

TALKING TO YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOLER ABOUT PURIM

Guide for children ages 11-14

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR:
This is for parents of kids ages 11-14 who want to prepare them for situations they might encounter on Purim.

If this has crossed your mind, you're not the only one.

"My kid is at an age where they'll notice adults drinking and acting differently. Alcohol might be sitting around at seudahs. I want them to know how to handle themselves and stay safe."

WHAT YOUR KID NEEDS:

At this age, they need:

- **Understanding:** What they're seeing and why adults are acting different
- **Tools:** What to say if someone offers them something they shouldn't have
- **Permission:** To leave situations that feel uncomfortable
- **A safety net:** Knowing they can always come to you

SAMPLE CONVERSATION STARTER

"I want to talk about Purim for a minute. You're going to see adults drinking and acting differently than usual. You might also see alcohol sitting around at seudahs. I want to make sure you know what to do if someone offers you something you shouldn't have, or if anything feels uncomfortable. Does that make sense?"

LET'S ALL STAY SAFE THIS PURIM:

Here are some suggested guidelines to talk to your children about.

1. THEY CAN ALWAYS COME TO YOU

"If anything feels weird, uncomfortable, or scary – come find me right away. You won't be in trouble."

2. THEY CAN SAY NO TO ANYONE

"Your body belongs to you – always. On Purim, when people are drinking, they might try to hug you or play rough. But you still get to say no. Even if it's Uncle [name] or someone else in the family, you can say 'no thank you' and walk away."

3. STAY WHERE PEOPLE CAN SEE YOU

"Stay in common areas where other people are around."

4. IF SOMEONE OFFERS YOU ALCOHOL

"Say 'no thanks, I'm good' and walk away. You don't need to give a reason. If they keep pushing, come tell me."

5. THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE POLITE IF SOMETHING FEELS WRONG

"If someone is acting in a way that makes you uncomfortable – even if they're family – you don't have to stay there to be nice. Come find me."

6. WHAT "TOO DRUNK" LOOKS LIKE

"If someone is stumbling, talking in a way that's hard to understand, or acting really different – keep some distance and stay near me or [safe adult]."

BEFORE PURIM, POINT OUT:

- Where you'll be during the seudah
- Who else is a safe person to go to
- Where they can go if they need a quiet break
- Remind them: Stay where you can see me or [safe person]