Safe Coalition
Prevention WORKS!
Hunterdon / Somerset
safecoalition.org

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PARENT - CAREGIVER - TRUSTED ADULT

Parent & Caregiver's Guide

to Preventing Teen Substance Use

Talk, they Hear you

Parents and caregivers have an incredibly important role in preventing substance use.

When it comes to talking about difficult subjects, it's not a five-minute talk.

Take action by having frequent conversations with the teens and young adults in your life about the dangers of substance abuse.

Kids who learn about the dangers of drug and alcohol use early and often are much less likely to develop addiction than those who do not receive these critical messages at home.

TALKING TIPS:

- Make a plan
- Present the facts
- Listen and discuss without judgement
- Set rules
- Set clear consequences - reward good behavior
- Recognize road blocks
- Continue the conversation

Plan and practice conversations with your teen using the **"Talk, They Hear You"** phone app.

Adapted from: drugfree.org/article/prepare-to-take-action

Safeguard your home

Alcohol and Medicine (over-the-counter and prescription) that is not safely stored (locked-up or out of reach) can easily be misused by a friend, family member, or anyone entering your home.

There are simple, easy ways to safeguard your home and keep your family and community safe.

Safe Home Storage

- ☑ Safe Storage is HOW and WHERE substances are stored in the home
- ☑ Use Safe Storage methods by locking away these substances and holding the key.

Monitor Substances

- ☑ Know WHAT and HOW MUCH you have in your home.
- ☑ Monitoring of may include keeping a list on your phone, counting or marking bottles.

VISIT OUR ONLINE RESOURCE:

NJPREVENT.COM/PARENTSHOLDTHEKEY

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Take Action

Many families have worked through these difficult times. The most important thing is to start an ongoing open dialogue about drug and alcohol use at an early age and to take action on the child's behalf the first time that substance use is suspected. Teens may use substances to self-medicate for anxiety and depression – consult with a mental health professional if you suspect underlying issues

MONITORING SKILLS:

- Parents are the first line of defense when it comes to teen drug use.
- Ask questions - who, what, when and where.
- Have your kids check in with you regularly.
- Be prepared and know the facts.
- Make your position clear.
- Don't assume your teenager knows where you stand.
- Tell your children that you understand there might be situations or circumstances when they are exposed to drugs or alcohol, and while you hope they don't engage in substance use and make healthy decisions, reinforce how important it is for them to be open with you about what they are doing.
- Make the rules of the house clear to your teenager.
- Monitor internet use.
- Be a good role model.

Adapted from: health.westchestergov.com/parent-guide-to-teen-drug-abuse

FIND SUPPORT

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER: Supports family members and loved ones of those affected by substance use addiction. HQ at Prevention Resources, Inc. (4 Walter Foran Blvd, Suite 410, Flemington, NJ, 08822) | P: 908-782-3909 | Serves Hunterdon, Somerset, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Union

QUICK FACTS

Alcohol

- Underage drinking is a factor in nearly half of all teen car crashes and 50-65 percent of youth suicides.
- Alcohol abuse is linked to as many as two-thirds of all sexual assaults and date rapes of teens and college students.
- More than 40% of individuals who begin drinking before age 13 will develop alcohol use problems or alcohol dependence at some point in their lives.

Vaping

- 99% of all Vaping devices contain nicotine.
- One JUUL pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes.
- Vaping Teens that have never used tobacco products are 3x more likely to start smoking cigarettes.

Marijuana (Cannabis)

- Potency of THC levels today average 20%, with concentrates/extracts, (used commonly in vape pens, edibles, or dabbing), as potent as 90%.
- Those that started using before age 18 have been found to be 4 to 7 times more likely to develop problem use behaviors.
- Symptoms of cannabis withdrawal: headache, shakiness, sweating, stomach pains, nausea, restlessness, irritability, sleep difficulties and decreased appetite

Medicine Misuse / Opioids

- 1 in 4 first time drug users reported starting with medicine misuse.
- One person dies every 12 minutes from an overdose.
- Prescription medications are the leading cause of accidental death; over 60% caused by opioids.

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