

TALKING TO YOUR HIGH SCHOOLER ABOUT PURIM

Guide for teens ages 15-18

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR:
This is for parents of teens ages 15-18 who need real conversations to navigate Purim.

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

Some parents have said:

"My teenager is getting older and adults might offer them a drink - whether they're with me or not. I want to prepare them for how to handle it."

AT THIS AGE, YOUR TEENS MIGHT NEED:

- **Permission:** To make different choices than their friends
- **Honest conversation:** Not "don't drink" but "here's how to think about this"
- **Tools they'll actually use:** Real phrases that work with peers and adults
- **Your trust:** That they can make good decisions
- **A safety plan:** What to do if something goes wrong

SAMPLE CONVERSATION STARTER

"I want to talk about Purim. You're at an age where someone might offer you a drink - whether you're with me or at a seudah on your own. I want to make sure you know how to handle it. Can we talk through that?"

WHAT WILL YOUR TEEN BE FACING THIS PURIM?

- Going to seudahs with the family (you'll be there)
- Going to seudahs with friends (without you)
- Mix of both - some with family, some without
- Adults might offer them alcohol
- Peers might be drinking
- Situations where they need to make their own call

WHAT THEY NEED FROM THIS CONVERSATION:

- Permission to make their own choice (including saying no)
- Language that works with both adults and peers
- A way to handle offers - whether you're there or not
- Boundaries about safety

HAVING THE CONVERSATION

START BY ACKNOWLEDGING REALITY:

"You're at an age where you might be offered alcohol on Purim - either by adults who think you're old enough, or by friends. I'm not going to pretend that won't happen."

STATE YOUR POSITION CLEARLY:

"Here's where I stand:

- I'd prefer you didn't drink at all."*
- If you're going to drink, I need you to be smart about it."*
- I trust you to make your own decision, but I need you safe."*

Whatever you choose, you want to know your child is safe and has a plan.

GIVE THEM TOOLS:

If they don't want to drink:

"You don't owe anyone an explanation, you can say:

- 'I'm good, thank you'*
- 'Not for me'*
- 'I'll pass'*

You don't need a reason. Just be confident about it."

SET NON-NEGOTIABLES:

"Here's what I need from you, no matter what:

- Don't get in a car with anyone who's been drinking*
- Stay with your group - don't go off alone*
- Have a way to reach me if you need me*
- Come home by [time]"*

GIVE THEM AN OUT:

"If you're somewhere and things feel wrong, unsafe, or just off - you can always call me. Say you're not feeling well, say we had an emergency, whatever you need. I'll come get you, no questions asked."

LET THEM SHARE:

"Does that seem fair? What are you thinking about Purim this year?"

LET'S ALL STAY SAFE THIS PURIM:

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

1. NO DRIVING WITH ANYONE WHO'S BEEN DRINKING

"If your ride has been drinking - even if they seem fine - you don't get in that car. Call me. Text me. I don't care what time it is."

2. STAY WITH YOUR GROUP

"Don't go off alone, and don't let your friends go off alone. Stay in groups, especially if alcohol is involved."

3. YOUR BODY IS YOURS

"If someone is drunk and getting too close, too touchy, or acting inappropriately - you can leave. You don't have to be polite. Walk away and find a safe person."

4. WATCH YOUR DRINK

"If you are drinking - don't leave drinks unattended. Don't take drinks from people you don't know well. If you put something down and walk away, get a new one."

5. CHECK IN

Agree on a time they'll let you know they're okay:

Check-in time: _____

How they'll reach you: _____

6. THE CODE PHRASE

If they need you immediately, what will they say?

Code phrase: _____

"If you use this phrase, I know to come right away. No questions, no judgment."

WHAT TO SAY IN THE MOMENT

WHEN AN ADULT OFFERS YOU A DRINK:

"Thanks, but I'm good." or "Not for me, but thank you."

WHEN A FRIEND SAYS "EVERYONE'S DOING IT":

"Cool, you do you. I'm good." or "Nah, not feeling it."

WHEN SOMEONE WON'T DROP IT:

"I said no. Stop asking." (Then walk away)

WHEN YOU NEED TO LEAVE A SITUATION:

- *Text me the code phrase*
- *Say "I'm not feeling great, I'm heading out"*
- *Just leave - you don't owe an explanation*

IF A FRIEND IS IN TROUBLE:

Don't try to handle it alone call Parent/Hatzalah/911

IF YOU'RE BEING PRESSURED INTO SOMETHING UNSAFE:

"I'm leaving. You coming?" (to a friend)

Then get out and call for help

FOR OLDER TEENS (17-18)

IF THEY'RE DRIVING:

"If you drink anything - even one drink - you're not driving. Period. Call me for a ride. I don't care what happened to your car, we'll figure it out tomorrow."

IF THEY'RE THE SOBER ONE:

"Thank you for being the responsible one. That takes guts. But you're not responsible for managing drunk people. If someone's too far gone, call their parent or me. Don't try to handle it yourself."

IF THEY'RE GOING TO BE OUT LATE:

Agree on:

What time they'll be home: _____

How they'll get home: _____

What happens if plans change: _____