

# PARENTS. THE ANTI-DRUG.

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## Keeping Your Kids **DRUG-FREE**



*A How-To Guide for Parents and Caregivers*

**NATIONAL YOUTH ANTI-DRUG MEDIA CAMPAIGN**  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY

## *A Message From Our Partners*

Whether you are a parent, grandparent or any other person who cares about a child's future, we thank you for your interest in preventing drug abuse. It's hard for us to imagine that a child we love could end up using drugs. But chances are, most children will be faced with, "Should I, or shouldn't I?" This booklet will help you teach your child to know that the answer is, "I shouldn't, and I won't."

Here are some facts about kids and drug use: Forty percent of U.S. teens say they expect to use a drug in the future. One out of every five kids in eighth grade has already tried marijuana. Use of substances such as marijuana and inhalants can result in social consequences (e.g., failing in school) and physical consequences such as reduced stamina and fitness or damage to

the lungs and brain.

Teens who smoke cigarettes are more likely to drink alcohol. Teens who smoke and drink are more likely to use marijuana. And those who use all three are more likely to use other illicit drugs. Long-term studies show that use of other illicit drugs among youth almost never occurs unless they have first used marijuana.



Now here is the most important fact you should know: Kids who learn from their parents about the dangers of underage drinking, drugs and other harmful substances are less likely to use those substances. In other words, you have the power to keep the child you love safe, healthy and drug-free. But finding the right words and the right approach can be hard. That's where this booklet comes in. It can help you put your good intentions into action.

The nation's pediatricians and National PTA thank you for taking the time to focus on your child's healthy future. Someday, your child will thank you as well.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics  
National PTA

American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

**National**  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>

*everychild.onevoice.*

In 1998, with bipartisan support and through the united efforts of Congress and the president, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) created the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. This multidimensional effort, designed to educate and empower youth to reject illicit drugs, reaches Americans where they live, work, learn, play and practice their faith.

[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com) is a Web site that provides parents and other adult caregivers with strategies and tips on raising healthy, drug-free children. The site encourages parents to help their children with difficult issues by focusing on major concepts including love, trust, honesty and communication. Information from [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com) is now available in Spanish at [www.laantidroga.com](http://www.laantidroga.com) and in various Asian languages (Korean, Cambodian, Chinese or Vietnamese) through the [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com) home page.

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# Parents Today



## *The Challenges All Parents Face :*

By the time your child reaches the age of nine or ten, you've probably taught him or her right from wrong, basic safety rules, good health habits and how to make friends and get along with others. You've already done a lot of good things. Before your child becomes a teenager, you also should enhance the communication skills you already have to increase the chances of keeping your child drug-free.

This booklet provides ideas and examples about the skills busy parents can use to keep their children off drugs. Read this booklet and let it guide you as you go about your daily activities.

There are opportunities every day to turn ordinary times like driving your child to practice or doing household chores together into teachable moments to let your child know what's important to you. As your kids move from elementary school through middle school and on to high school, it's important to keep talking to them about the harm that drugs, tobacco and underage drinking can do to their young lives. Just a little of your time every once in a while can make a lifetime of difference.

# You Matter



## *You Can Influence Your Child's Behavior:*

Kids who learn about the risks of drug abuse from their parents or caregivers are less likely to use drugs than kids who do not. How much less likely? Kids are about 36 percent less likely to smoke marijuana, 50 percent less likely to use inhalants, 56 percent less likely to use cocaine, and 65 percent less likely to use LSD.

*"You are your child's most important role model. If you don't want your kids taking drugs, consider how your own use of tobacco and alcohol affects them. Kids notice."*

**A MOM IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

It makes sense that your child is more likely to stay drug-free when your child talks to you because he or she pays attention to what you say and do. Children look to parents for information about life decisions and choices, such as how to succeed in school and why they shouldn't use drugs. They look to other kids for information about popular culture, such as fashion fads or what's cool.

"Most kids don't want to disappoint their families," according to Amelie Ramirez, a doctor of public health (Dr. P.H.) and a drug-prevention specialist. "Parents who send a clear message of 'no drug use' are setting expectations for their kids, and this will help their kids stay away from drugs."

