



7 WAYS

**TO PROTECT
YOUR TEEN**

FROM

**ALCOHOL AND
OTHER DRUGS**

A Parent's Guide



WHAT EVERY PARENT NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT TEENS, ALCOHOL, AND OTHER DRUGS

- 4 7 ways to protect your teen from alcohol and other drugs
 - 14 Good kids; bad choices
 - 16 Safeguard your teens
 - 18 Suburban teens are at risk, just like city teens
 - 20 Alcohol’s damaging effects on your teen’s brain
 - 22 Your kids’ biggest protection: you!
 - 24 Recreational marijuana use: some surprising findings
 - 25 How to talk to your teen
 - 27 Preventing prescription drug misuse
-

7 WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR TEEN FROM ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

1

BE A ROLE MODEL



FACT

Teens watch their parents. Your example helps to guide their choices.



ACT

How to be a role model:

- ▶ If you drink, do so in moderation.
- ▶ Never drive after drinking.
- ▶ Do not use illegal drugs.
- ▶ Do not ask your child to bring you alcohol.
- ▶ Be very careful with products that could be abused. Examples include solvents, gases, fuels, and anything in an aerosol can. Use them in a ventilated area according to directions. See <http://www.inhalantabusetraining.org/> for more information.

If you think you may have an alcohol or drug problem, find out how to get help. Alcohol and other drug treatment services may be covered by insurance. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services also funds services for individuals who are uninsured or indigent.

To get help, call the Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline at **1-800-327-5050** (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit **www.helpline-online.com**.

“ My parents drank and used drugs in front of us . . . I love my mom and dad, but I don’t want my kids to have the same childhood memories that I have . . . ”

– Father of teens

2

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS



FACT

The most common reason young people give for not using alcohol and drugs is not wanting to harm their relationship with the adults in their lives.

As a parent, you have a huge influence over what your teen does. Sometimes parents have a hard time figuring out exactly what to say. Set a clear “no use” policy for your family.



ACT

You can say “You mean so much to me that I am planning both a reward for living up to the ‘no use’ policy and consequences if you choose not to.” Here are some reasons you can discuss for “no use” policy:

- ▶ You’re still growing and your brain is still developing. Alcohol and other substances can interfere with your development.
- ▶ It is still an offense to use marijuana for non-medical reasons.
- ▶ If you start when you are young, you are much more likely to become addicted. I don’t want anything to get in the way of your dreams.
- ▶ Inhalants are extremely dangerous and can cause permanent brain damage or death, even the first time they are used.



ACT

When your kids get older, be more explicit about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs. You can tell them these facts:

- ▶ Drinking affects your decision-making. You are more likely to make a bad decision and end up in the wrong place at the wrong time. Being in the wrong place at the wrong time is not necessarily a matter of luck.
- ▶ Teens who drink are more likely to drive drunk, or get in a car where the driver is drunk.
- ▶ Teens who drink are more likely to try other drugs.
- ▶ Prescription drug abuse can lead to heroin addiction. Heroin is highly addictive any way it is used.



“ Keep talking about the dangers. Look for stories in the newspaper. If there is an alcohol-related car crash, put it in front of your child and say, ‘I hope this never happens to you.’ Look for stories on TV, or things that happen to their friends. If your kids are not complaining, ‘Oh, not this talk again!’ then you’re not doing it enough.”

– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Boston Children’s Hospital



FACT

Teens whose parents set clear rules and follow through with consequences are less likely to use alcohol and other drugs.

3

SET LIMITS AND FOLLOW THROUGH



ACT

Establish rules.

- ▶ Discuss the rules in advance.
- ▶ Allow your teen to build trust. Reward good behavior. Praise him or her often for staying away from substances.
- ▶ Tighten the reins when rules are broken.
- ▶ Follow through with consequences. Uphold limits set in school or in the community. If your child is suspended for violating a rule, help him or her learn from the experience.

“ I think a lot . . . of why I was so wild (as a teen) was that I was starved for discipline. I wanted some order in my life — some security. Those were lonely times. I don’t want [my son] to ever think I don’t care about him or how he acts. That’s why I sit down with him and tell him why I have these rules, why I don’t want him to do certain things. He knows that if he makes a bad choice he needs to be prepared for the consequences.”

