

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: RED RIBBON WEEK AT HOME



TIPS FOR TALKING TO YOUR CHILD RECOMMENDED BY U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION AND U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION



One of the most effective drug prevention tactics for children is active engagement with their parents or support providers. By allowing your home to be a safe space for your student, you are fostering trust and encouraging open communication within your family. Reflecting the concepts your child is learning in their MUSD classroom during Red Ribbon Week, you may use the following guidance to approach conversations about drug and alcohol prevention.



4TH-6TH GRADE

As children go through puberty, they will experience many physical, mental, and emotional changes. Your child may develop stressors during this time that can lead to substance abuse, so it critical to listen, observe, and check in with your child. With this in mind, consider the following when discussing drug and alcohol prevention awareness with your child.



As with children at earlier ages, encourage your children to share their dreams. Ask what activities they enjoy and help them nurture those interests in positive ways, such as participating in art, music, sports, community service, or academic clubs. Continue to talk to them about making good choices and setting goals.



At this age in your child's life, preteens start to care more about how they look. Remind them that it is normal for their bodies to change and find healthy ways to help boost confidence and manage stress. Make it clear that activities like smoking and drinking alcohol may worsen any self-image issues, as these activities can cause bad breath and stinky hair.



Friends become very important at this age, so get to know your child's friends. If you drive them somewhere, listen in to see how your child interacts with others. If you notice them struggling socially or that they are drawn to an unhealthy peer group, try to determine why. Get to know the parents of your child's friends and share with them your desire to maintain a drug-free household.



Tell your child often that you will come get them any time they need to leave a place where alcohol or drugs are being used. Promise them they won't get in trouble for calling you. Ensure there is at least one other trusted adult your child can call in case you are unavailable if they need to leave an unsafe environment.

Source: [Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention](#)