*"Everybody thinks their kid is beyond taking drugs ... Nobody's beyond it."*

A MOM IN TROY, MISSOURI

Every day it seems that we hear about kids using a new drug, such as ecstasy (MDMA). Although the drugs change over time, alcohol is still the most widely used substance among teens in America, followed by tobacco and marijuana. Also, kids still sniff glue to get high, but now they also sniff household products such as spray paints and aerosol sprays, shoe polish, gasoline and lighter fluid.

While this look at drug trends may be discouraging to you, take heart. Two-thirds of kids say that losing their parents' respect and pride is one of the main reasons they don't smoke marijuana or use other drugs. Your words and actions matter.

## Drug Facts:

The physical effects of inhalants can include hearing loss, limb spasms and damage to the central nervous system, brain, bone marrow, liver and kidneys.

.....

Club drugs such as ecstasy can lead to depression, drug cravings, paranoia (and in some cases, psychotic episodes), blurred vision and dangerous increases in heart rate and blood pressure.

.....

Teens who learn anti-drug messages at home are 42 percent less likely to use drugs.

*"Everyday parenting actions such as establishing clear rules and consequences, praising and rewarding desirable behavior and staying involved in kids' daily lives help prevent drug use."*

AMELIE RAMIREZ, Dr. P.H.

a drug-prevention specialist and mom

to Nicolas, 22; Ameli, 18; and Marco, 14

# It's Not Pestering, It's Parenting



*What can I do to keep my child away from drugs and other substances?*

Conflict sometimes comes with the job of parenting, especially when you're talking about touchy subjects such as drug use. Experts say that to create an environment that combines talking with action, you should:

Know what your children are doing — their activities and how they spend their time

.....

Be involved in your kids' lives

.....

Praise and reward good behavior

.....

Set limits with clear rules and consequences for breaking them

Of course, your kids might not like your keeping tabs on where they are and what they're doing. It won't be a democracy, and it shouldn't be, according to many parent experts. In the end, it's not pestering, it's parenting.

# Questions: The Anti-Drug

Ask Who, What, When and Where

Here are other ways to know what your child is up to:

Know where your child is when he or she is away from home. Have your kids check in with you regularly. Give them coins, a phone card or a beeper with clear usage rules. (For example, “When I beep you, I expect a call back within five minutes.”) If a beeper or cell phone is not allowed to be used in school, have your child keep one in his backpack and ask him to turn it on after school. You may have to coordinate the use of beepers and cell phones with school administrators. If your child does not have a beeper or cell phone, get the numbers of where he’ll be after school so that you can check in or have him call you at certain times so he can check in with you.

.....

Make a list of her activities for the coming day and put it on the fridge, on a calendar or in your wallet or pocketbook.

.....

Walk through your neighborhood and note where kids your child’s age hang out.

Know your child’s friends. Have a small party at your house and invite the parents of his friends. Have his friends stay for dinner. Ask them about their parents. Make a point of meeting your child’s friends’ parents — find them at a PTA meeting, soccer practice, dance rehearsal or wherever the kids hang out.

.....

Work with other parents to get a list of everyone’s addresses, e-mails, and phone numbers so you can keep in touch with your child.

.....

Show up a little early to pick up your child so you can observe her behavior.

.....

Occasionally check to see that your kids are where they say they’re going to be.

.....

Lots of kids get in trouble with drugs right after school — from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Try to be with your kids then, but if you can’t, make sure your child is doing something positive with an adult around: sports, jobs, clubs, after-school programs or religious youth groups. If your kids have to be at home, make sure they are doing homework or chores and not hanging out with friends.

questions



Parenting expert Phillippe Cunningham, Ph.D., recommends working to maintain a warm bond with your child. This builds up “credit” with your child so that when you have to punish him or her or set limits, it’s less stressful. With that strong bond, your child will most likely see your rule or punishment as an act of love. A strong bond can be developed by taking advantage of times when you can notice your child’s strengths (when they’re in a play, a music recital or on the football field) or when you can “catch them being good” (such as treating a sibling nicely or volunteering to do a household chore).

