

# WE KNOW HOW TO HAVE FUN THE RIGHT WAY

## A Special Guide for Maine's Teenagers



- Myths & Facts
- Teen Driving
- Prom Safety
- Alcohol Poisoning
- Peer Pressure
- Cyber Bullying
- Laws & Penalties
- Sobering Puzzles



# MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

**MYTH:** Drinking alcohol has no risk.

**FACT:** Alcohol increases your risk for many deadly diseases. Drinking too much alcohol too quickly can lead to alcohol poisoning.

**MYTH:** Drunk driving is not that big of a problem.

**FACT:** Someone is killed by a drunk driver every hour. Approximately 11,000 people die in alcohol-related driving crashes every year.

**MYTH:** I can sober up with coffee or a cold shower.

**FACT:** Once you drink alcohol your body needs time to process it; absolutely nothing can make a person sober except time.

**MYTH:** Adults drink, so kids should be able to.

**FACT:** A young person's brain is still developing. Teens who drink at age 15 are five times more likely to become dependent on alcohol as adults than those who start after age 20.

**MYTH:** Beer and wine are safer than hard liquor.

**FACT:** Wrong. One 12-ounce bottle of beer or a 5-ounce glass of wine has as much alcohol as a 1.5-ounce shot of liquor.

**MYTH:** Teens are going to drink anyway, so I might as well drink at home where it's safe.

**FACT:** This is a dangerous belief because falls, injuries, assaults, and alcohol poisoning, among other negative experiences, can still happen at home. Besides, adults who furnish alcohol to minors can face criminal charges, so would you want your parents or your friends' parents to get in trouble?

**MYTH:** Teens should "practice" drinking in high school to learn their limits early so as not to go wild in college.

**FACT:** Heavy drinking in high school increases tolerance in a dangerous way and can prevent teens from developing the necessary skills to have an emotionally healthy adult life.

**MYTH:** Eating a meal before I drink will keep me sober.

**FACT:** Drinking on a full stomach will only delay the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream, not prevent it. Eating before you drink is not a defense against getting drunk.

**MYTH:** Everyone reacts to alcohol the same way.

**FACT:** Many factors affect a person's reaction to alcohol (body weight, metabolism, gender, etc.). In addition to that, a genetic predisposition to developing alcohol abuse problems may exist.

**MYTH:** Drinking will make me cool and well-liked.

**FACT:** Stumbling around and vomiting is not cool. Alcohol makes you say things you normally wouldn't say and do things you normally wouldn't do. If you get caught, you will end up in court and possibly face a fine and/or community service.

**MYTH:** It's not my business if my friends are drinking.

**FACT:** If you are a real friend, it is your business. Maybe they will listen to your advice or seek help if needed.

**MYTH:** I have a great fake ID card.

**FACT:** No, you don't. Law enforcement officers are trained to detect fake identification. They have seen it all. If you are caught with a fake ID, you will face criminal charges. If convicted, you may be fined, jailed, and have a criminal record.

**MYTH:** Alcohol gives you energy.

**FACT:** Alcohol is a depressant which means that it slows down your ability to think, speak, and move.

**MYTH:** People who drink too much only hurt themselves.

**FACT:** Alcoholics have families. Each of the 12 million problem drinkers in this country affect at least four other people.

**MYTH:** The worse thing that can happen is a hangover.

**FACT:** If you drink too much alcohol too fast, you can get alcohol poisoning which can kill you in only a few hours. That is worse than a hangover.

**MYTH:** An OUI arrest is not a big deal.

**FACT:** The average OUI arrest – after paying bail, fines, attorney fees, and insurance-premium increases – is about \$10,000. You will have your driver's license suspended and a criminal record.

