

**While these conversations may be difficult,** it is critical that your students are hearing this information. Here are some tips for having conversations like this and helping your student take them seriously:

**Have a conversation, not a lecture.** Let your student talk. Listen to what they have to say. If only one person is talking, it is not a conversation.

**Set aside time.** Make sure when you start these conversations there is ample time to discuss everything. They don't have to take place in one sitting. It is okay to only talk about parts of these issues at a time and continue the conversation later.

**Don't be afraid to share your own experiences-positive or negative.** It will be easier for the student to be honest if you are. This isn't saying you have to share everything, but let them know that you do understand what they may be going through. However, be sure not to glamorize the use of alcohol and drugs.

**Ask them questions.** It's okay to ask what they are worried about concerning these topics because you can better support them if you know how they feel.

**Be a role model.** Show your student what healthy drinking looks like. They will look to you for guidance more than you think.

# CREATING CONVERSATION

3 CRITICAL TALKS  
FOR  
PARENTS &  
COLLEGE  
STUDENTS

To find resources on your campus, visit  
[pip.missouri.edu/resources](http://pip.missouri.edu/resources)



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# TOPIC 1: ALCOHOL USE AND ABUSE

## Why talk about this?

**Physical Consequences:** Many students don't know **standard drink sizes** and drink more than intended, leading to a host of negative consequences including, but not limited to vomiting, hangovers, blackouts and alcohol poisoning.

**Academic Consequences:** Partying during the week and drinking irresponsibly can lead to missing classes, falling behind, and lower grades overall.

**Legal Consequences:** In Missouri, there are many laws and campus policies that regulate the use of alcohol. Violating these laws/policies could result in prosecution in the courts as well as through campus judicial offices, which could impose a student suspension or probation from campus.

**Future Career Consequences:** It could prove difficult for students to find employment or admittance into graduate and professional programs, such as medical or law school because of background checks that could reveal drug or alcohol related offenses.

## Things to Say to Your Student

*Remind your student that not everyone drinks in college. About 1/4 of Missouri college students don't drink!\* There are plenty of ways to have fun in college that don't include alcohol. Encourage your student to get involved in extracurricular activities and organizations!*

*Remind your student to be safe if they choose to drink. Remind your student it is illegal to drink while under the age of 21 in Missouri. Make sure your student understands the future implications of MIPs, DWIs, and other alcohol related consequences. Talk to your student about avoiding drinking to get drunk, they can still socialize without getting wasted.*

*Remind your student to keep their friends safe. 70% of Missouri college students would call 911 or take a friend to the hospital if they thought they had alcohol poisoning. Most Missouri college students use a designated driver. Encourage your student to have at least one sober friend when going out.*

*Share your expectations with your student. Make your student aware of needing to balance academic work and social life. Reiterate your expectations about choices and behavior even while they are away at college. Hold them accountable for these expectations. Keep talking, they are still listening.*

**One Drink**

BEER

12oz.

WINE

5oz.

LIQUOR

1oz.

# TOPIC 2: MENTAL HEALTH

## Why talk about this?

**Stress will likely be something your student faces while at college.** Proper time management can help relieve some stress, but figuring out stress-relief techniques is important for all students.

## Things to Say to Your Student

*It is okay to get help from a counselor or other entity on campus to work through issues. Encourage your student to visit the campus mental health services or counseling center. Remain supportive and check in with your student regularly.*

# TOPIC 3: DRUGS

## Why talk about this?

As with alcohol, there are physical, academic, legal, and future career consequences. Drugs are something your student may be confronted with in the college environment and it is best to help them be prepared.

## Things to Say to Your Student

*86% of Missouri college students believe the typical student uses marijuana, when in reality 77% do not! Let your student know about the pressures and the consequences that come with marijuana use.*

*Prescription drug misuse, addiction, and overdose are growing issues on college campuses. Talk to your student about keeping medications safe and out of sight and properly dispose of any unused medication in your home.*

*Also, tell them about what the physical, mental, and future consequences could be if they chose to take prescription drugs not prescribed to them.*