

# Alcohol Use: A High Risk Behavior

Chapter 25 Lesson 1

# What is Alcohol

- **Ethanol**- *the type of alcohol found in alcoholic beverages.*
- Ethanol can be made synthetically or naturally through fermentation of fruits, vegetables, or grains.
- **Fermentation**- *the chemical action of yeast on sugars.*
- Alcohol is a depressant, causing the central nervous system to slow down.
- At some point during the consumption of alcohol, intoxication sets in.
- **Intoxication**- *physical and mental impairment resulting from the use of alcohol.* This can range from an inability to walk to unconsciousness.

# Alcohol and Teens

- According to the Centers for disease control survey, 80% of teens nationwide have had at least one alcoholic drink during their lifetime.
- At any age alcohol use can become a high risk behavior that affects the lives of themselves and others around them.
- Half of all teens who die each year die as a result of alcohol or other drug use.
- Alcohol is a factor in many unplanned pregnancies as well as STD's, rapes, dating violence, suicides, and homicides.
- Nearly 5 million problem drinkers in this country are between the ages of 14 and 17.



# Why Young People Drink

- Teenagers claim they drink to:
- Escape pressures or problems
- Feel better or get over being sad or lonely
- Deal with stress and relax
- Feel more confident in social situations
- For excitement
- Because their friends are doing it
- To deal with boredom
- To get away with something they're not supposed to
- To fit in

# Factors That Affect Teen Alcohol Use

- Friends are often an important, unconscious influence on a teenagers choice to drink.
- Parents who drink when socializing or having problems may lead to teen use to do the same.
- Advertisers spend over \$1 billion dollars a year promoting alcoholic beverages. Many of these ads are aimed at a teen audience and include:
  - Young, attractive, handsome, fit, healthy looking people
  - A party-like atmosphere with upbeat music.
  - Problem- free drinking
  - Nothing about the risks of using the product.

# Effects of Advertising

- The hidden messages advertisers are sending through images is that alcohol is an aid to successful, romantic, and problem-free relationships, working situations, and recreational opportunities.
- Most sporting events these days have liquor or beer sponsors.
- One of the most effective advertising gimmicks is having a consumer buy products with the name of a company on them. T-shirts and hats that display alcohol are free advertising for the company providing the shirt.



# You and Your Decisions About Drinking

- Underage use of alcohol is illegal, unsafe, and unhealthy.
- Be sure to look at the negative consequences associated with underage use of alcohol. The negative consequences will surely outweigh any potential benefit.
- Drinking is not a way to feel a sense of belonging, love, or important.
- Be a smart consumer!