

# Tips for Talking About Drugs

## Grades 4 – 6

*Here are some tips to help you guide your student toward a healthy, drug-free life:*

### **Base drug and alcohol messages on facts, not fear.**

*Students cannot argue with facts but their new need for independence may allow them to get around their fears. Studies have now shown that “scare tactics” are not an effective way to help students stay away from substances.*

### **Talk to your student about the drug-related messages they receive through advertisements, the news media and entertainment sources.**

*Some TV shows or movies may even glamorize drug use. Use the shows they watch as a way to help kick start conversations about drug use/abuse and the dangers/consequences associated with it.*

### **Consider the following topics when discussing drugs with your child: what alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are like; why drugs are illegal; what harm drugs can do to users.**

*You should also consider talking about the differences between the medicinal uses and illegal uses of drugs, and how drugs can impact the families and friends of users.*

### **Set clear rules and behave the way you want your kids to behave.**

*Tell them the reasons for your rules. If you use tobacco or alcohol, be mindful of the message you are sending to your student.*

### **Ask open-ended questions**

*When discussing substances, use open-ended questions such as: “What do you think about that?” This helps take the pressure off them and then you both have the opportunity to share and educate.*

### **Help your student learn to problem solve and escape situations they are unsure about.**

*Make sure they know that they shouldn't stay in a place that makes them feel uncomfortable or bad about themselves. Also let them know that they don't need to stick with friends who don't support them or try to pressure them into doing things (such as drugs) that they are uncomfortable with.*

### **Act out scenes with your student where people offer them drugs.**

*Students who don't know what to say or how to get away are more likely to give into peer pressure. Working on refusal skills together can help them when they are faced with the real situation.*

### **Preteens are not concerned with future problems that might result from experimentation with drugs.**

*They are however concerned with how they look and how it may affect their appearance. Emphasize how drugs can ruin one's appearance once they start using and later on in the future.*

### ***Substances in your students life may include:***

Tobacco, Alcohol, Prescription Pills (Adderall/Ritalin/Concerta), Over-the-Counter Medications, Inhalants & Marijuana



**MOST TEENS DON'T**