

# Things to Consider: **ALCOHOL & THE HOLIDAYS**

The holidays usually involve family time, games, movies, food, and possibly drinks. The holidays may involve less family members this year, but that doesn't necessarily mean less alcohol for some. Alcohol consumption has increased during the pandemic and when ABC stores were deemed essential it didn't help lower those rates (ABC News, September 29, 2020). Many people are still trying to figure out how to navigate our "new normal" since a global pandemic wasn't on our to-do list in 2020, but we encourage you to consider a few things during these trying times.

Questions to consider when drinking with your family:

1. What message am I sending if I drink in excess around my underage child?
2. Have I had conversations about responsible drinking with them?
3. Are the conversations I have about alcohol realistic?
4. Do my conversations with others reinforce alcohol use as a coping skill during stressful times?
5. What messages am I sending my underage child if I allow them to drink with me or another adult in the house?

Info to consider:

"One-third of Fairfax County students (33.7%) reported drinking alcohol at least once in their lifetime, ranging from 18.8% of eighth-grade students to half of twelfth-grade students (49.4%). One in seven students (15.2%) reported drinking alcohol in the past month, ranging from 4.5% of eighth-grade students to 27.7% of twelfth-grade students." (FCPS Youth Survey 2020)

"Female students reported higher rates of alcohol use in their lifetime (36.1% compared to 31.2% of male students), in the past month (17.1% and 13.1%, respectively), and binge drinking in the past two weeks (7.3% and 6.5%, respectively)" (FCPS Youth Survey 2020).

For general questions about the FCPS Substance Abuse Prevention Program, please contact the Office of Student Safety & Wellness at: (571) 423-4270 and be sure to follow us on Twitter at @FCPSSAPS.

For further Information & support:

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## **Sources & Resources**

Holiday Stress

Helpful Info to Quit Vaping

FCPS video on Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

Substance Abuse Prevention (Spanish)

FCPS Substance Abuse Prevention Program