

INT - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

A father, DREW, and his ninth-grade daughter, SIENNA, sit on the couch watching a soccer game.

TV ANNOUNCER:  
(offscreen)  
GOOOOOOAAAL!!!

SIENNA:  
Yes! That was awesome!!

DREW:  
Yeah! They're pretty good this half, huh.

SIENNA:  
Our team's pretty good. The only thing the other team's good at is faking injuries. My new drama teacher would be proud.

DREW:  
Yeah. So, uh, how has school been going this week?

SIENNA:  
Eh, okay. I talked to that girl Angie today. Well, before she got busted for playing a game on her phone in class. She's pretty cool.

DREW:  
I'm glad you're making friends.

TV ANNOUNCER:  
*And what a spectacular half! And now a quick word from our sponsor, 'Hops Light'. Hops Light - 'When you drink hoppy, you drink happy!'*

SIENNA:  
Wow. Beer ads are so cheesy.

DREW:  
Yeah.  
(mutes TV with remote)  
So... speaking of 'beer' - now that you're in high school, you, uh, might be around alcohol...

SIENNA:  
(fake surprise)  
What?!!

DREW:

I know. But it's true. And... I was hoping to chat with you a little about that. About drinking. Or not drinking. Is that okay?

SIENNA

I guess. Here comes the 'do as I say, not as I do talk.'

DREW

Okay. If you want to ask me about my drinking, go ahead.

SIENNA

Really? Okay. Um, why is it okay for adults to drink but not me?

DREW:

Well, here's some trivia for you. When do you think the brain is fully developed?

SIENNA:

I don't know, eighteen? No, wait it's gotta be twenty-one. Right? 'Cause that's why people can't buy beer till then.

DREW:

Well, twenty-one is the legal age to buy alcohol. But our brain doesn't actually reach maturity until twenty-five. So drinking before then could mess up its development.

SIENNA:

Okay. But... that is kind of interesting, I guess.

DREW:

So... riddle me this! Is drinking a glass of beer the same thing as drinking the same glass filled with rum?

SIENNA:

Ah. More of this fact stuff, Dad? (sighs) Well... no, Dad. They covered this at school the other day. (reciting voice) 'Different kinds of alcohol are different strengths.'

DREW:

Okay, so if someone filled this cup with rum, how different would it be then the same cup filled with beer?

SIENNA:

Like, really different?

DREW

(laughs)

Right, exactly. This is a twelve-ounce glass. So it would hold eight servings of rum. Drinking that would be nuts.

SIENNA:

(considered)

Yeah...

DREW:

Okay, so I've shared a little info that I picked up. What questions do you have so far?

SIENNA:

What about when you are my age? Did you drink?

DREW:

Well, that's a totally valid question. But whether I drink or not, doesn't change what I expect from you.

SIENNA:

(accusatory)

So you did!

DREW:

I... took some risks I wish I didn't. My friends and I were lucky nothing too bad happened. Plus, we know a lot more about risks these days.

SIENNA:

Yeah, yeah. I'm supposed to share stuff about me but you don't have to?

DREW:

I just want this conversation to be about helping you make good decisions and staying safe.

SIENNA:

I know, I know. I just wonder why you care so much about this. Angie's parents don't care...

DREW:

Well, different parents take different approaches. Even if they're kind of loosey-goosey about things, that's not our family's approach, kiddo.

SIENNA:

Right, 'cause Angie's family trusts her.

DREW:

This isn't a 'trust' thing... this is just our approach; having conversations to help you make safe decisions and stay healthy.

SIENNA:

All right, all right. (resignedly) I'll do my best to remember that on Saturday...

DREW:

(mock surprise)  
Saturday?

SIENNA:

Yeah, as in,... 'Saturday'! When I go to my first high school party?

DREW:

(mock remembering)  
Oh yeah. *That* Saturday. You know I did have a couple questions about that party if you don't mind...

SIENNA:

Sure. Let the interrogation begin...

DREW:

So when it comes to alcohol what are your friends doing?

SIENNA:

I think some of them have tried it before. So I guess there's a chance they might have a drink at the party.

DREW:

I appreciate you being honest with me about this.

SIENNA:

Yeah I never thought high school would be this intense.

DREW:

Even with all those teenage soap operas you watch?

SIENNA:

(laughs)

Yeah, even with those.

DREW:

You know, I was reading an article the other day and I stumbled upon an interesting statistic...

SIENNA:

Dad, you're such a dork. You just happened to 'stumble upon a statistic'?

DREW:

Okay, you got me. It was some more prep to chat. But hear me out. It said that around eighty percent of kids *think* their peers are drinking, but the actual number of kids your age drinking is less than *thirty* percent.

SIENNA:

Huh, really? That is a bit surprising.

DREW:

Yeah and maybe something to bear in mind when you hear "everyone" talking about drinking.

SIENNA:

Hmmm. true.

DREW:

Let's say you decided not to drink at the party. What do you think your reasons would be for that decision?

SIENNA:

I mean... to not get drunk and do something stupid?

DREW:

So you're worried you won't make good decisions because you've been drinking.

SIENNA:

Well, yeah. What if I walk into a door... or puke... or end up as an internet meme or something?

DREW:

Anything else? Think worst case scenario.

SIENNA:

I guess I could... end up in a car with a drunk driver, get in trouble with the police, or get hurt or something? And kiss my chances of playing JV soccer goodbye? That would suck!

DREW:

So you're worried if you had alcohol, something could happen to you, and you wouldn't achieve a goal that's important to you.

SIENNA:

Yeah, I mean after all the work I put into it, I wouldn't want to let something stupid like drinking one time at a party stop me from making the JV team.

DREW:

That's great, honey. Keeping your eye on what matters to you can help you make good decisions.

SIENNA:

I never thought about that. Thanks Dad!

DREW:

I gotta say I just... my expectations are that you don't have alcohol.

SIENNA:

Ever?

DREW:

I mean, hope-wise, yes. But realistically, at least until you're of age.

SIENNA:

I mean, I hear you, Dad, but... I don't know. I don't think it's very realistic for me not to touch a drop of alcohol for the next eight years.

DREW:

No matter what you choose to do, I'm gonna love you. And to stay safe and healthy, make good decisions, and be able to do the things in life you want to do, waiting to drink until you're twenty-one is what I expect you to do.

SIENNA:

(considered)

Mmmm-hmmm.

DREW:

Okay, that's enough for right now. Hey, look, at the end of the day... I just want you to know I'm here for you... and whether you like my approach or not, I want to help you make the best decisions you can.

SIENNA:

All right, Dad. Thanks. I appreciate that. (gestures to television) Ooooh look! Half-time's over! The game's starting again. Can we unmute it please?

DREW:

(unmutes TV)

Uh, yeah! Okay. We're back on!

FADE TO BLACK.