



Should teen be allowed to drink at home?



By Robert Wallace

Syndicated advice columnist 22 hrs ago

Dear Dr. Wallace:

My husband and I are aware that teens experiment with all types of alcohol when they are on dates, at parties or anywhere else where teens congregate. This type of alcohol consumption is unacceptable because of peer pressure to “have one and have fun.” Teens who consume alcohol are not really aware of the problems that can occur. These can include unwanted sexual contact and driving drunk.

My husband wants to teach our 17-year-old daughter how to drink responsibly at home. My husband and I enjoy a cocktail each evening after dinner and sometimes a glass or two of wine at dinner. My husband wants to allow our daughter to have a small sampling of the wine we drink, gradually building her tolerance to a safe level. I understand where he’s coming from, but I don’t think encouraging our daughter to consume alcohol is advisable at her age.

I’ve been reading your teen column for quite some time, and I’m positive that you and I have the same philosophy on underage “responsible” drinking. If you agree with me, I’ll use your column for assistance in getting my husband to change his mind. If you don’t agree with me, please toss my request in the trash. Thanks!

— *Mother, Tulsa, Oklahoma*

Dear Mother: I have been writing this column for quite some time, and my view on teenage drinking has never wavered! It doesn’t matter where they drink or why they drink. I’m against teens drinking alcohol of any kind — at home or anywhere else.

Dear Dr. Wallace: I'm a girl who is 16 and my brother is 15, and we are good friends. My mom is nice to me, but she spends more time pleasing her son. My dad is nice to my brother, but he is stricter with my brother than he is with me.

My brother and I agreed that favoritism takes place, and we both take advantage of it. We each have a parent who goes easier on us than the other sibling. Would you say the mother-son and father-daughter thing happens in most families?

— *Favorite,*

via email

Dear Favorite: Good question. There are probably fault lines in every family to some extent. A parent's affection may seem to flow easier from one child to another, and ditto for their discipline. And it may be, if one were to look for a pattern, that dads are generally tougher on their sons, and moms are tougher on their daughters.

It is my experience, however, that in most families this doesn't develop into outright favoritism. Most parents love all their children equally, even if they sometimes show it to their children in different ways.

Dear Teens: The average teen spends more than 20 hours every week of every year watching television, videos online or videos on their cellphones. Teens are an extremely important audience for advertisers, so they have a huge influence on family spending.

But according to the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Johns Hopkins University, young Americans are exposed to more commercials for alcohol than for sneakers or jeans — sad, but true. Don't be swayed by all you see!

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