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things

every parent needs to know

about

drug abuse

SOUTHERN DENTON COUNTY COMMUNITIES STANDING TOGETHER



FIRST AID FOR DRUG-FREE LIVING

SOUTHERN DENTON COUNTY COMMUNITIES STANDING TOGETHER

This resource for parents was compiled by The Town of Flower Mound and Lewisville Independent School District. For additional copies, please contact The Town of Flower Mound Department of Community Affairs or LISD Department of Public Information. © 2014

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How to talk
to your children
about drug
abuse.

Ask a question and let them do the talking; here are some conversation starters.

- Why do you think it's illegal for kids under the age of 21 to drink alcohol? After all, many parents do it.
- **Why are marijuana and other drugs illegal?**
- What would you do if you were in a car and the driver had been drinking or smoking marijuana?
- **What if the driver was a grown-up, like your friend's parent?**
- What do you think happens in the brain when people smoke marijuana? Why shouldn't kids smoke it?
- **Have you ever thought that I drank too much? Acted differently when I drank alcohol?**
- When do you think kids are ready to try alcohol?
- **Do you know any kids or adults who you think have alcohol or drug problems?**
- When do you think kids are ready to try alcohol?
- **Do you know any kids who have tried alcohol or drugs? What do you think of them?**
- What do the kids at your school do at parties? Have you been to a party like that?
- **Have you ever been offered a drink or a marijuana cigarette or other drugs? What did you do?**
- What would you do if you were at a party and someone passed out from drinking alcohol?
- **Do you ever worry about becoming addicted to alcohol or drugs? Do you know anyone who is?**
- Do you think coffee is a drug? When do you think it's ok for kids to start drinking coffee? What about energy drinks?

SOURCE: *Dr. Laura Markham, Aha! Parenting*

Be clear with your expectations. Create a family drug policy and stick to it.

Setting boundaries with clear consequences for acting outside of them is necessary in all stages of your child's growth. A family policy helps prevent misunderstandings. Different from a contract that can be negotiated by all parties involved, setting policy is your responsibility as a parent and is based on your knowledge, experience and willingness to follow through. Children do not have your ability to set limits and are not part of forming the policy.

You may have different ideas about what should be in your family's policy, but the point is, ***have a policy and do not set consequences if you cannot carry them out.*** Here is a sample policy to get you thinking.

Our Family Drug Policy

Date: _____

- We know and respect the drug and alcohol laws in the _____ family.
- We do not use, buy, hold for others, or attend events where illegal drugs are used.
- We understand illegal drugs mean the following: marijuana, crack cocaine, heroin, meth, designer drugs, LSD, steroids, and _____.
- If anyone in this family is found holding or buying illegal drugs, we will call the police. If this happens more than once, we will take him or her to a doctor or other professional for addiction evaluation.

Our Family Drug Policy (continued)

- If the police call us about a family member breaking drug or alcohol laws, fines, legal fees and court costs will be paid by that family member from their job or from selling their car or other belongings.

- If a family member is found driving impaired, the car will be taken away for a time. If it happens again, it will be taken away permanently.

- We understand “impaired” means the following: _____.

- If over-the-counter drugs or herbal supplements are used to get high, the family member using them will be grounded for _____ days.

- If the school sanctions one of our family members for breaking school

policy on illegal substance use, we will support the school's decision, upholding disciplinary action required at school and also at home by carrying out the consequences in this policy.

- We know and respect the laws regarding smoking or taking nicotine products and using alcohol. If an under-age family member is found to be smoking or drinking alcohol, he or she will not be allowed to go to the next social event planned, even if it is an important one such as graduation parties, homecoming or concerts.

Signed by all:

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Know what
a drug habit
looks like.

Warning signs of drug abuse: Answering yes to two or more means a potential problem.

1. Does your child's mood change inappropriately such as giddiness, irritability or unprovoked hostility?

2. Is your child developing friendships with older kids of legal drinking age?

3. Is your child hanging out with an identified drinking or drug crowd?

4. Is there trouble at school - grades dropping, missing classes, unexplained truancies, especially on Mondays and Fridays?

5. Is your liquor supply dwindling? What about your pills in the medicine cabinet? Do they use considerably more over the counter medications (cold preparations, pain killers, allergy medication) than you think is reasonable?

6. Has anyone (siblings, neighbors, school officials) tried to tell you your child is using drugs or

drinking too much, whether or not you believe them?

7. Is your child in trouble with the law for any reason? Have they been suspended from school for an alcohol or drug related incidence, no matter what they said the circumstances were?

8. Does your child bad-mouth and/or ridicule education, television shows, or literature about alcoholism or drug abuse?

9. Are there signs of medical or emotional problems (stomach problems, sudden weight loss or gain, depression, overwhelming anxiety), suicide talk or gestures?

