



PREVENTION TALK

POWER OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE

CSAP'S WESTERN CENTER FOR THE APPLICATION OF PREVENTION TECHNOLOGIES
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If you could do one thing that would help your child succeed in school, live a healthier life, and develop to his or her potential would you do it?

If you answered "yes" then TALK to your child. Research shows teens are more likely to delay drinking alcohol when they have a close, supportive relationship with a parent or guardian.¹

The children of today are in a rush to "grow up." Being "grown-up" means freedom, making decisions and choices about events that happen to them today, tomorrow and in the future. Parents are the role models for "grownup." Actions speak louder than words. For example parents might be surprised to find out that they influence the attitudes of their children toward alcohol, tobacco and other drug use when they involve them in their own use.²

An example is asking a child: "get me an ashtray" or "hand me a beer from the refrigerator."

Young people often say that they learn more from friends than family when they reach adolescence; but research studies have found that these same adolescents would prefer to learn about a variety of

REMEMBER

"As a parent you have tremendous influence over your child"

— JD Hawkins

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important topics from their parents or another caring adult.³ If they do not hear your opinion on the subject, they may think you do not have one. This silence can leave the door open for experimentation or regular use. Start talking when your child is young and keep talking.

TO THINK ABOUT...

- Prevention is good parenting.
- Prevention starts with communication.
- Are you talking with-and listening to-your child about life in general?
- Good communication is the foundation to build a healthy and successful child.

ACTION STEPS:

- Encourage conversation and be an active listener. Doing so builds bonds between you and your child.
- Don't involve your child in your own use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. This involvement can increase the likelihood of early use by your child.
- When possible, point out examples of negative behavior linked to substance use and abuse and the consequences. Examples can be found in movies, music and video/ computer games or on television.

For more information call:

SOURCES CITED:

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- ³ Hawkins, JD.; Catalano, R.; Miller, J. (1992) "Risk and protective factors for alcohol and other drug problems in adolescence and early adulthood: implications for substance abuse prevention." American Psychological Association Journal.