*building relationships*



# Opening Lines of Communication



*What do I say to my child?*

## First, you listen.

It's important to take time to listen to your kids. Try to find time to be with your child when he or she asks to talk to you. Don't say "in just a minute" or "not right now." Devote your attention to what your son or daughter is saying, because kids know when you're pretending to listen.

*Some ideas for good listening:*

Ask open-ended questions that encourage conversation. Avoid questions that kids can answer with a simple yes or no.

Make it clear that you are listening and trying to understand your child's point of view. When your child describes events, repeat what you think your child has just told you.

# Listening helps

To show that you are listening, you can also use phrases such as the following:

“Sounds like you’re saying ... ”

.....

“Do you mean that ... ”

.....

“When that happens to me, I feel like ... Is it like that for you too?”

.....

“Are you saying ... ?”

.....

“I’m having a hard time understanding what you’re saying. What do you mean?”

When they use words or slang that you don’t understand, ask them to explain. Establish regular weekly “together time” in which you and your child do something alone with each other that allows your child to talk. It doesn’t have to be elaborate — just taking a walk or going out for ice cream can be a chance to listen. Tap into what your child is good at by having them teach you something (for example, searching the Web, dancing, fishing, etc.).

## Then you talk.

You've listened and you've thought about what to say. Now comes the tough part — finding the words to say and actually starting the conversation. In this section, you'll find some opening lines (and some follow-up lines too) recommended by Dr. Cunningham, father of Noelle, 9, and Phillippe Pete, 8. You don't have to follow the script word for word. Find your own words and find times and places that are comfortable for you to talk, like in the car when it's just the two of you, on walks together, or having a snack at the mall.

### *Setting the Rules:*

In a recent study, teens gave parents a “C-” in preventing kids from using drugs. These kids often say that their parents don't talk to them about drugs — even though their parents report that they do. Don't leave your kids guessing.

Tell them very clearly that you don't want them using substances — no tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, ecstasy or inhalants. Setting a firm rule of no drug use will help your child navigate peer and other pressure to use drugs. Here are some examples of rules that parenting experts recommend:

“If you're at a party and you see that drugs or alcohol are being used, the rule is to leave that party. Call me and I'll come and get you.”

.....

“I've been thinking lately that I've never actually told you this: I don't want you using alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.”

.....

“I love you and I want the best for you, so I don't want you using marijuana or any other drug.”

.....

“The rule in our house is that nobody uses drugs.”

.....

“You know, drugs are not games. I don't want you doing them, not now, not ever.”

## *Risky Situations:*

Part of what you can do as a parent is set limits. Let your kids know that you do not want them in risky situations.

“I don’t want you riding in a car with a driver who’s been using drugs or who’s been drinking.”

.....

“Honey, I love you, but you’ve got to know I’m your parent, not one of your friends. As your parent, I will not put up with you being in a place where drugs are being used.”

.....

“It’s my job as a parent to keep you safe, so I’m going to ask you questions about who you’re with and what you are doing.”

.....

“I care enough about you to let you know that I don’t want to see anything bad happen to you, and it would be hard not having you in my life.”

*communication tips*



## Giving Advice on Avoiding Risky Situations:

Sometimes kids need the language to help them stay away from risky situations. Here are some lines you can provide your child. In addition, this is also an opportunity to get your kids to think for themselves. Ask them what they would say or do in risky situations. Then you can give your child examples from the ones listed below of what he can tell someone who uses drugs:

“I like you, but I don’t like drugs.”

.....

“It makes me uncomfortable to be around drugs.”

.....

“I’d be happy to help you (go to a teacher, parent or other adult), but I can’t be around you when you use drugs.”

.....

“My dad (or mom, grandmother, etc.) would kill me if they knew I was around drugs.”

.....

“I’d get kicked off the team if I was caught around drugs.”

Here’s what your child can tell someone who offers them drugs:

“No, thanks. It’s not for me.”

.....

“Why would I want to mess up a good thing? I’m cool the way I am.”

.....

