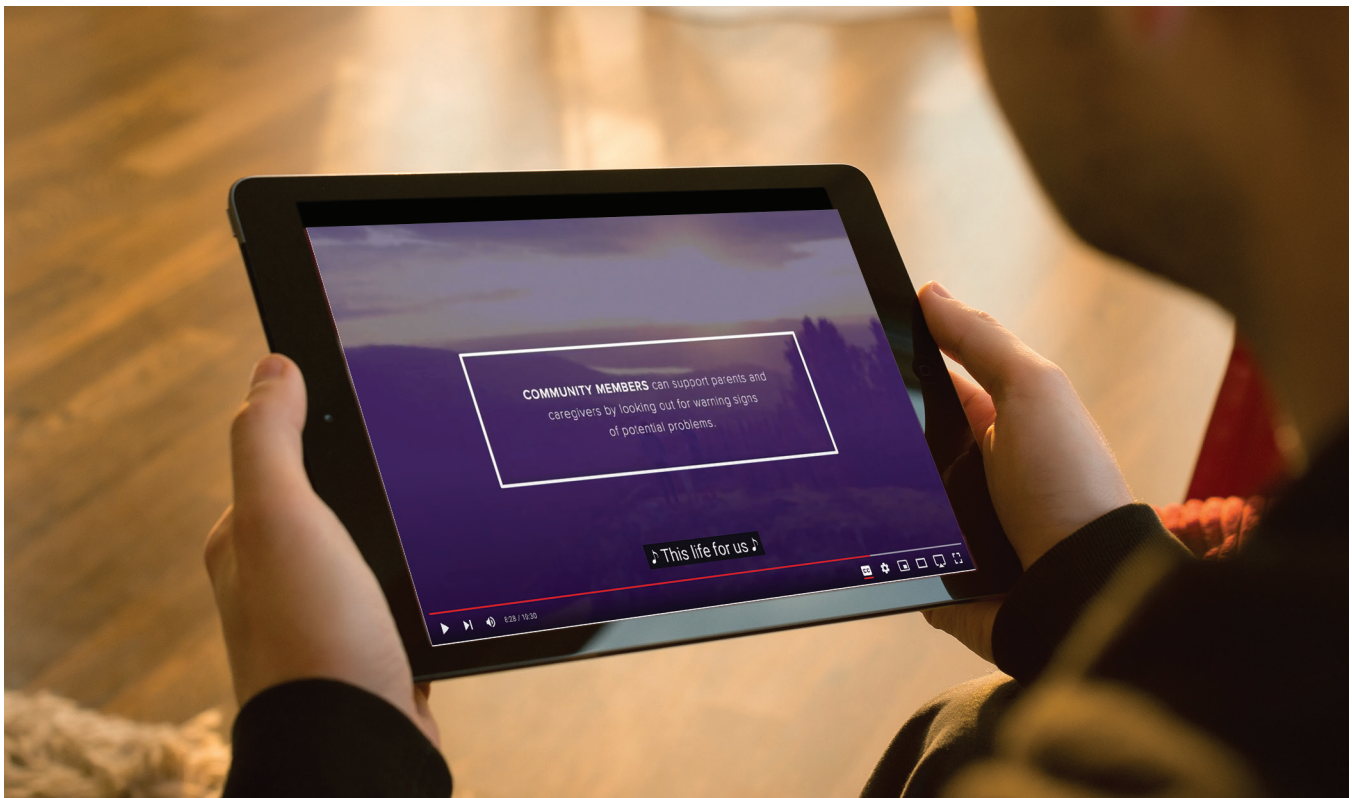




“This Life for Us”

Discussion Starter Video Guide

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



Purpose

This guide serves as a supplement to “This Life for Us,” a 10-minute discussion starter video from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) “Talk. They Hear You.”® campaign. The video aims to help parents and caregivers better understand and harness the power of the people and resources in their communities to prevent underage drinking and other drug use. Among its key messages is that *strengthening communities builds resilience and creates hope*. It also reinforces the important role community members can play in a child’s life and how we all can step up to be a community for others. Specifically, the video highlights how your community—your home, neighborhood, school, workplace, faith community, social groups, arts organizations, athletic teams, etc.—is a valuable resource for support that can help improve the health, wellness, and wellbeing of young people.