**MYTH:** I can fool the breathalyzer test.

**FACT:** You can't beat the test.



# Driving A Motor Vehicle Is A Privilege - NOT A RIGHT!

- Motor vehicle crashes are the #1 cause of death for teenagers in the United States.
- Based on miles driven, teens are involved in 3 times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers. Always wear your seatbelt.
- Maine has a zero tolerance law; minors may not operate a vehicle after consuming any amount of alcohol.
- The total average cost of a first OUI offense can be over \$10,000.
- Driving at night presents different challenges than driving during the day – traffic fatalities at night are 3 times higher than during the day.
- Keep windows and headlights clean – dirty windows can increase glare at night and dirty headlights can reduce efficiency by as much as 90%.
- Do not look at oncoming headlights; staring directly into the headlights can blind you for up to 5 seconds. Focus on the right side of the road when approaching oncoming traffic.
- Do not tailgate, you never know what the driver in front of you is going to do.
- Stay alert to moose, deer and other wildlife activity.
- Maine law prohibits any person from operating a vehicle while engaged in text messaging.
- Drivers under age 18 many not use a cell phone or any handheld electronic device, including iPods/MP3 players, while operating a motor vehicle.
- Two out of three teens killed, as occupants of motor vehicles, were not wearing seat belts.
- If a driver is cited for any moving violation while on a provisional license, the license will be suspended.

**BUCKLE UP. NO EXCUSES!  
NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE!**

## MAINE LAWS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Furnishing liquor or imitation liquor to a minor may result in fines from \$500 to \$1,500 and/or up to 12 months in jail.

Possession of liquor or imitation liquor by a minor may result in fines up to \$600.

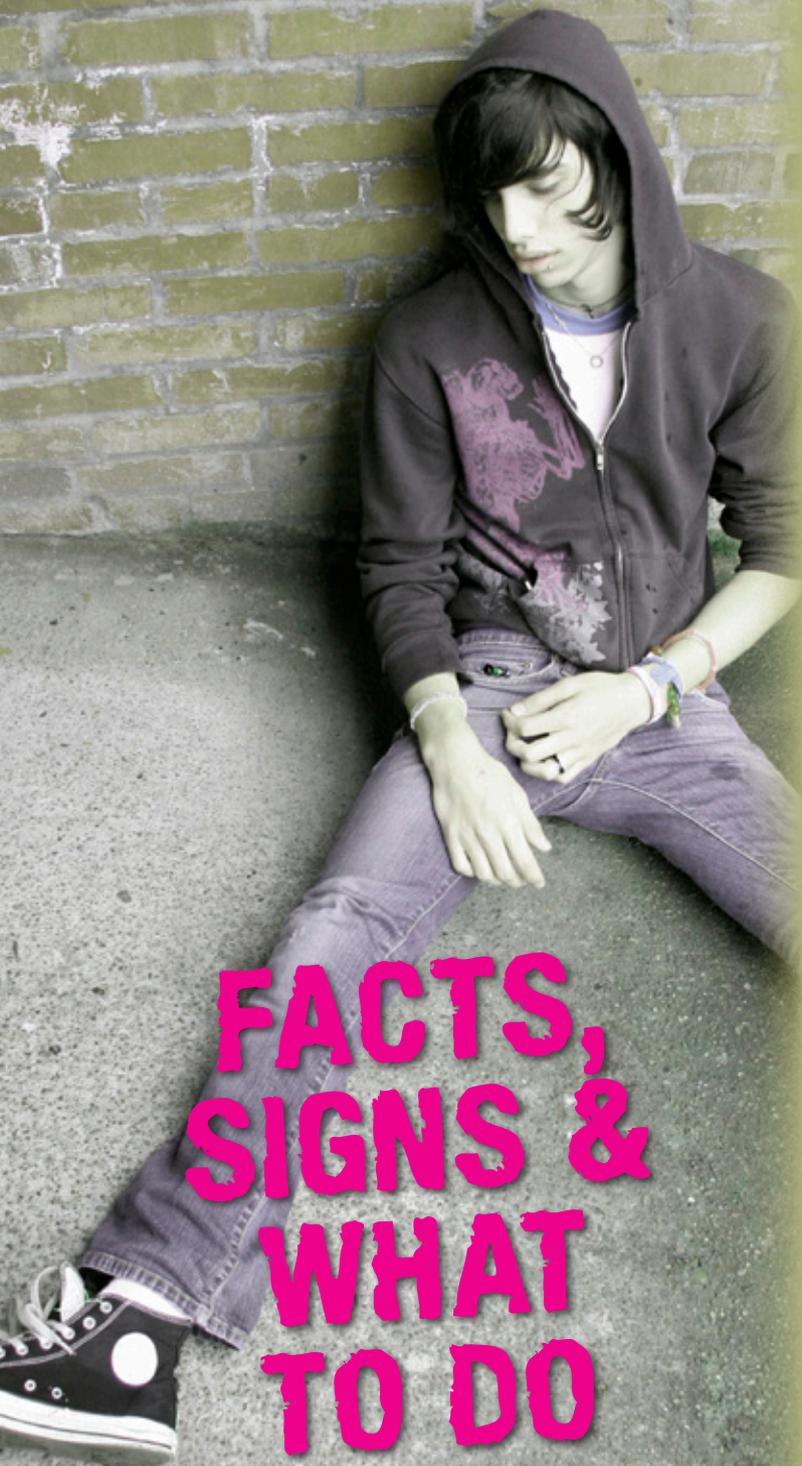
Transporting liquor or imitation liquor in a motor vehicle except in the scope of your employment or at the request of your parent may result in fines and a mandatory loss of your driver's license.