– Father of a teen boy

“ When my son and his friends were caught drinking right before April vacation, I cancelled his (plans) . . . He got the message.”

– Mother of a high school senior



FACT

Teens who are exposed to alcohol use in movies and TV are more likely to drink.



ACT

Monitor what your teens watch.

- ▶ Talk to your teen about consequences that may or may not be shown in films or television programs. For example, after characters drink heavily in one scene, wouldn't they really feel worse in the next?
- ▶ Consider movie content by reading family-friendly reviews (e.g. www.parentpreviews.com).
- ▶ Think about why you don't want your kids using alcohol or other drugs and clearly explain your reasons to them.
- ▶ You might need separate rules for alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. For example, your family rule for alcohol might be only a sip of wine at a religious service. Make sure to discuss your rules with your adolescent and ask if they have any questions. Give them a chance to talk about the rules, then enforce them.





FACT

Teens are much less likely to use drugs when parents are involved in their lives.

4

BE INVOLVED IN YOUR KID'S LIFE



ACT

Ways to stay involved:

- ▶ Listen — even when your teen is talking about things that may not seem interesting to you. Don't judge.
- ▶ Be warm and responsive: Start conversations with an observation like "You seem happy." or "You seem stressed."
- ▶ Get to know your teen's friends and their parents.
- ▶ When your kids want to go to someone's house, check to see if an adult will be home. Tell them the rules you have for your teen.
- ▶ Encourage your teens to call you if they ever feel uneasy or unsafe. Is there a code word they can use to let you know they want to leave a risky situation?

“

It's amazing what you can learn about what's going on in their lives by listening to them talk to their friends in the car.”

– Father of high school students



5

HELP YOUR TEEN BECOME WELL-ROUNDED



FACT

Teens who participate in community service and extracurricular activities are less likely to be involved with drugs and alcohol.



ACT

Encourage your child to spend several hours a week on a combination of...

- ▶ Community Service
- ▶ Sports
- ▶ Art, music, drama and/or
- ▶ Clubs, etc.



It's important for kids to see beyond themselves, to get a sense that they are responsible for helping other people. Whether they're baking pies for the homeless or doing holiday shopping for kids whose mothers have AIDS, it's about teaching them to be responsible and compassionate people.”

– Parent of teens in a youth group

For help finding opportunities for your teen, talk to your child's school or call 2-1-1 or 1-877-211-6277 (TTY: 1-508-370-4890), or visit www.mass211help.org



FACT

Teens who perform well in school are less likely to become involved with alcohol and drugs.

6

ENCOURAGE YOUR TEEN TO TRY HARD IN SCHOOL



ACT

Check in on homework. If needed, talk to teachers, guidance counselors, or social workers to find tutoring or other help for your teen.

“ We limit all screen time — Internet, TV, video games.”

– Mother of teens

“ My son has a learning disability, so good grades are hard to get, even when he tries. I encourage every improvement, like, ‘You went from a C+ to a B- in English. Great!’”

– Mother of a high school student

“ . . . [Teens] that are not interested in school . . . more often turn to alternatives, one being drug use. I hear many people say ‘I got injured.’ or ‘I didn’t make the sports team.’ or ‘School is boring.’ And then they report they were heavily involved in drugs in junior high or high school.”

– Clinical supervisor at a suburban treatment center

“ Parents who stay connected to their teens’ lives can help them to find ways to do something well, even if they are not A students.”

– Alcohol and other drug abuse prevention specialist

**FACT**

It takes a village. Teens who have support from a variety of adults are less likely to use alcohol and other drugs.

Sometimes the job of parenting a teen can be overwhelming. Supportive, caring adults in the community can make a big difference in your teens' development.

**ACT**

Seek and give ongoing support.

- ▶ Spend time with close family members or friends.
- ▶ Join activities in your community.
- ▶ Talk to parents in similar situations.
- ▶ Share your rules for your teens with parents of their friends and your relatives.



When our family had serious problems, the principal suggested a social worker. I didn't even realize the school had social workers. I never thought we'd need one. They have helped enormously."

– Mother in a family in crisis

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP GUIDE YOUR CHILD OR HELP YOU FIND COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



Pediatrician or
health care provider



Guidance counselor



Social worker



Teacher



Religious leader



Call 2-1-1 to be directed
to local programs

If you have questions or need referrals to alcohol and other drug services, call the Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline 1-800-327-5050 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit www.helpline-online.com

MENTORING RESOURCE:

► Big Brothers Big Sisters of America: www.bbbs.org

GOOD KIDS; BAD CHOICES



FACT

Good kids can make bad decisions — their brains are still developing.

