



# How to Talk to Your Teen About **DRUGS**

## *What Parents Need to Know*

**You are an important role model for your teen.  
Help them make the right choices.**

**START EARLY & TALK OFTEN** Eat dinner together & do things as a family to improve communication and attachment. Talking openly will help strengthen your relationship with your teen. Take advantage of short 'teachable moments' in the car, watching TV, or at the dinner table.

**SET AN EXAMPLE** Be responsible about your own use of alcohol & other drugs.

**BE OPEN** Negotiate limits, family rules & consequences. Respect your teens' independence. Think about your teen's point of view and listen to what they have to say.

**PROVIDE A SAFETY NET** Enforce limits but let your teen know that safety comes first & they can depend on you to help keep them safe.

**STAY INFORMED** You don't have to be an expert but be in the know about alcohol & other drugs to help your teen make better choices.

**CHECK IN** Know where your teen is & who they are with. Support positive friendships & help them stay connected with school and after school activities. Encourage positive socializing & being involved in the community.

**LEARN FROM MISTAKES** Recognize that experimentation & mistakes happen. Help your teen use them as learning opportunities. Focus on facts and not emotions.

## **WATCH FOR SIGNS:**

- **Avoiding contact with you**
- **Change in sleeping &/or eating patterns**
- **Change in behaviour or appearance** – mood swings, signs of depression, secretive, slurred speech, red or watery eyes, less grooming, weight loss, etc.
- **Confusion or difficulty concentrating**
- **Change with school or activities** - lower grades, attendance issues or behaviour problems, loss of interest in sports or hobbies
- **Possession of paraphernalia** - pipes, rolling papers, razor blades, syringes, spoons, etc.
- **Presence of new or different friends**

## **SEEK HELP...**

if you feel your teen has a problem.

For more information or support, contact your local Mental Health & Addictions office or your family doctor.

**HEALTHLINE**

811

**Mental Health Crisis Line**

1-888-737-4668

**Kids Help Phone**

1-800-668-6868



[www.bridgeTHEgAPP.ca](http://www.bridgeTHEgAPP.ca)  
[www.westernhealth.nl.ca/mha](http://www.westernhealth.nl.ca/mha)