“You’re kidding, right? Why would I do something so dumb?”

.....

“No way, man. Taking drugs is stupid.”

.....

“No way, man. Taking drugs is not for me.”

.....

“Can’t do it. Gotta get home.”

.....

“I can’t use drugs. I have a big test tomorrow.”

“I tried drinking and I threw up.”

.....

“That’s illegal. I don’t want to get in trouble.”

.....

“I have a big game tomorrow.”

.....

“I’m up for a scholarship and don’t want to blow it.”

.....

“My parents would kill me.”

.....

“My cousin smoked marijuana and got caught by the police.”

.....

“I could get kicked off the team if anyone found out.”



## Catching Your Child With Drugs:

If you've caught your child using drugs or "holding" them for a friend, you might be speechless. Worse yet, you might want to lash out with harsh words. If you feel angry or that you may be out of control at that moment, give yourself a cooling-off period before you talk to your child. The next step, experts say, is to let your child know that you do not approve of drug use or possession.

*speaking with your child*

The following phrases work to get good communication going:

"Let's talk about how you got these drugs and the impact of what you've done."

.....

"I'm really disappointed. You know I don't approve of drug use. I especially don't approve of you using drugs."

.....

"I'm going to stand by you and always love you and guide you, but I do not want you taking drugs. I don't want you making the wrong choice and then have bad things happen in your life."

If your child has admitted to using drugs recently, you may want to ask your doctor or counselor for help. He or she will give you good advice and keep the conversation confidential. During your talk, you can ask your child where he or she got the drugs. If your child got drugs from a friend, ask the name of the friend.

Depending on the situation, you may want to let the parents of the friend know.

.....

If your child got drugs at school, you may decide that telling the principal is the best thing to do. There's no doubt that talking to a parent or a principal about where your kid got drugs might be a hard choice. However, in the end, you might decide that this is the best alternative for you when you consider this fact: if you don't alert the principal or a parent, the drug problem may continue and may even get worse.

If your child used allowance money to buy the drugs, you might want to take away the allowance until your child earns back your trust. Explain to your child that he or she let you down by using their allowance for something illegal and harmful and that you now question their judgment about being responsible with money.

*What to say*

### *When Your Child Breaks the Rules:*

We all want a peaceful household, but conflict will probably arise when your child does not follow the rules. A question you might well ask is: What is the consequence for breaking the rules? Dr. Ramirez has a few suggestions. The important point here is to not overreact; however, you should set a punishment that has some impact. Remember, you're the parent and you set the rules and the consequences, which are not negotiable.

Restrict television and Internet use.

.....

Have your child read and discuss information about the harmful effects of drugs, tobacco or alcohol.

.....

Suspend outside activities such as going to the mall or movies.

.....

Temporarily restrict friends from coming over to the house and don't allow visits to friends' homes.

.....

Have your child perform a community service to encourage positive usage of time.

.....

Disallow telephone calls.

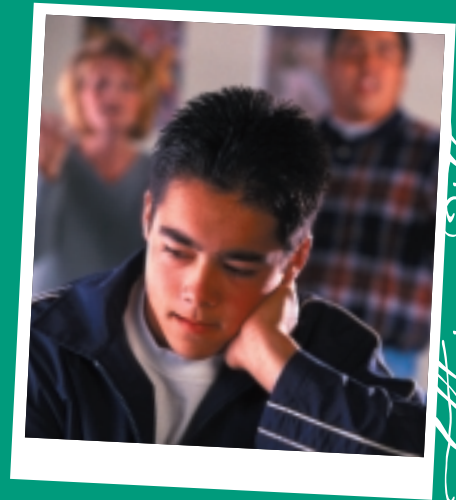


## *How You Can Enforce the Rules:*

“Because you stayed at a party where there was no adult supervision and where people were using drugs, you’re not going anywhere — no mall, no movies, nowhere — for one week (up to three depending on whether the child lied and on how severe the act was).”

.....

“You broke the most important rule — no drugs. We’ve talked about how I feel about that; here are the consequences of your behavior. You get no phone or television privileges for one week (up to three depending on whether the child lied and on how severe the act was). You do get Internet privileges, so that during that time, you can read a paper on the effects of drugs.”