Our brains do not finish developing until we're in our mid-twenties, at the earliest. Drinking alcohol during adolescence can damage the parts of the brain responsible for decision-making, self-control, memory, and learning.



ACT

Provide guidelines. Remember that critical areas of the brain are still forming.

“The areas of the teen brain that are still developing are those that control impulses, planning, and anticipating consequences. So there is a reason teenagers often act impulsively and can fail to think through their decisions.”

– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Boston Children's Hospital

“Once parents see what alcohol does to a teen brain, I think they will understand the dangers.”

– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Boston Children's Hospital

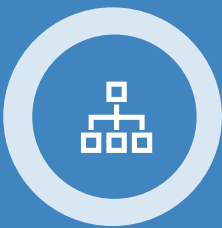
DEVELOPING FUNCTIONS IN THE TEEN BRAIN



Planning



Judgement



Organization



Impulse control



Thinking through
consequences



Understanding other
people's feelings



FACT

Parents have a huge influence on their child's decisions, but may not know the decisions youth are facing.

TO LEARN MORE:

- Visit the Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse to order free publications that can help you learn more about teen alcohol and other drug use: www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse or call 1-800-952-6637 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480).

SAFEGUARD YOUR TEENS



FACT

The younger kids are when they start drinking, the more likely they are to become addicted.

Youth who start drinking before age 21 are more likely to become addicted to alcohol. Alcohol can have long-term effects on their brain development. While most youth are not drinking or using other drugs, some are.



ACT

Tell your kids that drinking when they're young can make them more likely to be dependent on alcohol later.



Some kids are binge drinking in 7th grade; smoking (marijuana) in 7th grade.”

– Substance abuse counselor

“Many of the drugs adolescents experiment with are the most dangerous ones. Inhalants, for example, are among the most dangerous substances. When kids use inhalants, they can just drop to the ground or fall down stairs and break their necks or suffer skull fractures. Inhalants are found in common household products, like cleaners and spray cans, which are in most homes.”

– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Boston Children’s Hospital



FACT

Trying drugs can have devastating effects.

Inhalants – A Deadly Experiment

- ▶ Teach kids to read labels on household products, woodshop supplies, and school supplies, and treat inhalants as poisons.
- ▶ Tell kids that certain products can cause permanent brain damage or death when used the wrong way, even the first time.
- ▶ Supervise the use of household, woodshop, and art products.

TO LEARN MORE:

- ▶ For more information about inhalants, visit the inhalant abuse prevention site for parents: www.inhalantabusetraining.org or www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse, or call 1-800-952-6637 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) and mention your teen’s age.

SUBURBAN TEENS ARE AT RISK, JUST LIKE CITY TEENS



FACT

Drugs are a problem for both urban and suburban youth.



ACT

If your child takes Ritalin, Adderall, or another drug that could be abused, monitor its use. While it is helpful for your child, it could be harmful to another child. Don't let kids take medicine to school. You or a school authority should administer any medications.

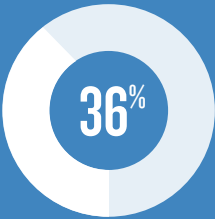


“Many people believe drugs aren't a problem in the suburbs, but I think drug use in the suburbs is possibly even greater than in the inner city. A lot of kids in the city see the devastating effects of drugs and decide, 'That's not going to happen to me.' In the suburbs, kids have access to the three ingredients needed for drug use — money, cell phones, and transportation. The first thing we do in treatment is remove access to those three things so that the teenager doesn't have the money to buy, the phone to arrange a purchase, or a car to go get it.”

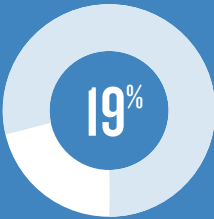
– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research
at Children's Hospital Boston

2013 “MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY” REPORTS THESE RATES:

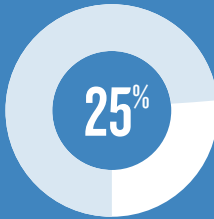
(<http://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Results.aspx?LID=MA>)



Used alcohol in the last month



Participated in binge drinking over the past month



Used marijuana in the last month



FACT

You can tell your teen that staying away from alcohol and other drugs will help them keep their freedom.



