



Cobb Underage Drinking Task Force

What parents need to know about spring break

- Be aware** – spring break is a time for some teens to hit beaches overcrowded with other teens, where drinking lots of alcohol is the featured activity.
- Know the risks** – underage drinking is not a harmless rite-of-passage. It contributes to the leading causes of preventable death, injuries, juvenile crime, etc. for adolescents.
- Plan ahead** – don't wait 'til your teen asks if he/she can go with friends to some "fun" destination. Talk often and early about your family expectations for appropriate spring break activities and destinations.
- Listen carefully** – if your teen presses hard about heading to a "party" spring break destination with friends - beware! It is highly likely that your teen is a current drinker and at high risk for experiencing some dangerous spring break incident, sure to involve alcohol.
- Supervise teens** - lack of parental or adult monitoring and supervision of youth behavior is a contributing factor in all the risks associated with underage drinking, whether during spring break or at any other time of year.
- Legal liability** - unsupervised teens, in huge numbers, head to "party" destinations each spring break. Parent chaperones, often just tagging along, need to know they are assuming legal responsibility for teens in their care and can be held liable for results of teens' misbehavior or for negligent parenting.
- Marketing forces** - alcohol and travel industries spend lots of promotional dollars on spring break packages. They advertise travel and drink "specials", sponsor wet T-shirt contests and drinking games, all with "youth appeal".
- Who's responsible** - underage drinking is an adult problem with youth consequences. Adults can keep youth safe from the dangerous consequences of underage drinking – it's not easy but it is up to adults!