

Not a Game

My life is real, and so are the people in it.

Underage drinking can put me and the people I care about at risk.

I'm more likely to fight, get injured, or withdraw from people I care about if I drink alcohol. That can make it difficult to build trustworthy relationships with my parents, siblings, and friends. Plus, underage drinking can do damage to my brain- the very thing that allows me to think, breathe, move, speak and feel. It's just 3 pounds of gray-and-white matter that rests in my skull, and it is my own personal "mission control." My brain is especially vulnerable to damage from alcohol because it's still developing well into my 20s.

If I'm ever concerned about a friend who might need help choosing not to drink alcohol, I know I can talk to an adult you trust – like a parent, coach, teacher, or school counselor.

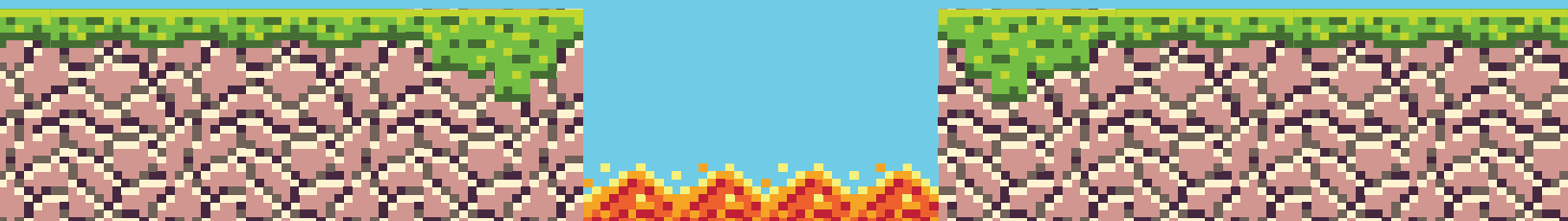
Words from the wise...

- "One of the lessons that I grew up with was to always stay true to yourself and never let what somebody else says distract you from your goals. And so when I hear about negative and false attacks, I really don't invest any energy in them, because I know who I am." – Michelle Obama
- "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader." – John Quincy Adams
- "The successful warrior is the average man, with laser-like focus." – Bruce Lee



NOT A GAME

THERE'S NO
PAUSE BUTTON
ON LIFE.



My life is always moving forward. Underage drinking can really ruin things! It affects my memory, my concentration, and my learning. I'm not letting alcohol get me off course like that.

If I ever feel pressure to drink alcohol, I remember these pointers...

1. My true friends share my beliefs about healthy living. I want people in my life who know I'm cool and smarter without alcohol.
2. Most teens don't drink! Even if it doesn't always appear this way, I have to remember the fact that the majority of teens in Illinois don't underage drink.
3. I can always crack a joke. If I'm ever in an uncomfortable situation, I know that I can use humor to get out of it.
4. I've got adults who care. If I ever need extra support or advice, I know there are adults I can count on - my parents, teachers, and coaches.

I HAD NO IDEA!

- My heart generates enough pressure as it pumps blood throughout my body to squirt blood up to 30 feet!
- It takes an average human body about twelve hours to digest food completely.
- A sneeze can travel with a speed of more than 100 miles per hour.



I only get one life. There are **NO** respawns.

I'm making my life count by making choices that move me forward, closer to my goals. Underage drinking makes it harder to think clearly and make decisions for myself. Alcohol can cause me to do things I wouldn't normally do...like fighting or withdrawing from friends. It can even make me say things I usually wouldn't say. That's not cool! I know I'm cool just the way I am. I've got big dreams ahead and major motivation to get me there.

You know what's also cool...

- There are 12 times more trees on the Earth than stars in the Milky Way.
- Cows and horses sleep standing up.
- Butterflies taste with their feet.
- If you feel like you can't get yourself out of a situation, turn to a trusted adult for help or advice.

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My winning
strategy is being
alcohol-free.



I know my life is real,

and so are the consequences of underage drinking. Like other drugs, alcohol can change my ability to think, speak and see things as they really are. Alcohol can lead to risky behavior that I wouldn't normally engage in, such as using other drugs or fighting. It can also increase my chances of injuries and accidents, which could put me in the emergency room. All of these behaviors put me and my relationships at risk.

Those risks aren't worth it. Winning in real life means making choices that set me up for success. That's why I'm deciding not to drink alcohol. It's the safe choice, and it's my choice.

Not a Game

I'm winning
in real life.

I know that winning in real life means making choices that set me up for success... like deciding not to drink underage. Alcohol can mess with my memory, coordination, and decision-making. I need all of those things to stay sharp and reach my goals.

Just like winning a game takes practice, I know that winning in real life takes practice and preparation.

- *My mom would be disappointed in me*
- *I have plans early in the next morning*
- *I'd be suspended from the team*
- *I have a test to study for*
- *I'm having enough fun without alcohol*
- *I'm just not into drinking*

**Fun at-home
& alcohol-free
activities...**

- Make a time capsule
- Create a baking challenge
- Have a virtual game night
- Host a Tie-Dye party

That's why I've already thought of reasons to say "no" to alcohol without looking uncool.



That means I'm looking out for my brain and my body. I know there are a lot of opinions and messages out there about alcohol. The truth is that my brain is still developing and will continue well into my 20's. Also true is that underage drinking can mess with mind.

My winning strategy is sticking with the facts!

1. Alcohol can impair my balance, coordination, and decision making.
2. Alcohol can make it more difficult to form memories
3. Alcohol can lead to mental health problems.

With so many risks, underage drinking just isn't worth it!

Words from the wise...

- "You must expect great things of yourself before you can do them."
– Michael Jordan
- "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning."
– Albert Einstein
- "The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate."
– Oprah Winfrey