

# Alcohol Abuse – The Warning Signs

Understanding the warning signs of alcohol abuse is an important step to knowing when someone you love may need your help.

The following list provides a guideline of what to look for if you think there may be a problem. If you see one or more of the following changes with your child, it's a time to start a conversation.

## Physical

- Finding alcohol in your child's room or backpack
- Smelling alcohol on his or her breath
- Bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils
- Changes or slurred speech
- Memory lapses
- Poor concentration or inability to focus as they once did
- Sleeping in extra late
- Feeling ill after spending time with friends

## Personality

- Feelings of stress or added stress
- Mood changes: hot temper, irritability, and defensiveness
- Rebellion against family rules
- Lack of energy or lack of involvement in former interests,
- Sloppy appearance-change in commitment to getting ready

## Social Life

- Persistent or intense about going out with friends
- Friend changes: switching friends or hanging out with new friends and not wanting you to meet them
- Not checking in with you as they once did

Experts believe that there may be a drinking problem if you notice some of these warning signs happening at the same time, if they occur suddenly, or if they are extreme in nature.

- Breaking curfew
- Frequently attending parties or group hangouts
- Discussing alcohol or drug use on social media

## School Life

- Grades dropping
- Lack of interest in sports or other activities they were once involved in
- Poor attendance
- Recent disciplinary action

## Other "Red Flags"

- **Household items missing such as:**
  - ✓ Money
  - ✓ Alcohol
  - ✓ Prescription drugs
- **Personal Items**
  - ✓ Eye drops
  - ✓ Breath mints/mint tins or other small containers
  - ✓ Interest in apparel that promotes alcohol or drug use
  - ✓ Red cups being used as décor or to store items in their rooms



**It is a FACT: YOUR disapproval of alcohol use is the key reason your child will choose not to drink. You can make a difference!**

