

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS USING DRUGS?

It is difficult because changes in mood, attitudes, unusual temper outbursts, and changes in hobbies or other interests are common in teens.

WATCH LIST FOR PARENTS: As a parent you should look for signs of depression, withdrawal and hostility.

- 1.Changes in friends.
- 2.Negative changes in schoolwork, missing school, discipline problems at school, activity changes.
- 3.Increased secrecy about possessions or activities.
- 4.Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfume to hide smoke or chemical odors.
- 5.Subtle changes in conversations with friends, i.e using more secretive coded language. For example, “four twenty” is a code name for a time to get high.
- 6.Change in clothing choices, such as a new fascination with clothes that highlight drug use.
- 7.Evidence of drug paraphernalia, such as pipes or rolling papers.
- 8.Evidence of inhalant products, such as hairspray, nail polish, correction fluid, and other common inhalants.
- 9.Bottles of eye drops, used to mask blood shot eyes, or dilated pupils.
- 10.Missing prescription drugs - especially narcotics and stabilizers.

These changes often signal that something is going on and often that involves alcohol or drugs. Seek professional help in dealing with this problem.

TIPS FOR PARENTS:

Parents, you are the first line of defense when it comes to your child's drug use or drinking. You make the difference!

1. **Set Rules.** Let your child know alcohol and drug use is unacceptable in your family. Enforce stated consequences when family rules are broken.
2. **Know where your teens are and what they will be doing during unsupervised time.**
3. **Talk to your teen.** Casually ask how things are going at school, with friends, and about plans for the future.
4. **Keep your teens busy, especially between 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and into evening hours.** Teens who are involved in constructive, adult supervised activities are less likely to use drugs than other teens.
5. **Take time to learn the facts about marijuana and underage drinking and talk to your teen about the harmful effects on young people.**
6. **Get to know your teen's friends and parents.** Make sure you know their rules and standards.
7. **Accept the role of a parent as your major responsibility.** Children do not need you to be their friend, let others be their friend. You be the parent!

The Elks are committed to providing a healthy future for America's youth. In addition to educating young people about the dangers of drugs, the Elks provide positive alternatives such as Hoop Shoot® and Soccer Shoot programs. The organization also awards more than \$8 million each year in college scholarships. For additional information, contact your local Elks Lodge or visit the Elks website at www.elks.org/YouthActivities.cfm.

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