



What to say to my children when we talk about/if they ask about:

Alcohol

Be prepared:

You are a parent/carer, not a medical or legal expert. You aren't expected to know everything. It's OK to check things and look things up but remember, some online sites aren't reliable. Our family hub has some reliable and trusted sites with more information to help you:

Scan here

<https://link.lsec.uk/family-hub>



Pick the time and place. A calm, quiet place where you won't be overheard or interrupted is best.



The facts, useful information and how to word things:

In this country the legal age to buy alcohol is 18.

At the age of 18, everyone has the choice to drink alcohol or not. (Some religions may not allow this.)

Our bodies are still growing up to the age of 18 so alcohol could be harmful.

Scientists and Doctors think alcohol is safer in small amounts each week - 14 units per week. Explain units if your child is ready - 6 pints of average strength beer or 10 small glasses of lower-strength wine.

The size of the drink is not a good guide to the amount of alcohol in it. Shots and spirits can have as much or more alcohol than pints.

Alcohol can be addictive.

Mixing alcohol and drugs or medicines can be harmful and mean medicines don't work.

Avoid suggesting alcohol use is a cure for stress. (There are healthier ways to deal with stress - the children will know some - reading, exercise, talking about it, relaxing.)

Avoid instilling fear - say - Drinking too much alcohol over a period of time can increase the risk of an alcohol related disease. Scare and shock tactics don't always work.

What skills should you talk about as well?

Our approach is that children are best armed with accurate facts and information from the programmes used in school and what you discuss with them. Alongside this, they need strategies and skills to say No if they need to. Visit our Family Hub to find out and reinforce the strategies your children have been taught during the Life Skills Programme.

These include:

- Dealing with stress and peer pressure.
- Communicating clearly when saying No.
- The MATES resistance strategies.
- Considering risk and consequence within our SKILL decision-making model.