ACT

Teach your teen that such things as cell phones and cars are privileges that come with responsibilities. Set rules for their use and ask your teen to check in regularly.

ALCOHOL'S DAMAGING EFFECTS ON YOUR TEEN'S BRAIN



FACT

Alcohol can damage the developing teenage brain.

Teens who drink alcohol may not understand how dangerous it can be. Dr. Susan Tapert and colleagues at the University of California, San Diego used MRIs to compare the brains of 15- and 16-year-olds who drank heavily with those of teens who had no history of alcohol abuse.

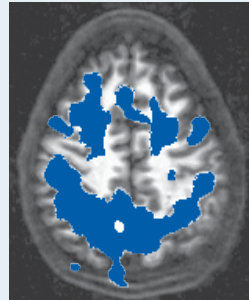


ACT

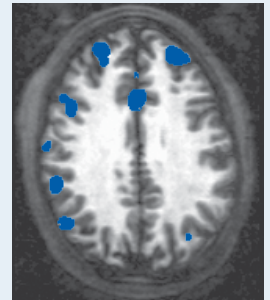
Show your teen this picture.

Explain that the colored areas represent brain activity and that the MRIs were taken when the teens were sober.

Brain Activity Comparison



15-year-old
non-drinker



15-year-old
heavy drinker

“ The biggest difference we found between the alcohol-dependent and the non-abusing teens had to do with memory functions. Mostly, the alcohol-dependent youth did a poorer job at recalling new information . . . If students are drinking so heavily that it's affecting their brain functioning, they may not be able to get as much out of educational opportunities. This could significantly disrupt their future choices, chances of going to college, and ability to get a good job.”

– Dr. Susan Tapert, University of California, San Diego

“ Many parents don’t realize the power they have to influence their children.”

– Dean of a large high school

“ I have a file in my office full of newspaper clippings about kids who die — from car accidents, drownings, or just falling down the stairs — after drinking in homes where parents supplied alcohol or ‘looked the other way’ while they drank. It’s often after graduation or prom . . . Parents need to help teens find ways to celebrate that don’t include drinking.”

– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Children’s Hospital Boston



FACT

Serving alcohol to teenagers is dangerous.



ACT

Don’t serve alcohol to minors under 21. Remind your teen often that they are not allowed to use alcohol.

TO LEARN MORE:

- **Choose to Keep Your Freedom and Preventing Underage Drinking... Priceless**, brochures for youth and parents about the legal implications of serving alcohol to minors, developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and collaborators. Available through the Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse, at **1-800-952-6637** (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit **www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse** to download or order at no charge.

YOUR KIDS' BIGGEST PROTECTION: YOU!



FACT

Kids whose parents are supportive and set clear limits are less likely to use alcohol and other drugs.

Setting limits helps keep kids safer. It's not too late to start.



ACT

Get to know your teens' friends and their families.

Encourage them to spend time with kids and families who have similar values and rules.

How to set limits:

- ▶ Share your values. Talk about what is important to you, and what is important to them.

- ▶ Clearly state the rules. Explain why you are setting them. Lay out what will happen if they break them and follow through.
- ▶ Keep discussing why alcohol and drugs are not allowed.
- ▶ Regularly catch your teen "being good" and reward him or her.



Teenagers don't want limits but they need them. They don't thrive without limits. It's the job of being a parent . . . The payoff comes much farther down the road."

– Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Children's Hospital Boston

"I didn't know . . ."

"You do now."

"It was my first time . . ."

"Bad things can happen the first time."

COMMON TEEN DEFENSES ...AND WHAT YOU CAN SAY

"Don't you trust me?"

"My trust meter is low right now. Here's what you can do to raise it."

"That's not fair. You're the only parent who won't let me . . ."

"I am sorry you feel that way, but that is the rule in this house."



FACT

Frequent criticism can lower a teen's self-esteem and may increase the chance of alcohol and drug use. Constructive criticism should be balanced with support for positive decisions.



ACT

When you have a conflict, try to work together to find a solution and don't let anger and bad feelings get in the way.

“ There are some things where there is no discussion. There are houses that Anna can't go to because they are totally unsupervised.”