The punishment should not be much longer than three weeks. If it’s too long, the child will forget why he’s being punished.

*Talking With your Kids*

*Your Child Admits to  
Having Tried Drugs:*

This is another situation that could leave you upset, angry or at odds as to how to respond. Again, the idea is to reinforce the rules about drug use while keeping the lines of communication open. Love the child, but disapprove of the behavior.

“I’m glad you told me, but let me remind you that drugs get in the way of your being healthy and happy. Drugs are also illegal, so juvenile detention is a possibility. You can lose your driver’s license (or learner’s permit). You can lose your scholarship. You can get kicked off the team.”

.....

“While I’m disappointed to hear that you tried drugs (or alcohol), I’m glad you told me and I don’t want you to stop telling me stuff. But I don’t want you to use drugs.”

.....

“My job as a parent is to make sure that you have a wonderful childhood, but it’s more important that you become the wonderful, competent adult that I know you’ll be. I know you can’t do that if you use drugs.”

*Your Child Says That  
“Everyone is Doing It”:*

Kids often believe that more kids are doing drugs than is actually the case. That sometimes means that they will try drugs in an attempt to fit in.

.....

“Fewer kids use drugs than you might think. Besides, you don’t need drugs to fit in.”

.....

“You can make your own decisions. You don’t have to do anything that’s against your beliefs.”

.....

“I’m not interested in what other kids are doing. I know I don’t want you using drugs.”

.....

“Why should that affect you? You are your own person.”



## *Your Child Tells You That Marijuana Is a Natural Product.*

There might be a time when your child argues that marijuana is natural. Here are some possible responses:

.....

“Arsenic (a natural poison) and poison ivy are ‘natural’ too, but I don’t want you ingesting those either. Don’t forget, marijuana is illegal. You can go to a juvenile detention center and lose your driver’s license.”

.....

“Everything natural is not good for you ... marijuana is one of those things, right up there with tobacco.”

## *Your Child's Friend or Parent Tried Drugs:*

This is another instance that is really a risky situation. As the parent, you can let your child know that it is your job to keep him or her safe and away from bad situations.

.....

“I don’t want you hanging out with kids who use drugs or drink alcohol. You know that when you’re around people who use drugs, I’m afraid they’ll try to pressure you to use drugs.”

.....

“You obviously care about your friend. And when we care about somebody, we don’t let him or her get hurt or get in trouble. Let’s try to help your friend.”

.....

“Can I help? Do you want me to help you get help for your friend?”

*communication tips*

## *If Your Kids Ask, "Did You Ever Do Drugs?" :*

Experts agree that it's best to be honest. Behavioral scientist Tony Biglan, Ph.D., suggests that answering this question untruthfully can cause you to lose credibility with your kids if they ever discover that you've lied to them. On the other hand, if you don't feel comfortable answering the question, you may decide that the time is not right to discuss the topic. As with other possibly sensitive topics such as sex, you should talk about it when you're ready.

When you are ready to talk, Dr. Biglan says, "You don't need to go into detail." You can just give a short, honest answer like these:

"When I was a kid I took drugs because some of my friends did. I thought I needed to in order to fit in. We didn't know as much as we do now about all the bad things that can happen when you smoke marijuana or use other drugs. If I'd known then about the consequences, I never would have tried drugs, and I'll do everything I can to help you keep away from them."

.....

"Everybody makes mistakes. When I used drugs, I made a big one. I'm telling you about this, even though it's embarrassing, because I love you and I want to save you from making the same stupid decision I made when I was your age."

.....

"I drank alcohol and smoked marijuana because I was bored and wanted to take some risks, but I soon found out that I couldn't control the risks — the loss of trust of my parents and friends. There are much better ways of challenging yourself than doing drugs."

# Teachable Moments



*When do I say it?*

Experts like Dr. Cunningham suggest that any moment can be a teachable moment. When you decide to use a moment to teach your child something about drugs, it doesn't have to be a long, serious talk — just a few words can do. And it's not a talk you have only once. Have it regularly.

