



GCAPP PARENT TOOLKIT:

Off to College: Important Conversations About Alcohol

How the Conversation Starts



You don't need a **formal talk**. Look for natural openings in everyday discussions. **Try these conversation starters:**

Talking about majors and classes?

- Discuss how alcohol can interfere with academic goals and career plans.

Choosing housing?

- Explore the pros and cons of substance-free dorms or roommates who don't drink.

Talking about campus life?

- Ask how they would handle situations where other students' drinking might disrupt sleep, study time, or create safety concerns—like pressure to drink or unwanted advances.

Keep the Conversation Going



Starting the conversation is important, but **keeping it going** is key.

- Check in regularly, even after they've left home.
- Reaffirm your values and expectations, including a zero-tolerance stance on underage drinking.
- Stay alert to warning signs, academic struggles, changes in mood, or emotional stress can all signal underlying alcohol issues.
- Let them know you're always a safe space for honest conversations without judgment.

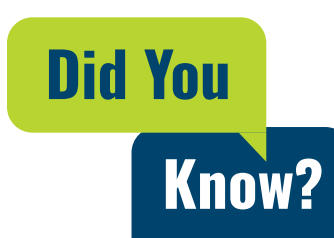
GCAPP



GEORGIA CAMPAIGN FOR
ADOLESCENT POWER & POTENTIAL
Education • Prevention • Action
For Adolescent Health

Talk Early. Talk Often. Make a Difference.

As your teen heads off to college, it's more important than ever to have serious, honest conversations about alcohol. Many first-year college students face new freedoms and pressures, and unfortunately, this often includes increased access to and use of alcohol.



First-year college students **drink more** and experience **more alcohol-related** harm than their non-college peers.

Even if your teen drank in high school, research shows that **talking with them about alcohol before college** can make a major difference.

Students who had these conversations with their parents were more likely to:

- Avoid underage drinking
- Limit their alcohol use
- Spend less time with heavy-drinking peers

What Parents Should Know: Alcohol's Real Impact on College Students

Academic Consequences



1 in 4

College students report academic issues related to drinking.

Effects include: missing classes, falling behind, poor exam/paper performance, and lower overall grades.

Health Risks



13%

Of college students meet the criteria for alcohol abuse or dependence.

Safety Risks

696,000+

students are physically assaulted by another student who has been drinking.

97,000

students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.

400,000

students engage in unprotected sex due to intoxication.

100,000+

report being too intoxicated to know if they consented to sex.

3.3 MILLION

students drive under the influence of alcohol each year.



Legal Consequences

5%

of students report interactions with campus police or security due to drinking.

110,000+

Students are arrested annually for alcohol-related violations.



REMEMBER: You are still one of the biggest influences in your teen's life. Your voice matters, especially now. (Source: samhsa.gov)