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New campaign to help parents talk to younger children about the dangers of underage drinking

[“Talk. They Hear You.”](#) a new national public service announcement (PSA) campaign that empowers parents to talk to children as young as nine years old about the dangers of underage drinking was launched today by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The kickoff occurred in conjunction with SAMHSA’s 2013 National Prevention Week—an annual health observance dedicated to increasing awareness of, and action around, substance abuse and mental health issues.

SAMHSA’s latest report on underage drinking shows that more than a quarter of American youth engage in underage drinking. Although there has been progress in reducing the extent of underage drinking in recent years, particularly among those aged 17 and younger, the rates of underage drinking are still unacceptably high.

[“Talk. They Hear You.”](#) raises parents’ awareness about these issues and arms them with information they need to help them start a conversation about alcohol with their children before their children become teenagers.

“These young people are our future leaders—our future teachers, mayors, doctors, parents, and entertainers,” said SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde. “As our youth and young adults face challenges, we as a community, need to effectively communicate with them in every way possible about the risks of underage drinking so that they have the necessary tools to make healthy and informed choices.

“Talk. They Hear You.” features a series of TV, radio, and print [PSAs](#) in English and Spanish launching today. The PSAs show parents “seizing the moment” to talk with their children about alcohol such as while preparing dinner or doing chores together. By modeling behaviors through these PSAs, parents can see the many “natural” opportunities for initiating the conversation about alcohol with their children.

The strength of “Talk. They Hear You.” is in its diverse network of campaign partners that will help implement the campaign in local communities across the country.

Visit www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov for more tips and information.

For more information about SAMHSA visit: <http://www.samhsa.gov/>.

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The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA’s mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America’s communities.