Some examples of teachable moments might be when you're:

Having fun. One mother said, "I go for walks with my girls and everything just comes right out."

.....

Discussing books or movies with your kids.

.....

Doing regular chores together.

.....

Eating dinner together as a family.

.....

Just hanging out ... reading, cooking a meal, going fishing, listening to music, watching a ball game, singing together, playing chess or having a family picnic.

When your kids are in school, it's a good time to start using teachable moments to warn them about inhalants. Some kids sniff gasoline, nail polish remover or the fumes from shaving cream cans to get high, and they can die any time they use them — the first or the 50th time.

Tell your preteens how marijuana interferes with concentrating on schoolwork and their ability to play sports. If they don't hear about drugs and alcohol from you, it's a sure thing that they'll hear about them from someone else. Make certain that they understand the legal trouble they can get into when it comes to drug use.

.....

Also remember that you are your child's most important role model. They notice everything you do.

When your children see you drink or do drugs, they might think it's OK for them. If you make jokes about getting drunk or using drugs, or if you allow minors to drink in your home, your child might think that alcohol or drugs are not to be taken seriously.

## Watching TV, Listening to Music, Surfing the Net:

TV and radio shows also can be discussion-starters for you and your child. In fact, research shows that teenagers whose parents are aware of the television they watch and the music they listen to are less likely to smoke, drink or use drugs.

Television is a good way to look at the negative and positive portrayals we get every day about drugs, alcohol and tobacco. This is a chance to consider how TV shows, advertisements or music lyrics influence our beliefs about drugs. However, most important, it is also a chance to turn the time into a teachable moment. For example, if a character on a TV show is using drugs, you could start a conversation with any one of these opening lines:

"I wonder what his family thinks about him getting high?"

.....

"Where do you think this person would end up in life?"

.....

"What do you think her teachers would think?  
Her neighbors? Her pastor?"

.....

"Why would he do drugs?"



Many parents are concerned about pro-drug messages in television, movies and music. Some parents choose to restrict their children's access to media content and tell them why.

A lot of parents don't check their kids' activities on the Internet. If you have a computer at home, it's really important that you let your kids know that you're in charge of their time online. Not only can kids find out about drugs on the Internet (including a lot of pro-drug sites), they can also buy them online. If you are surfing the Net with your child and come across some pro-drug sites or sites with drug content, you could ask questions such as:

"Who are these people trying to sell you on drugs?"

.....

"Do they care about what happens to you while you're on drugs?"

.....

"How would you know what the drugs are made of?"

## *Feeling Low:*

There are other times that parents should be watchful and that could be turned into teachable moments. One dangerous time is when kids are feeling really low. Such a time may be after a bad test result, losing a game or when a friend moves away. The notion that "drugs will make you feel better" can have a lot of appeal during the down times. You need to tell your kids that drinking alcohol can make them sadder and that smoking marijuana can make them more anxious. On top of that, these substances often lead to other bad consequences such as car crashes, looking silly in front of their friends or losing control and people taking advantage of them.

## *Feeling Good:*

The other time parents should be careful about is when your child has had a string of good luck — when he or she is feeling on top of the world and everything is going right. These times can trick kids into believing that they can do anything and it will turn out fine. They might be tempted to think that the bad things that happen with drugs couldn't happen to them.

# Signs and Symptoms



*Be alert.*

You want your kids to be healthy and drug-free. But many parents find it difficult to spot signs of drug use, especially since many of the signs and symptoms listed below are common in perfectly normal adolescents. While there is no single warning sign for drug or alcohol use, some indicators of a potential problem include:

.....  
Drop in school attendance  
or academic performance

.....

Lack of interest in  
personal appearance

.....

Physical changes (e.g.,  
persistent runny nose, red  
eyes, coughing, wheezing,  
bruises, needle marks)

.....

Uncharacteristic  
withdrawal from family,  
friends or interests

.....

Isolation, depression,  
fatigue

.....

Hostility and lack  
of cooperativeness

.....

Increase in  
borrowing money

.....