About the Campaign

“Talk. They Hear You.” is a national substance use prevention campaign that helps parents and caregivers, educators, and community members get informed, be prepared, and take action. In particular, the campaign aims to:

- Increase awareness of the prevalence and risks of underage drinking and other substance use;
- Provide knowledge, skills, and confidence to prevent underage drinking and other substance use; and
- Increase actions to prevent underage drinking and other substance use.

Discussion Starter Video Series

The “Talk. They Hear You.” [Discussion Starter Videos](#) feature specific content to engage all three of the campaign’s key audiences: (1) parents and caregivers; (2) educators; and (3) community members. This content highlights the important role each audience can play in the prevention and reduction of underage drinking and other drug use. Here’s more information about the full video series:

- **[Parent-and Caregiver-Focused Discussion Starter Video & Guide](#):** This 5-minute video focuses on the importance of parents and caregivers talking with their children early and often about the risks and dangers of underage drinking. It highlights parent-to-parent and parent-to-child conversations to help inspire parents and caregivers to talk with their kids about avoiding alcohol and empower them to make good choices.
- **[Educator-Focused Discussion Starter Video & Guide](#):** This 9-minute video focuses on the importance of student assistance professionals, school leaders, and families working together to support the needs of students who may be struggling with substance use, mental health challenges, or school-related issues. It highlights educator-to-educator, educator-to-student, and educator-to-family conversations to encourage more communication about alcohol and other drugs and to increase awareness of the important role student assistance teams play in supporting students and providing assistance services when needed.
- **[Community Member-Focused Discussion Starter Video](#):** This 10-minute video focuses on the importance of parents and caregivers harnessing the power of the people and resources in their communities to prevent underage drinking and other drug use. It also raises awareness that strong communities build resilience and create hope. The video highlights community member-to-parent and community member-to-child conversations to reinforce the critical role community members can play in supporting the health, wellness, and wellbeing of youth and how people can step up to be a community for others.

How to Use This Discussion Starter Video in Your Community

This [discussion starter video](#) can be used in a variety of ways—such as during community events, “[Parents’ Night Out](#)” events, parent-teacher nights, or other parent/caregiver gatherings—and with different time frames to encourage the adults in your community to take a greater role in preventing underage drinking and other drug use. Below are just a few ideas on how you can use the video:



Community Meetings—You might periodically have faith-based meetings or meetings with other community groups—such as health departments, school districts, and law enforcement agencies—if you’re affiliated with a countywide or statewide prevention network. Use these meetings as forums to share resources and updates on your prevention efforts. Play the discussion starter video and mention the ways these partners could use the video in their own prevention efforts as outlined in this guide.



Train-the-Trainer Programs—Train community leaders, student assistance professionals and other school leaders, and parents and caregivers to help educate your community about the risks and dangers of underage drinking and other drug use. Consider distributing a toolkit with “Talk. They Hear You.” materials—such as [fact sheets and brochures](#) for parents and caregivers and digital resources such as the discussion starter video, “[What Parents Are Saying](#)” podcast, and campaign [mobile app](#).



“Parents’ Night Out” Events—Invite parents and caregivers, educators, and other community members who support youth to participate in interactive, facilitator-led [“Parents’ Night Out” educational sessions](#). Developed by the “Talk. They Hear You.” campaign, these sessions aim to inform parents and caregivers about the realities of underage drinking and other drug use, prepare them to talk with their kids about these issues, and motivate them to start these important conversations. Consider playing the discussion starter video before, during, or after your “Parents’ Night Out” events to prompt deeper discussion among participants. Comprehensive “Parents’ Night Out” toolkits are available for download and include all materials needed to implement either a single 1-hour program session or a series of three 1-hour program sessions. These toolkits contain everything you need to plan, prepare, and host events in your community.



Maturation/Graduation Ceremonies (From Elementary to Middle School)—As elementary school students graduate into the next phase of their education, some schools may offer a maturation ceremony for parents and caregivers to attend. It’s important to talk with youth early and often about the risks and dangers of underage drinking and other drug use. Prepare a presentation for the ceremony focused on prevention. Play the discussion starter video before your presentation to break the ice and get parents and caregivers thinking about what they can do to prevent their children from drinking alcohol and using other drugs.



