

Keeping Your Teens Drug Free

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

National Institutes of Health

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Office of National Drug Control Policy

INTRODUCTION

- ✘ There are opportunities every day to turn ordinary times like driving your child to school or to the mall, or watching TV together into teachable moments to let your child know what's important to you.
- ✘ Many parents put off talking to their kids about drugs and alcohol because of time constraints, but just a little of your time once in a while can make a lifetime difference.

YOU MATTER

- ✘ Teens who learn about the risk of drug use from their parents or caregivers are less likely to use drugs than those who don't.
- ✘ Parents are the most important influence in their kids lives. Many parents don't realize that they play a crucial role in their teen's decision not to use drugs.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

- ✘ Develop a strong, trusting relationship with your child.
- ✘ A good relationship with you is likely to encourage your child to try to live up to your expectations because they want to maintain their close tie with you.

STRONG PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

- ✘ Establish open communication...
- ✘ Show you care...
- ✘ Draw the line...
- ✘ Offer acceptance...
- ✘ Understand that your child is growing up...

OPEN COMMUNICATION

- ✘ Find out what your child knows about alcohol and other drugs.
- ✘ Share important facts about alcohol and other drugs.
- ✘ Avoid scare tactics but state why teens should not use drugs.
- ✘ Help your child figure out how to deal with peer pressure.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- ✘ Get involved in your kids lives
- ✘ Know what your children are doing- their activities and how they spend their time.
- ✘ Know who your teen's friends are.
- ✘ Check with parents who are hosting the party your teen will be attending.
- ✘ Do not support teen drinking.
- ✘ Never host an alcoholic beverage party even if children will be staying overnight.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- ✘ Praise and reward good behavior and set consequences for bad behavior.
- ✘ Set a good example.
- ✘ Encourage your child to develop healthy friendships.
- ✘ Let your teen know what you expect of them.
- ✘ Dispose of all medications properly. (Do not dispose in sink or toilet)
- ✘ Make sure all medications in household are in a secure or locked cabinet. This is to ensure that your child and frequent guest do not have access to medication.

WHO IS AT RISK?

- ✘ Kids at highest risk are those who:
 - + Have begun using alcohol or drugs before age 15
 - + Have a parent who has a problem with substance abuse
 - + Have close friends who use alcohol or drugs
 - + Have been aggressive, antisocial or difficult to control as a young child
 - + Have suffered childhood abuse or major trauma
 - + Have current behavioral problems or are failing in school
 - + Have no parental support
 - + Have difficult home life & relationship with parents

WARNING SIGNS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

If you notice *several* of these signs *at the same time* or if they *occur suddenly & seem extreme*, your child may have a substance abuse problem .

- Mood changes
- School problems
- Rebelling against family rules
- Switching friends
- Reluctance to let you meet new friends
- Change in appearance: sloppy
- "Nothing Matters" attitude
- General low energy
- Borrowing money often, or suddenly having extra cash
- Unusual odor on their clothes or in their room
- Physical problems (new)
- Mental problems (new)

RESOURCES

✘ Treatment Resources

- + Alcohol & Drug Recovery Center, Cecil County Health Dept, 410-996-5106
- + Elkton Treatment Center, 410-620-6077
- + Haven House, 410-398-9900

✘ Support Resources

- + Addiction Connection Resource, Inc., 410-398-9410
- + Al-Anon, 410-398-2004
- + Al-Anon (North East), 866-460-4070
- + Alcoholics Anonymous, 800-570-4150/410-272-4150
- + Narcotics Anonymous, 800-317-3222
- + Nar-Anon Family Groups, 800-477-6291

✘ Prevention Resources

- + Cecil County Health Department, 410-996-5168

REFERENCES

- ✘ *Make a Difference; Talk to Your Child About Alcohol* (2009). NIH publication No. 06-4314.
- ✘ *Keep Your Teens Drug Free A Family Guide*. Office of National Drug Control Policy