– Mother of a high school student

“ Once he starts driving, always remember you have the ultimate power: the car keys.”

– Father of a high school student

RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA USE: SOME SURPRISING FINDINGS



FACT

Marijuana use is related to the following issues:

- ▶ Youth who have used it heavily have decreased lifetime achievement.
- ▶ Some studies have shown marijuana to be addictive, especially among those who start using it early, or use it regularly.
- ▶ Youth who use marijuana regularly are more likely to report symptoms of chronic bronchitis than are non-smokers.

It is important that parents set ground rules for children so that they know that recreational marijuana use is unacceptable.



ACT

Explain that it is not legal to sell or buy marijuana for non-medical use in Massachusetts.

Anyone in possession of an ounce or less of marijuana for non-medical use can face civil penalties. For those under 18, these include fines, completion of a drug awareness program, and performing community service. Except in circumstances of approved medical use, it is a criminal offense to possess more than one ounce of marijuana, distribute any amount, and possess any amount with intent to distribute. (This should not be taken as legal advice.)



ACT

You are your kids' strongest role model. Even if you've used marijuana in the past, it is best to keep the focus on them. (See ACT on page 26.) If you feel it's better to tell the truth, you can say: "We didn't always know what we do now about the harmful effects of marijuana. I stopped because I realized how harmful it was. It was a mistake and I shouldn't have done it. My hope is that you don't have to repeat my mistakes."

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR TEEN



FACT

No matter what you did in your past, you can help protect your teen in the present by talking to them about the risks of alcohol and other drugs.

Teens who report that their parents show concern for them and are monitoring their behaviors are less likely to engage in substance abuse. These teens are less likely to use substances if they have learned a lot about the risks of drug use from their parents or from schools.

When most of today's parents were kids, we knew only some of the risks associated with drinking. Now we know much more. You can use examples in the community to explain that any driving after drinking is dangerous.



At every party you go to in high school when girls [and guys] drink, there's less respect."

– Recent graduate of a suburban public high school



I worry that if I ask my kids not to drink, they will call me a hypocrite. The truth is, when I was young, I didn't think much about the risks of alcohol and drugs. And there were lots of risks. Now I know the risks are even greater."

– Parent of teens



ACT

If your teen asks about your past, ask, “Why do you want to know?” If your teen insists, you can ask, “If I did, would you want to know?” Think about how your child would react. If you decide to tell them, avoid details and stress how you have changed. Ask them to think about how drugs affect family and friends. You can say:

“When I was younger, we didn’t know what we do now about how harmful alcohol can be. Today we are talking about you, because I am worried about you and your safety.”

Advice adapted from: LifeSkills Training Parent Guide: A Guide for Raising Drug-free Youth. (2006), by Dr. Gilbert Botvin. National Health Promotion Associates, Inc.

TEENS WHO DRINK ARE AT RISK FOR:

- ▶ Poor grades in school
- ▶ Fighting
- ▶ Riding with a drunk driver
- ▶ Carrying a weapon
- ▶ Attempting suicide
- ▶ Engaging in risky sexual behavior
- ▶ Using other illegal drugs

.....

Teens today face risks like AIDS and exposure to a wide range of prescription drugs that may not have been present when you were their age. When combined with alcohol, these drugs can be deadly.

Teens who drink and cause harm are still held responsible. Drinking is not an excuse and does not change the consequences of a bad decision.

PREVENTING PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE



FACT

There is a lot you can do to prevent your teen from engaging in this dangerous behavior.

Many teens do not realize how dangerous prescription drugs can be when they are misused. The abuse of painkillers can lead to heroin addiction, and prescription drugs such as anxiety medications or sleeping aids can be highly addictive and especially damaging when combined with alcohol. As a parent, you can help protect your teen by closely monitoring the prescription drugs in your home, and by being aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse.

“ Youth may get dangerous information on the internet. It’s important to keep tabs on the sites that your teen is visiting.”

– Alcohol and other drug abuse prevention specialist

“ We hear stories such as, ‘I went to the local party and did an OC (OxyContin) and then I went the next weekend and did an OC. And then before I knew it, I was doing two. An 80 mg is \$80 and I can’t afford that. So I switched to heroin.’”

– Criminal Case Manager for a juvenile drug court, North Shore



FACT

Most of the prescription drugs abused by teens come from medicine cabinets.