Unaccounted-for cash,  
especially in small  
denominations

.....

Change in friends



Loss of interest in hobbies and/or sports that used to be important

.....

Change in eating/sleeping habits

.....

Evidence of drugs or drug paraphernalia (e.g., rolling papers, eye drops, butane lighters, pipes)

.....

Use of incense or room deodorant

.....

Evidence of inhaling products (such as hairspray, nail polish and white-out) and chemicals used to get high (e.g., rags soaked in chemicals or gasoline smell of chemicals on the person, more frequent need to buy household products)

Smell of alcohol on the breath or sudden, frequent use of breath mints

.....

Watered-down alcohol in liquor bottles in the liquor cabinet

.....

Sudden use of strong perfume or cologne

.....

Heightened secrecy about actions or possessions

If you suspect that your child is using drugs, take action. Ask your child whether he or she is taking drugs, and if you are unsure of whether you'll get an honest answer, figure out a way to find out if drugs are being used. You've got to talk on an ongoing basis.

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While you should be open and ready to receive the information that your child will give you, you should also continue to establish a zero tolerance for drug use and then set clear expectations as described in this brochure. If you need help, contact your child's school counselor, family physician or pediatrician or call the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Information at 1-800-788-2800 for prevention information and a listing of the treatment centers closest to you. You may also visit the Web site at [www.samhsa.gov/centers/csat/com](http://www.samhsa.gov/centers/csat/com).

# Calling on Your Community



*How can I get others to help?*

You and your family are not alone. You can call on your neighbors to join forces with you. Many parents have organized support or networking groups in their neighborhoods for talking about how to handle problems. Other parents organize alcohol- and drug-free neighborhood events and parties or set up safe community work programs for young teens, such as baby-sitting and lawn-mowing.

*community*

And many communities have started anti-drug parent peer groups and anti-drug coalitions that bring together different groups — such as schools, businesses, faith communities and youth groups — to help stop drug use and underage drinking in parks and malls where your kids may hang out. It's amazing what you can do when you join together.

Your child's school has people who can help — guidance counselors, teachers, coaches and other adults. Ask for help with your child. You also can call your child's school to make sure they have effective drug-prevention programs and activities.

Many parents also find help in their faith communities, and many belong to other community groups. Consider being a volunteer with organizations in these communities as well. Kids need adults other than their parents in their lives, and community organizations often need extra help. A little time volunteering with a community program can help a kid make positive choices. To contact a coalition in your area, call 1-877-KIDS-313 or go to [www.helpyourcommunity.org](http://www.helpyourcommunity.org).

## A Final Word

It might not always be an easy job, but you've learned by now that parenting can be a rewarding job. One of the biggest hurdles you probably face is finding the time to maintain a strong, loving family relationship that will help protect your kids from drugs.

*Keeping Your Kids Drug-Free* offers you tips on how to make time and gives you examples to build skills in using opening lines for powerful conversations. When parents and kids take the time to talk, life can be easier, healthier and more enjoyable for the whole family. In the process, you'll be doing your part in keeping your child drug-free.

**PARENTS.**  
THE ANTI-DRUG.

For more information about drugs and their effects and prevention and treatment, call, read or visit:

1-800-788-2800

1-877-SINDROGAS (*Spanish*)

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*www.TheAntiDrug.com*

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*www.health.org*

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*www.NIDA.NIH.gov*

*Growing Up Drug-Free,*

U.S. Department of Education.

Available by calling 1-877-433-7827.

*Make a Difference: Talk to Your Child About Alcohol,*

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Available from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at *www.niaaa.nih.gov* or by calling 1-800-487-4889.

*Keeping Youth Drug-Free,* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Available by calling 1-800-729-6686

or by visiting *www.samhsa.gov*.

For a description of effective school and community prevention programs and strategies, you can also visit *http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov*.





*Notes:*

## Acknowledgements:

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National Asian Pacific American  
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National Families in Action

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National Family Partnership

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National Fatherhood Initiative

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Parenting Coalition International

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Partnership for a Drug-Free America

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Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America  
(Drug-Free Kids Campaign)