Middle or High School Parent Orientation/Open House or Back-to-School Nights—If possible, work with school administrators to secure a brief time slot during an orientation or open house to talk with parents and caregivers about alcohol and other drug use prevention. For example, you could start by playing the discussion starter video and quickly refer participants to other helpful campaign resources—such as the [“Talking to Kids About Alcohol and Other Drugs: 5 Conversation Goals” fact sheet](#), [“What Parents Are Saying” podcast](#), and [“Talk. They Hear You” mobile app](#)—to encourage them to talk with their kids about substance use early and often. Share statistics on underage drinking and other drug use in your community from local law enforcement or health departments to show the importance of these topics. Don’t forget to close your remarks by directing participants to the campaign website at talktheyhearyou.samhsa.gov, where they can find more useful resources.



Parent–Teacher Association (PTA) Meetings—Coordinate with your school’s PTA to offer a brief update on community prevention activities. For instance, consider playing the discussion starter video and referencing additional products from the campaign—such as the [“Talk. They Hear You” mobile app](#) and [“Talking to Kids About Alcohol and Other Drugs: 5 Conversation Goals” fact sheet](#)—during your update. Reference local statistics on underage drinking and other drug use to emphasize the importance of talking with kids about these issues. Suggest a follow-up meeting that coincides with a relevant national observance, such as National Alcohol Awareness Month (April) or Youth Substance Use Prevention Month (October).



Interactive Talks—Use the discussion starter video to illustrate your talk in lieu of a presentation. Pause the video at strategic points for further discussion, including sharing local statistics on underage drinking and other drug use, and posing questions for parents and caregivers, educators, and other community members. Reference the next table in this guide for discussion suggestions based on different time markers. At the end of the conversation, direct participants to talktheyhearyou.samhsa.gov for more campaign resources.



Presentation Finale—Use the discussion starter video as a sign-off in your presentations to help you pivot to the Q&A. End by directing your audience to talktheyhearyou.samhsa.gov for more campaign resources.

Before Watching the Discussion Starter Video

In this video, we follow the stories of Isabella (Izzy), Daniel, and Alexandra (Alex). The video highlights how personal, financial, and family stressors can affect the health, wellness, and wellbeing of youth. Characters in the video demonstrate how involvement and support from community members, in addition to parental and educational guidance, can help prevent kids from drinking alcohol and using other drugs and help them better understand the risks and dangers of substance use. SAMHSA’s “Talk. They Hear You.” campaign aims to reduce underage drinking and other substance use by providing parents and caregivers, educators, and community members with the information and resources they need to help facilitate prevention discussions with young people.

Before playing the video in your presentation, prompt the audience to pay particular attention to the community members who step in to help. We also encourage you to pause the video at various points to help facilitate discussions among the audience members.

In Preparation for Your Presentation



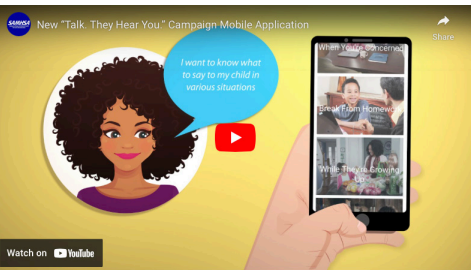

Below are ideas for how you can use the video to encourage conversation during your presentation. Pause the video at any of the time intervals to encourage discussion among the audience members. Feel free to use any combination of the discussion starter ideas outlined below in the *Discussion Starters* column and highlight the campaign resources in the *“Talk. They Hear You.” Resources* column that fit your presentation best. You may also use the video with a traditional slideshow by pausing the video at strategic points and highlighting campaign resources from the *“Talk. They Hear You.” Resources* column.

Need to find relevant statistics on underage drinking and other drug use?

Check with law enforcement and health agencies in your community. SAMHSA also provides statistics on the prevalence of underage drinking and other substance use.

Want to know how your state regulates underage drinking?

Download and read SAMHSA’s [“Learn the Law: Preventing and Reducing Underage Drinking” series](#) to learn more about how your state regulates underage drinking as compared with other states.

