

# 5 Strategies Young People Can Use to Avoid Risky Situations

“Having a strategy about how to avoid underage drinking & substance use can help children make better choices. Talk with your child about what they would do if faced with a decision to try alcohol or other substances.” - SAMHSA\*

**Below are the 5 strategies that young people can use to avoid risky situations, without losing any friends:**

## 1 Ask questions

Ask your friends questions so you have all the details, and know what you are getting yourself into. Asking questions will help you determine if it's the right situation for you, or if it's something you'd rather avoid.



### Examples:

*What are we going to do there?*  
*Will his/her parents be home?*  
*Who else is going?*

## 3 Identify the result

Point out the potential consequences of any risky behavior that your friends are planning to engage in.



### Examples — If I do that:

*I could be kicked off the team.*  
*I might lose my scholarship.*  
*I could get suspended.*

## 4 Suggest an alternative

Plan seems risky? Suggest an alternative to show them that there are other ways to have fun that don't come with the same risk.



### Examples:

*Why don't we play Minecraft instead?*  
*Let's order pizza and watch the Pats game.*

## 2 Name the risk

Put things in perspective by naming the behavior in which your friends are planning to engage.



### Examples:

*That's illegal...*  
*That's unhealthy...*  
*That seems risky...*

## 5 Leave the door open...

If they don't accept your offer, leave the door open & let your friends know that the offer still stands if they change their mind.



### Example:

*Okay. I'll be at home watching the game if you want to hang out.*

For more tips and tricks for parents, sign-up for the next session of Guiding Good Choices (GGC) Workshop by visiting:

<http://www.safeharborcohasset.org/guiding-good-choices-workshop/>



\*For more info about how to talk to your kids about underage substance use, visit the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website at: [www.samhsa.gov/](http://www.samhsa.gov/)