

### Is Someone Special Having a Baby?

#### Help the mother have a healthy baby

If you're a partner—or relative, or a special friend—and the mother-to-be drinks alcohol, you need to know a few facts:

- Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause serious problems to a developing baby. When a woman is pregnant, the baby drinks what she drinks. Alcohol goes into her bloodstream and crosses the placenta.
- *All* types of alcohol—even wine, wine coolers, and beer—can harm a developing baby.
- Some children whose mothers drank while they were pregnant have mental retardation, behavior and learning problems, and problems growing.
- These are serious problems that can be long-term.

#### Give good advice

Don't be afraid to talk to the pregnant mother. You can be more helpful than you think. Many women who know about the risks of drug use or smoking during pregnancy are not aware that alcohol can harm their babies. Here are some things you can do to help:

- Find a quiet place to sit and talk about having a healthy baby. Mention eating right, exercising, and not drinking.
- Remind her that her baby is exposed to any alcohol she drinks, and there is no known safe amount of alcohol during pregnancy.
- These serious problems that can affect the baby for a lifetime.
- Tell her you know she wants what is best for her baby and encourage her. Tell her you'll stop drinking with her.
- If the mother needs more help to stop drinking, help her find a doctor or treatment specialist. You can help her locate one online at: <http://dasis3.samhsa.gov>.



#### Plan activities to do together

You can help the mother-to-be enjoy her pregnancy by giving her support and sharing in activities that are good for her health and the health of her baby:

- When you are with her, avoid situations where drinking is common. Stay away from bars, clubs, and drinking parties.
- Help her say “no” when friends and family offer her drinks.
- Support her in situations when others tell her that it's OK to drink.

Spending time with the mother-to-be and letting her know that you care about her well-being is one of the best things you can do.

Adapted from:

*How to Help Your Family Member or Friend Be an Alcohol-free Mother-to-be.*

<http://www.fascenter.samhsa.gov/whatsnew/bookletsPreventing.cfm>.