10. Is your child beginning to tell lies, cover his or her tracks, say they are going one place and go to another, asking other parents or siblings "not to tell" you things?

Three stages of addiction behavior and why parents fail to see it

EARLY STAGES

Young addict:

- Begins smoking cigarettes, or pot and drinking; may steal medications from parents
- Has blackouts
- Heavy experimentation with drugs
- Urgent requests for money, manipulates family members
- Preoccupied with finding drugs and plans activities around their search; isolated while at home
- School problems begin, truancies, asking parent to excuse them
- Hangs out with a known drug or drinking crowd
- Does not come home on time or stays out overnight frequently
- Hides most of this from parents

Parents' common response:

- Annoyed by child's attitude and aware that their influence is waning; confused about missing medications
- Notices child is evasive when questioned; notes change in appearance
- Tries to tie chores to money, but chores don't get done
- Growing concern that child does not spend time with family
- Tries to be understanding, blames school for not motivating child
- Suspicious of friends' influence
- Escalates control and demands on child as child increasingly resists
- Rationalizes this as normal behavior for teenagers

MIDDLE STAGES

Young addict:

- Abusive attitude toward non-users
- Tries to limit use or change drugs to gain control over habit
- Blames others for personal failures
- Drastic mood swings, resents parents and siblings; emotional withdrawal and guilt when confronted
- May begin stealing from home or elsewhere, or begin dealing
- Can no longer hide growing problems at school or with friends

Parents' common response:

- Begins to cover up for child's bad behavior, extracts promises for better behavior, guilt over parenting skills
- Blames child's friends
- Threatens or bribes child to change in order to gain control; maintains front to family and friends
- May increase alcohol or own drug use, prescribed or otherwise
- Begins seeking help but minimizes severity of problems

CHRONIC STAGES

Young addict:

- Routine weekend binges or daily use; paranoid, locks doors, increases security over everything
- Physical symptoms appear according to drugs used: respiratory problems, weight loss or gain, overdosing
- Gives up trying to control drug use and uses openly
- Irrational toward friends, school, parents and siblings
- Blatant addiction: chronic problem and embarrassment to family

Parents' common response:

- Assumes blame for bad parenting and/or blames spouse for bad parenting; marital problems increase
- Overly reacts to prove love for the addicted child through self-sacrifice
- Begins retaliation by calling police or through verbal or physical abuse
- Excessive attempts to reason with the child, thinking they can reach him
- Sincere search for help begins; family resources are drained to help addict while others are neglected

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When and how
to test your child
for drug use.

Consider a home drug test kit to prevent good kids from making bad choices.

Home drug test kits have been available commercially for 15 years and are increasingly popular with families as a deterrent to drug use. If you suspect your child is using illegal substances, your child's doctor is the best person to do the evaluation. He or she can make a professional assessment and refer counseling and treatment options.

As a deterrent, having a kit on hand could prevent your child from experimenting by allowing them to say, "No. My parents test me." When shopping for a kit, keep in mind that no single test can detect all substances. Most of the retail kits test for commonly abused drugs. Ask your pharmacist for advice if you are unsure about which kit to purchase.

Southern Denton County home drug kit providers

Test My Teen.com

Highland Village Police Department partners with Test My Teen to provide free drug test kits. Order one online at www.highlandvillage.org.

Kroger

4038 Old Denton Rd., Carrollton
2709 Cross Timbers, Flower Mound
1101 Flower Mound Rd., Flower Mound
2240 Justin Rd., Highland Village
1305 S. State Hwy 121, Lewisville
6805 Main St., The Colony

Market Street

3800 Long Prairie Rd., Flower Mound

Walgreens

4021 Cross Timbers, Flower Mound

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What to do
when you know
your child
has a problem.

Area agencies and healthcare providers

It's an emotional time: you discover your child drunk or high and your first impulse is to scream - *don't!* **Instead:**

- Stay calm.
- Send him to bed with the promise of talking in the morning after you have cooled down and he is sober.
- Next, have a conversation, not a confrontation. He knows he messed up and expects to lose some or all of his freedom.
- Revisit and revise your family policy if you have one. Follow through with consequences and set new limits if necessary.
- Seek professional help sooner, rather than later. Here are some area resources to help you:

Excel Center, 972-906-5522

Day treatment for mental health and substance abuse

Hickory Trail, 972-298-7323

Inpatient treatment for chemical dependency and alcohol abuse

Lifenet, 214-221-5433

Addictions and mental disorders

LISD Safe and Drug Free Schools Family Center, 469-948-8680

Counseling for LISD students, families

Metrocare Services, 214-743-1200

Evaluations and case management

Timberlawn. 214-381-7181

Inpatient care for substance abuse

Green Oaks Hospital, 972-770-0818

Inpatient substance abuse treatment

Phoenix House, 877-769-9698

Drug and alcohol rehabilitation

Dallas Challenge, 214-942-5166

Outpatient substance abuse treatment, group and individual counseling

Teen Contact, 972-233-2233

24-hour crisis prevention hotline

Seay Behavioral Healthcare,

972-981-8300 In-patient and out-

patient treatment, detoxification

WTF - Winning the Fight!

972-467-7704, Drug education, support and resources to families that suffer with addiction

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How to get help
for yourself.

Addiction affects the whole family; you are not alone in suffering.

Commitment to the recovery process ensures the overall well being of the entire family. To heal from the destruction an addict brings to you and your family, take these steps:

- 1. End your isolation.** Connect with an education or support group.
- 2. Educate yourself.** Learning how addiction affects both the addict and the family is the first step to moving on.
- 3. Learn communication skills.** Active addiction destroys family communication. The family that learns to communicate can begin healing.
- 4. Detach.** Learn to detach with love and assume responsibility for your own behavior.
- 5. Stop old behaviors.** How did you get here? Enabling, denial, blaming and minimizing the problem need to be replaced with the following:

6. Build on your strengths as a family and as a parent.

7. Get involved with fulfilling activities you can do together or alone: volunteering, teaching or helping others.

8. Be prepared for relapse. Recovering from an addiction is a process, not an event. Expect setbacks and develop strategies for surviving them.

Free resources :

Nar-Anon and Narateen

Support groups for family members of addicts. Find one at www.nar-anon.org

Al-Anon and Alateen

Support groups for family members of alcoholics. Find one at www.dallasal-anon.org

LISD Family Center

Short-term confidential counseling for LISD families: 469-9488680

The Parent's Bill of Rights

Loving your child does not give them the right to be rude, violent, inconsiderate, or self-centered. Help your children understand your rights and teach them respect for those rights. If you don't, you can't expect others, including your children, to respect you.

1. You have the right to a night's sleep without worrying where your child is.
2. You have the right to a night's sleep without being awakened by your child coming in drunk or high.
3. You have the right to live without dread of phone emergencies from police, hospitals, and stranded family members.
4. You have the right not to be called to school repeatedly responding to irresponsible behavior by your child.
5. You have the right to live in a clean house.
6. You have the right to expect cooperation and courtesy in your home.
7. You have the right to expect re-

sponsible behavior from children in your family.

8. You have the right to stop paying other's fines and making excuses for them.
9. You have the right to care for yourself.
10. You have the right to make changes in your behavior and friendships that your son or daughter does not like.
11. You have the right to go places and do things that do not include your children.
12. You have the right not to be treated badly or inconsiderately by your child.
13. You have the right to parent your child according to your religious and moral values without interference from "experts" who don't know you.
14. You have the right to stop driving yourself crazy by following each new parenting fad in order to "do the right thing" so your child is not traumatized.
15. You have the right to stop feeling guilty because your child or you are not perfect.

Southern Denton County programs for preventing drug addiction

- **LISD Safe and Drug Free Schools** program Choices coordinates with other school and community services to provide free counseling and classes for parents and LISD students.

www.lisd.net/choices

469-948-8680

- **I.N. the Know** confidential drug use reporting program seeks to help the user, not penalize them. Police departments reach out to families to help free the child from addiction.

I.N. the Know Flower Mound

www.flower-mound.com/intheknow

972-874-3341

I.N. the Know Highland Village

972-317-5558, ext. 529

I.N. the Know Lewisville

972-219-5137

- **Test My Teen** drug testing kits, Highland Village Police Department provides a free kit by mail from the national program Test My Teen. Order a kit at www.highlandvillage.org.

- **Medication disposal** venues allow residents to throw away expired or unused medications without fear of contaminating water sources.

LISD Medication Disposal Day

Each September, LISD holds a medication disposal day at high schools in Carrollton, Flower Mound, Lewisville and The Colony.

www.lisd.net/choices

469-948-8680

Throughout the year, **Flower Mound Police Department** has a medication disposal box at 4150 Kirkpatrick Lane, located in the lobby.

Highland Village Police Department has two medication disposal boxes at City Hall. Highland Village will pick up unused medications for those who are unable to come to City Hall. Residents can call 972-317-6551 (non-emergency police) for pick up.

LOCK

Your medicine
cabinet

TOSS

Old prescription
drugs

WATCH

Your children

LOVE

Your children

Remember: Talking to your kids is your first line of defense to helping them grow up drug free. Start today!

First Aid for Drug-Free Living

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