Displaying or possessing a revoked, suspended, mutilated, fictitious or fraudulently altered driver's license or identification card issued or represented to be issued by the State of Maine or any other state or province may result in fines up to \$1,000 and up to 6 months in jail.

Allowing a minor under a person's control or in a place under a person's control to possess or consume liquor or imitation liquor may result in fines up to \$2,000 and up to one year in jail.



# Alcohol Poisoning



**FACTS,  
SIGNS &  
WHAT  
TO DO**

## Facts About Alcohol Poisoning

While some people laugh at the behavior of others who are drunk, or think it's even funnier when they pass out, the bottom line is that alcohol poisoning can kill you.

Alcohol poisoning occurs when the alcohol content in a person's blood increases to the point where it slows down the normal functioning of the brain and how it communicates with other parts of the body.

For example, a fatal dose of alcohol can stop the brain's ability to control involuntary actions, such as breathing and the gag reflex (which prevents choking). With the absence of these vital functions, a drunk person who passes out can choke on their own vomit and die.

Did you know that a person's blood-alcohol content can continue to rise even while passed out? Even after a person stops drinking, alcohol continues to circulate through the body. Therefore, it is always dangerous to assume that when a drunk person passes out, he or she can just sleep it off.

## Signs of Alcohol Poisoning

A person experiencing alcohol poisoning may display the following signs and symptoms:

- Mental confusion, slurred speech, or unconsciousness
- Inability to be woken up
- Absence of reflexes
- Continuous or excessive vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow, shallow, or irregular breathing
- Low body temperature, paleness, or bluish skin color
- Unpredictable behavior

## What You Can Do to Help

If you believe that a person may be suffering from alcohol poisoning, you can help in the following ways:

- Call 911. Don't attempt to treat the person yourself.
- Know and recognize the danger signs and symptoms.
- Take action immediately.
- Be aware that a person who has passed out could die.
- Don't leave the person unattended.
- Try to keep the person awake.
- Sit the person up, or roll them on his/her side to prevent them from choking on vomit.
- Monitor the person's pulse and breathing until the ambulance arrives.
- If trained, perform CPR if necessary.
- Remember, a person with alcohol poisoning just can't sleep it off!



# PROM NIGHT

## SURVIVAL GUIDE

Prom is a special night and a time of celebration for high school students. Hundreds of dollars are spent on dresses, tuxedos, and corsages to create an evening to remember. Sadly, every year prom-goers are killed or seriously injured as a result of drinking or being involved in alcohol-related crashes. Studies indicate that over 59% of fatal alcohol-related car crashes occur during prom season. In addition to drinking and driving, accidents can happen when you are distracted – even for just a few seconds. Though partying may seem like a good way to ease your nerves, alcohol and drugs are a quick way to ruin your entire night. **Stay alcohol and drug free and YOU WON'T...**

**FORGET THE NIGHT.** Consuming alcohol can leave the evening a complete blur. Staying sober will allow you to remember the night for years to come.

**EMBARRASS YOUR DATE.** Picture this: your date is dancing alone, or with someone else, while you are sick and miserable in the bathroom. Not only will your date never forgive you for leaving him/her dateless, but your prom will pass you by.

