

TALKING TO YOUR ELEMENTARY-AGE KIDS ABOUT PURIM

Guide for children ages 5-10

WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR:
This is for parents of kids ages 5-10 who want to prepare them for what they might see or hear on Purim.

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

Some parents have said:

"My child is going to see adults acting weird, and I don't want them scared or confused. I want them to understand it's part of Purim without thinking drunk behavior is normal."

WHAT YOUR KID NEEDS TO HEAR

At this age, they need:

- **Context:** "On Purim, some adults drink wine as part of the mitzvah"
- **Reassurance:** "The adults are still safe, just acting different"
- **Permission to leave:** "If you feel uncomfortable, you can find me"
- **A safe adult:** "If you can't find me, go to [name]"

SAMPLE CONVERSATION STARTER

"On Purim, you might see grown-ups acting sillier than normal. Some adults drink wine or other drinks that change how they act for a little while. They might be louder, sleepier, or act a little funny. It's part of how they celebrate. Everyone is safe, and if anything feels weird or off to you, come find me."

LET'S ALL STAY SAFE THIS PURIM:

Here are some suggested guidelines to talk to your kids about

1. THEY CAN ALWAYS COME TO YOU

"If anything feels weird, uncomfortable, or scary – even if you're not sure why – come find me right away. You won't be in trouble."

2. THEY CAN SAY NO TO ANYONE

"If someone who's been drinking wants to pick you up, hug you, play rough, or talk to you and it doesn't feel right – you can say 'no thank you' and walk away. Even if it's someone you know. Your body is yours."

3. STAY WHERE PEOPLE CAN SEE YOU

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

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

"If someone is acting in a way that makes you uncomfortable, you don't have to stay there to be nice. You can come and find me. I will never be mad at you for walking away, even in the middle of a conversation with an adult."

5. WHAT "TOO DRUNK" LOOKS LIKE

Keep it simple: "If someone is stumbling, talking in a way you can't understand, or seems really confused – keep your distance and come tell me."

6. WHERE TO GO IF THEY CAN'T FIND YOU

Who's your backup safe person if you're not immediately available?

Write their name: _____

Tell your kid: "If you need me and can't find me right away, go to [person]. They'll help you find me or help you themselves."

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]

PRACTICE WITH THEM:

“What do you do if someone wants you to go in a room alone with them?”

“I say no and come tell you”

“What do you do if someone offers you a drink?”

“I say I’ll ask my parent”

“What do you do if [name] wants to pick you up and you don’t want to?”

“I say no thank you and walk away”

“What do you do if something feels weird?”

“I come find you right away”

AFTER PURIM CHECK-IN:

Ask your child:

- “Did anyone do or say anything that felt weird or uncomfortable?”
- “Did anything happen that you’re not sure if you should tell me?”

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]

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: _____