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Parents & Guardians Must Be



**A trusted source
of information**



**Have an open door policy
for conversations**

Teens will have questions about drugs and alcohol. They will also receive false, harmful information from peers and other sources. Your child must feel comfortable coming to you, and you must be ready to have those vital talks.



Parents & Guardians Must



Make your expectations of your children crystal clear

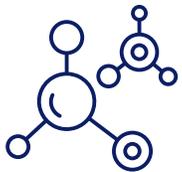
Let your child know that it is never acceptable for them to use drugs or alcohol. Using substances is not something your family does. Talk about how you know some of their peers will be using substances and some of their parents will even allow it to happen. Make it clear that you flat out disagree with that decision, but that you can only control the rules for your family. Find a balance between making your expectations clear but also showing some flexibility so your kids come to you when they are struggling or being peer pressured. Your child cannot fear you more than the consequences that can come from substance use.



Parents & Guardians Must Be



**Aware & Mindful of the
4 Risk Factors for
Substance Use Disorder**



Bio - Genetics



**Psycho -
Mental Health**



**Social -
Family/Friends**



Age of first use

Does addiction run in your family? Does your child suffer from depression, anxiety, or other mental health struggles? Are family members and peers using substances? If so, they are more vulnerable to dependence, and they need to be reminded. Part of prevention is delaying use—the younger they start, the more likely it becomes a problem. The brain does not fully develop until age 25.



Parents & Guardians Must



Model healthy behavior, habits, and routines

Parents/Guardians are the most influential person in their child's life. It is vital that you model healthy behavior, habits, and routines. If you drink alcohol, be mindful of how and when you do so, and use it as an opportunity to show that adult drinking is a choice made responsibly, not a coping mechanism or social requirement. Remember, a teenager's brain is still developing, and the impact of alcohol on them is far different—and far more harmful—than it is for adults. Your actions shape their understanding of what's "normal."



You cannot become addicted or suffer negative consequences from a substance you have never taken.

- Emphasize the power of choice
- Talk often about the risks
- Highlight benefits of a healthy and sober lifestyle



Maybe you are lucky enough that your kid never develops a problem, but your child—and if you are a parent who allows substance use to happen—may influence someone who does develop a problem.

- Everyone reacts differently to substances
- Parents/Guardians must lead by example and encourage their kids to be leaders
- Your child's choices may impact friends who are more vulnerable to addiction