talk about the everyday fluffy stuff, as well as the heavier issues, like alcohol and other drugs).

Whether it's a spiked Slurpee at a football game or some other alcoholic beverage at a different place and time, most students are likely to be offered a drink at some point. Encourage your students to find their personal motivation for being alcohol-free. They may attribute it to academics, sports, friendships, appearance, health or not wanting to disappoint their parents. Regardless, students will feel better equipped and more confident in saying 'no' if they have thought about it ahead of time.

The idea of sneaking alcohol into a football stadium is nothing new, and even when protective measures have been taken, there will be those who find a way around it. You are encouraged to take the above safeguards and stay up-to-date on what's happening in your students' world, but more than anything, talk early and often with your students to educate and empower them – because in the end, it is up to them to make the right choice.

For information on the impact of alcohol on the behavior, body and mind of adolescents, [CLICK HERE](#).



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