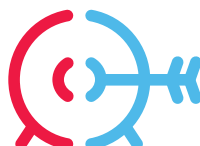


Practical ways parents can protect their children from AOD harms.

There are many ways a parent can help protect their child from the harms of alcohol and other drugs (AOD), starting from a young age. It's never too late to create an environment that provides protective factors and prevents or delays your child's uptake of AOD.

1. Delay the introduction of alcohol

- Delay your child's first alcoholic drink for as long as possible
- Avoid providing under 18s with alcohol of any amount, even sips



2. Role model low-risk drinking

- Avoid saying you 'need' or 'deserve' a drink and build some alcohol-free days into your week
- Follow the Australian alcohol guidelines – no more than four standard drinks a day, and no more than 10 standard drinks in a week
- Find healthy ways to manage stress like exercising, listening to music or streaming a show

3. Build and maintain a healthy relationship with your child

- Support them in pursuing their interests and in dealing with problems
- Show an interest in them and be involved in their life
- Work to create open communication between you and your child
- Build their trust by being consistent in following through on promises and enforcing rules
- Regularly demonstrate that you care about them and tell them that you love them

4. Establish family rules

- Talk about boundaries, expectations, and consequences
- Establish rules for your children before they're exposed to situations involving alcohol
- Establish rules regarding alcohol for when your child is at home unsupervised, alone or with friends
- Establish realistic consequences for when family rules are broken



5. Monitor your child

- Stay informed about your child's schedule, activities, physical whereabouts and friends
- Help your children identify and choose good friends, and help them become a good friend
- Build a support network with other parents by sharing your rules with them and plan opportunities for alcohol and drug-free activities



Practical ways parents can protect young people from AOD harms.

6. Get involved with supervised activities

- Encourage participation in supervised activities such as sport, music or drama
- Share activities with your child by getting involved and participating together

7. Talk about alcohol and other drugs

- Have open conversations about alcohol and other drugs with your child
- Conversations should aim to address a range of personal and social skills (e.g. decision-making and refusal skills)

8. Support school connectedness and attendance

- Speak with your child about the importance of attending school every day, and establish positive attendance habits early
- Actively monitor your child's school attendance
- Ask about and help with homework
- Get involved in the school community, e.g. volunteer on a committee, help in the classroom, attend events
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to them to find out why

9. Build media literacy

- Talk with your child about alcohol advertising and support them to identify some of the advertising practices used by alcohol companies, and how they may be targeting them
- Check how media literacy is taught at your child's school
- Report inappropriate content and/or make an official complaint



Here are some ways to get involved in your child's life:

- Regularly spend one-on-one time giving them your undivided attention
- Try establishing a regular weekly routine for doing something special with your child
- Find ways for your child to be involved in family life, like doing chores or caring for siblings
- Engage in activities together as a family on a regular basis
- Try to include your child's friends in family activities.