**RUIN YOUR REPUTATION.** With parents and family friends present, you will be remembered as the one stumbling around and slurring your words. Wouldn't you rather be remembered for your gorgeous dress, sharp tux, or great dance moves?

**GET KICKED OUT.** If you cross paths with a teacher or get caught with alcohol, you're going to be axed. A prom night cut short due to a few drinks is a complete waste of all your preparations and the money you spent on your formalwear.

**GET SUSPENDED.** If school officials catch you drinking, you risk the chance of being suspended from school. You just went from prom royalty to being labeled as a troublemaker.

**GET IN TROUBLE.** Unless you're 21, it's illegal to purchase and possess alcohol. In addition to this, there's zero tolerance for underage drivers being under the influence. You may end up in trouble – not dancing with your friends.

### TIPS TO ENSURE YOU HAVE A SAFE, ENJOYABLE PROM NIGHT:

1. Always wear your seatbelt, and make sure everyone in the car is buckled up. Limit passengers to one additional couple. The more people in the car, the more distractions.
2. Concentrate and drive defensively. There are likely to be a lot of distracted drivers out on prom night.
3. Understand that the average vehicle weighs 3,000 pounds. It may be easy to drive, but it's still a dangerous hunk of metal.
4. NEVER allow someone who has been drinking to drive.
5. NEVER get in a car driven by someone who has been drinking.
6. Remember, tired drivers are dangerous, too. If you are barely awake, you shouldn't be behind the wheel.
7. Call home if you need a ride. No matter what time it is, your parents would rather pick you up before you put yourself in a dangerous situation.
8. Charge your cellular phone, and take it with you in case of an emergency.
9. Stay in groups, and take care of each other. Have a plan, and remind each other about responsible decision making and resisting peer pressure. Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable in a situation, leave immediately.
10. Stay in touch with your parents, and keep them informed of changes. Always know where you are and where you are going. Create a "secret phrase" with a parent or older sibling that will enable you to get out of bad situations.
11. Never accept any type of drink from someone you don't know, and don't leave your drink unattended.
12. Never carry fake or altered identification. This could delay medical attention or notification of your parents in the event that you are injured.



# PEER PRESSURE

## HOW TO FACE IT. HOW TO WIN IT.

How do you face peer pressure and win? And yes, you can win. Here are some tips and things to think about:

### 1. Prepare a mental script of how you will deal with uncomfortable situations.

Script out the reaction you want to have in a given situation, and play it over in your head. If you are prepared, you can handle just about anything.

### 2. Know where you stand on key issues like alcohol, drugs, and sex, and don't allow anybody to make you deviate from your position.

Don't be afraid to speak up and let others know your boundaries. Yeah, you may get teased at first, but most people respect the boundaries of others when they know what they are.

### 3. Don't be a bully. Making people feel bad is a terrible way to fit in.

Refuse to take part in anything designed to cause harm or distress to another person. You don't have to be angry or confrontational to get your point across. Usually, just simply standing up for what's right is enough to inspire others.

### 4. Be a leader, and think of yourself as a leader.

The more you see yourself in a leadership role, the more comfortable and confident you will feel asserting your own opinions and feelings.

### 5. When peer pressure kicks in, it's easy to get caught up in the moment.

When this happens, you sometimes forget that you will have to live with your choices. Step back, think, and focus on how you feel about what is happening. Are you comfortable with your choice? Always stand up for what you think is right. Stand your ground. Some people may not like you for going against the group, but doing the right thing is always rewarding. Peer pressure only works if you let it. If you refuse to let it intimidate you, it loses its power.

**Remember, peer pressure can only win if you let it!**

## DID YOU KNOW?

- 42% of kids have been bullied while online.
- 35% of kids have been threatened online.
- 21% of kids have received mean or threatening emails or other messages.
- 58% of kids admit that someone has said mean or hurtful things to them online.
- 53% of kids admit having said something hurtful to another person online.

## TIPS

**DON'T RESPOND.** If someone bullies you, remember that your reaction is usually exactly what the bully wants. It gives him or her power over you. Who wants to empower a bully?

**DON'T RETALIATE.** Getting back at a bully turns you into one and reinforces a bully's behavior. Help avoid this whole cycle of aggression.