ACT

Protect your teen from prescription drug abuse:

- ▶ Secure your medicines; lock them up or keep them away from your kids.
- ▶ Keep your computer in an open area and monitor your teen's internet use.
- ▶ Talk to your teen about the dangers of prescription drug abuse.
- ▶ Monitor your teen's prescriptions for painkillers, ADHD medication, or other controlled substances. If they must take them during school hours request an 8-12 hour dose so you can administer them. If they need to be given more often, school authorities are required to give them.
- ▶ If medications must be taken during school hours, give them to the nurse.
- ▶ Properly dispose of unused prescription drugs.

TO DISPOSE OF UNUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:

- ▶ Take them out of their original containers.
- ▶ Mix with coffee grounds or kitty litter and place in a sealed container in the trash.
- ▶ Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless the label instructs doing so.
- ▶ Some communities have "Take-Back" programs for prescription drugs. Check your local newspaper or city/town official website for programs in your community.

TO LEARN MORE about prescription drug abuse prevention:
Visit www.mass.gov/parentpower



FACT

Resources are available if you are concerned about prescription drug abuse or the possibility of a future overdose.

EXAMPLES OF SIGNS OF OVERDOSE:

- ▶ Shallow or slow breathing, clammy skin, seizures, convulsions, coma, blue lips or fingernails, slow pulse or heart rate, pinpoint pupils

If you see any of these or any other signs of overdose, call 9-1-1.



ACT

Prevent prescription drug abuse by seeking help if you see any of these signs.

- ▶ Drugs disappearing
- ▶ Abrupt changes in teens' finances
- ▶ Dramatic mood changes
- ▶ Lower grades, changes in friends, or changes in sleep or appetite
- ▶ Loss of concern about appearance, being dirty, poorly dressed
- ▶ Physical signs such as fatigue, confusion, weight loss, constipation, restlessness, memory loss, slurred speech, dizziness, and sleeplessness

TO LEARN MORE:

Nasal naloxone (Narcan) is available free of charge statewide. To find a naloxone (Narcan) site for overdose reversal call 1-800-327-5050 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/substance-abuse/naloxone-info.pdf.

Learn to Cope (www.learn2cope.com), a statewide support group for parents whose children are addicted to opioids or who have other substance abuse problems, provides training on naloxone administration at every meeting.

The resources on page 30 offer helplines for prevention, treatment, and other services.

For additional free information on prevention:

- ▶ **Choose to Keep Your Freedom** (for youth)
- ▶ **A Parent's Guide: Preventing Inhalant Abuse Among Children and Teens**
- ▶ **Preventing Substance Abuse Starts at Home: Safeguarding Your Children**

To order call the Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse at 1-800-952-6637 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse

For help if your child has a problem:

- ▶ **Alcohol and Other Drugs: Is Your Teen Using?** To order call 1-800-952-6637 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse
- ▶ **Youth Central Intake and Care Coordination.** Help with finding services for teens with substance abuse and medical or residential needs; 1-617-661-3991 or 1-866-705-2807 (TTY: 1-617-661-9051), or www.healthrecovery.org
- ▶ **Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline.** Information and referrals to prevention and treatment programs; (Translators available) 1-800-327-5050 (7 days a week) (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit www.helpline-online.com

For additional copies of this booklet and other free materials for other age groups, call 1-800-952-6637 (TTY: Use MassRelay at 711 or 1-800-720-3480) or visit www.mass.gov/maclearinghouse

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

Special thanks to Dr. John Knight, Director, Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research at Boston Children's Hospital





PARENT CHECKLIST

Does your teen...

- ☐ Have strong family support?
- ☐ Understand the limits you have set?
- ☐ Receive praise for staying free of alcohol and other drugs?
- ☐ Have high expectations for his or her future?
- ☐ Have a safe environment at home and school?
- ☐ Participate in a supportive, caring community?
- ☐ Work hard at school and enjoy activities such as sports, art, music, theater, or clubs?
- ☐ Learn about values through regular volunteer work, or being in a community group?
- ☐ Hang out with friends who act responsibly?
- ☐ Feel he or she can come to you with a serious problem?

**SEE INSIDE FOR TIPS ON HOW TO REACH THESE GOALS.
CONGRATULATE YOURSELF FOR WHAT YOU'RE ALREADY
DOING WELL!**

