

February 2013



# prevention

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## Heart to Heart Conversations

### *The Importance of Talking with Your Children*



Sometimes being a kid is tough. And, if being a kid is tough, then being a parent in today's society is one of the hardest jobs around. Not only do parents need to meet the physical needs of their children, they also

need to manage their children on an emotional level and educate them about the issues they are prone to face throughout adolescence.

One of the best ways parents can do this is to keep the lines of communication open with their children. Believe it or not, kids still listen to their parents! In fact, kids usually listen to their parents more than anybody else, and that's including their friends. In a recent survey on underage drinking, teens reported that parental disapproval is the #1 reason they choose not to drink.

So, talk to your kids. Take time daily to talk about their interests and activities. Get to know your children by asking about their lives, hopes, fears and concerns. Ask about their friends. Stay involved with their education. Kids who make an effort to get good grades and are involved in school activities are far less likely to drink. Notice and compliment the good in your children. Try to be positive. When correcting behavior or giving consequences, make sure your children know that they are still loved.

Explain the real risks of underage drinking. Set clear rules about not drinking and encourage your kids to choose friends who support your no-alcohol rules. Let them know that you care about them and want what's best for them. Find ways to keep in touch with your kids when you aren't around, through a phone call, a text message, or a neighbor stopping by. Be sure that you know where your kids are, who they're with, and what they are doing.



Most of all, let your children know that you're always available to talk. If you don't have time to sit down for a conversation, let them help you with dinner or run errands together. Find the time to be with them so they can open up when they want. Listen with empathy to their concerns and try not to interrupt or overreact if you hear something you're not happy about. Repeating a phrase or two back as they talk lets them know they were heard. Remember to express your love for your children and enjoy your time together.

For more information and parenting tips and skills, please visit [parentsempowered.org](http://parentsempowered.org).



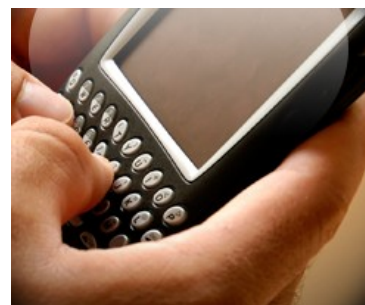
## DEADLY DISTRACTIONS



Each day, hundreds of Utahans get in their cars with the expectation to make it to their destinations safely. Usually, this expectation is a reality. Unfortunately, there are at times exceptions to that reality due to distracted driving. Being distracted while driving, even for just a moment, could have deadly consequences. In 2010 alone, it was estimated that there were about 4,300 crashes in Utah where the driver was distracted (Utah Department of Public Safety (UDPS), 2010). When we drive distracted, we are potentially risking the safety and ultimately the lives, of ourselves and others on the road.

Distracted driving is *any* activity that can divert a person's attention away from the primary task of driving (US Department of Transportation (USDOT), 2012). Distractions include: cell phones, eating, tending to children, talking to passengers, applying make-up, changing music, etc. We must never let something as miniscule or innocent as putting on make-up or talking on a cell phone take precedence over someone else's life. When we choose to let things distract us, we are choosing to take a huge risk, a risk that will never be worth it.

The Bear River Health Department encourages drivers to eliminate all distractions while behind the wheel. With everyone actively doing this, our roads will be much safer and each person can reach their destination safely. For more information, visit [www.brhd.org](http://www.brhd.org) or [www.distraction.gov](http://www.distraction.gov).



UPCOMING EVENT:

### Free Car Seat Check

Wednesday, February 13, 5-8pm  
Hillcrest Fire Department  
1244 East 1100 North in Logan

A limited quantity of car seats will be available for purchase upon eligibility. To make an appointment call 435-792-6510.

Don't forget we have free car seat clinics every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month (some exceptions apply) from 1:00-3:00pm at the Bear River Health Department (655 East 1300 North). Call 435-792-6510 to make an appointment.



## Heart Health:

Cardiovascular diseases are our nation's number one killer. To urge Americans to join in the battle against these diseases, February has been proclaimed "American Heart Month." In honor of American Heart Month, we'd like to pass along a few simple trips for a healthy heart.

- ♥ Get Active
- ♥ Eat Better
- ♥ Lose Weight
- ♥ Control Cholesterol
- ♥ Manage Blood Pressure
- ♥ Stop Smoking
- ♥ Reduce Blood Sugar



For more information, please visit [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org)