**SAVE THE EVIDENCE.** The only good news about digital bullying is that the harassing messages can usually be captured, saved, and shown to someone who can help. You need to do this even if it's minor stuff in case things escalate.

**TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT.** You deserve backup. It's always good to involve a parent, but if you can't, a school counselor usually knows how to help. Sometimes both are needed. If you're really nervous about saying something, see if there's a way to report the incident anonymously at school.

**BLOCK THE BULLY.** If the harassment comes in the form of instant messages, texts, or profile comments, do yourself a favor: use preferences or privacy tools to block the person. If it's in instant chat, close the chat window.

**BE CIVIL.** Even if you don't like someone, it's a good idea to be decent and not sink to the other person's level. Also, research shows that gossiping about and trash talking others increases your risk of being bullied. Treat people the way you want to be treated.

**BE A FRIEND, NOT A BYSTANDER.** Forwarding mean messages empowers bullies and hurts victims even more. So does knowing about these messages and doing nothing to stop them. If you can, tell bullies to stop, or let them know harassment makes people look stupid and mean. It's time to let bullies know that abuse of fellow human beings is unacceptable. If you can't stop the bully, at least try to help the victim by reporting the behavior.

## REMEMBER:

Don't be a bully. How would you feel if someone harassed you? You know the old saying about walking a mile in someone's shoes. Even a few seconds of thinking about how another person might feel can put a big damper on aggression.

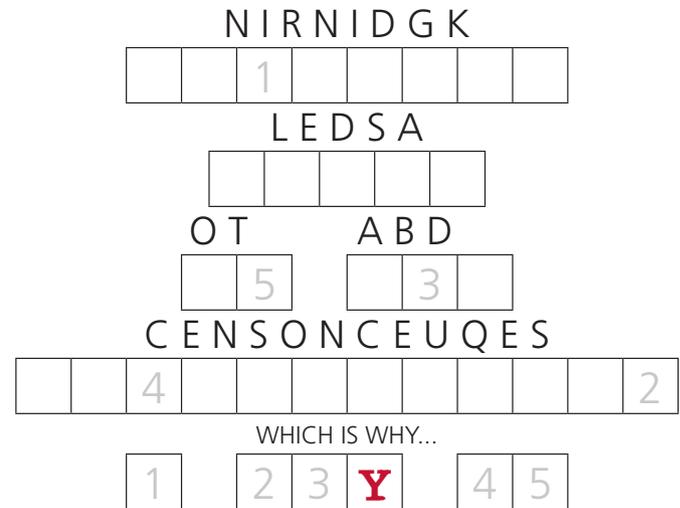
# Cyber-Bullying

Treat Others  
Like You Want  
to Be Treated



# THINK ABOUT IT!

ONLY SOBER MINDS CAN SOLVE THESE PUZZLES.



Our advice on how you can be a leader were on tiles that fell out of this puzzle. See if you can put them back using only the letters under each column. We'll give you some hints.

Unscramble these words and fill in the bottom row with the numbered blocks to find out what the smart kids know.

FALLEN TILES: Tell your friends that teens and alcohol do not mix. JUMBLE LETTERS: Drinking leads to bad consequences. I say no.

## IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR BRAIN

The younger a person starts using alcohol, the more likely an addiction will develop. Based on studies, **47% of those surveyed who started drinking before the age of 13 met the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their adult life**, while only 9% of those who started drinking at the age of 21 developed alcoholism.

**Alcohol impairs the brain's ability to process information, form conclusions, and solve problems.** The brain goes through dynamic changes at adolescence, and alcohol can seriously damage long- and short-term growth processes. The learning and memory centers of the adolescent brain are twice as vulnerable to alcohol as an adult brain. **Damage to the brain from alcohol use can be long-term and irreversible.**

**Brain activity during sleep is important for learning and for memory.** Since alcohol impairs sleep quality, the information you learned in school won't be correctly transferred from short-term to long-term memory during sleep.

## USE YOUR BRAIN. THINK ABOUT IT!

If you or someone you know needs help, you can find information on available resources 24 hours a day by dialing 2-1-1 (in Maine only) or search online at [www.211maine.org](http://www.211maine.org). **Help Starts Here.**



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& FINANCIAL SERVICES