Video Time	Discussion Starters	"Talk. They Hear You." Resources*
1:29	<p>Discuss how behavior can be learned when children see their parents, caregivers, or other adults in their lives drinking alcohol or using other drugs. Children with parents or caregivers who have a history of alcohol or other drug use are more likely to use substances early in life because of genetics and other environmental factors. Be sure to share local and national statistics on underage drinking and other drug use.</p>	<p>"Talking to Kids About Alcohol and Other Drugs: 5 Conversation Goals" fact sheet</p> 
4:38	<p>Discuss how youth living in high-stress situations may seek out alcohol or other drugs to escape their thoughts and emotions. Teens may also experience peer pressure and bullying from friends and other peers who drink alcohol or use other drugs. How can your child work through tough emotions and situations in a healthy manner? Brainstorm ways to help them manage their emotions and peer pressure with other audience members.</p> <p>[If there are young people in the audience, you can use this section to ask them to share their thoughts and feelings about alcohol and other drug use or about how adults in their lives can support them or their friends in staying substance-free.]</p>	<p>"What Parents Are Saying" podcast</p> 
4:50	<p>First, ask the audience members what they think happened to Izzy after she left the restaurant. She may have gone to her friend's house to drink alcohol or home to do homework.</p> <p>Second, ask the audience members how they would help prepare kids for a difficult situation like this. Frame discussions around practicing how kids can say "no" to alcohol and other drugs or establishing a code word they can use to let their parents or caregivers know they need help.</p>	<p>"Talk. They Hear You" mobile app</p> 
7:39	<p>Children who feel unheard or misunderstood are more likely to turn to alcohol or other drugs as a way to cope. Share statistics on how different groups of people are being affected by underage drinking and other drug use.</p>	<p>TV, radio, and print public service announcements (PSAs)</p> 

7:54	This scene shows that community members can be great resources for youth. In the auto repair shop, Daniel and Ethan have a conversation that goes through the five conversation goals. Ask the audience members to pair up and role-play the five conversation goals with one another.	"Talking to Kids About Alcohol and Other Drugs: 5 Conversation Goals" fact sheet
8:58	Discuss how community members can work together to help keep kids safe by using a "see something, say something" approach. Share information on how early intervention helps decrease underage drinking and other drug use.	"Talking to Kids About Alcohol and Other Drugs: 5 Conversation Goals" fact sheet
10:30	Pause the video and discuss how members of the community were able to come together and positively affect kids in the neighborhood.	TV, radio, and print PSAs

"Talk. They Hear You." Resources

1. **[Screen4Success](#)**: This tool helps parents and caregivers better understand their kids' health, wellness, and wellbeing and find resources to help address their needs.
2. **["Talk. They Hear You." Mobile App](#)**: This app shows parents and caregivers how to turn everyday situations into opportunities to talk with their children about alcohol and other drugs and it equips them with the necessary skills, confidence, and knowledge to start and continue these conversations as their kids get older.
3. **["What Parents Are Saying" Podcast](#)**: This podcast features parents, caregivers, and experts engaging in important discussions about youth substance use and mental health issues..
4. **["Talk. They Hear You." PSAs](#)**: These TV, radio, and print PSAs show parents and caregivers how to turn everyday situations into opportunities to talk about underage drinking and other drug use.
5. **["Talking to Kids About Alcohol and Other Drugs: 5 Conversation Goals" Fact Sheet](#)**: This fact sheet includes goals, tips, and other information for parents and caregivers to use when talking with their kids about the risks and dangers of underage drinking and other drug use.
6. **["Talk. They Hear You." Materials on the SAMHSA Store](#)**: Download and order free campaign materials online from the SAMHSA Store.

Other SAMHSA Resources

1. **[StopAlcoholAbuse.gov Website](#)**: This website provides the latest research and resources to support underage drinking prevention and related issues.
2. **["Learn the Law: Preventing and Reducing Underage Drinking" Series](#)**: This series features legal policy summaries that track how states regulate underage drinking.
3. **["Implementing Community-Level Policies to Prevent Alcohol Misuse" Guide](#)**: This guide serves as a compendium of key policies for the prevention of alcohol misuse that have been identified as evidence-based by robust scientific literature.
4. **[Underage Drinking Prevention and Reduction Materials](#)**: These materials include fact sheets, guides, and data visualizations focused on underage drinking prevention and reduction.
5. **["Tips for Teens" Fact Sheet Series](#)**: This fact sheet series for teens provides facts about alcohol and other substances, describes short- and long-term effects, lists signs of use, and helps dispel common myths.

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