Think before you speak
Having conversations with your kids about alcohol is worth the effort. But it’s good
to prepare. Consider beforehand how you’ll bring up the topic and what you’ll say.
The information below can help you.

The Basics
• A standard “drink” in the U.S. contains 14 grams of pure alcohol. That equates to about
12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of liquor/spirits. Of course, it depends
on the alcohol content in each.¹

• Binge drinking involves drinking to the point
where the blood alcohol concentration is
0.08 g/dl or above. While a person’s weight
and the time elapsed play a big role, age and
gender also affect how much alcohol it takes to
get to that point. The numbers below show how
many drinks it takes to be considered “binge
drinking.” A person can be drunk—and impaired—well before this point.¹

Boys
Ages 9-13: about 3 drinks
Ages 14-15: about 4 drinks
Ages 16-17: about 5 drinks

Girls
Ages 9-17: about 3 drinks

The Facts
• Alcohol is the most widely abused substance
by American youth.² It beats out cigarettes,
marijuana and vaping.

• People aged 12-20 years old drink 11% of
alcohol consumed in the U.S.²

• More than 90% of this underage drinking is
consumed in the form of binging.²

• Excessive drinking is responsible for more
than 4,300 deaths among underage youth
each year.²

Learn more at WorthTheEffort.org
Because I’m an adult, I can make that choice. One of the dangers of drinking has to do with brain development. When you’re young, alcohol can have long-lasting intellectual effects. And, drinking young can make you four times more likely to be dependent on alcohol later in life. As an adult, those issues are much less. Plus, I drink in moderation, and not to get drunk.

If it’s so dangerous, why do you drink?

Because I’m an adult, I can make that choice. One of the dangers of drinking has to do with brain development. When you’re young, alcohol can have long-lasting intellectual effects. And, drinking young can make you four times more likely to be dependent on alcohol later in life. As an adult, those issues are much less. Plus, I drink in moderation, and not to get drunk.

What if I promise not to drink and drive?

Unfortunately, when you’re drunk you aren’t always thinking straight. So even if that’s what you intend to do, it may not be what you’d actually end up doing. I’d feel a lot better just knowing you weren’t drinking.

What if I have no other way to get home because the driver has been drinking?

Call me. I’ll come and get you. Or I’ll get you an Uber or a Lyft. I just don’t want you to ever get behind the wheel if you’ve been drinking or in the car with someone who has been.

What if my friends just came over to our house to drink? That way, you can supervise us.

No, your friends aren’t welcome to drink in our house. In Indiana, it’s illegal for anyone under 21 to drink on private property, even if it’s my kids in my home. I could be arrested for it."

2https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm