



PREVENTION TALK

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR TEEN

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Do you know the number one reason teens give for not using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs?

If you answered “**parents**,” you are correct. Research shows teens report they choose not to use because they do not want to disappoint their parent(s).¹

Parents **cannot** always be there to help their teen make the right choices. Parents **can** help their child develop skills to manage their need for peer acceptance in positive and productive ways.³

Communicate with your teen regarding the myth “*everyone is doing it.*” This myth fuels perception that drug use is normal. Research shows when young people believe “*everyone is doing it,*” the rate of use increases.⁴

Parents who develop an open and trusting communication link between themselves and their teen help their teen to refuse offers to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. If a child feels comfortable talking openly with their parent, the parent has a better chance of guiding him or her toward healthy decision making.

REMEMBER

“Every child in America is at risk of using drugs regardless of race, ethnicity or economic status.”²

For more information call:

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TO THINK ABOUT...

- Everyone is **NOT** doing it (i.e. drinking, smoking and using illicit drugs).
- Respect builds and develops respect.
- Try this open-ended question... “What was the greatest part of your day today?”

ACTION STEPS:

- Be a good listener. Listen to what your teen has to say without interruption.
- Ask open-ended questions by avoiding questions that have simple “yes” or “no” answers.
- Give honest answers to your teens’ questions. Set a good example by honestly answering your teens’ questions. This process will help build trust.
- Make conversations a “win-win” experience. If you show respect for your teen’s point of view, he or she will be more likely to listen and respect yours.

SOURCES CITED:

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