

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS USING DRUGS?

Possible signs include:

- ⇒ *Less responsible*—lateness for school or class, dishonesty, late in coming home etc.
- ⇒ *Mood changes*—irritable, withdrawn, secretive, overly sensitive, excessive anger.
- ⇒ Changing of friends and or lifestyle, new interests, unexplained money.
- ⇒ *Physical deterioration*—difficulty in concentration, loss of coordination, weight loss, unhealthy or untidy appearance.
- ⇒ Refusal to be in company of family members.
- ⇒ Stealing,

Reason why young people use drugs

- ♣ To fit in
- ♣ Boredom
- ♣ For fun
- ♣ Curiosity
- ♣ Risk taking
- ♣ To escape pain in their lives

Parents

- ♥ Educate yourself about the facts surrounding alcohol and other drug use. Having the correct information when speaking with your child is vital
- ♥ Establish clear rules against drug use and consistently reinforce them
- ♥ Develop your parenting skills by taking advantage of resources available e.g. reading, seminars, counseling etc.
- ♥ Collaborate with other parents



Homestretch Avenue,
D'Urban Park
Georgetown

Phone: 225-4731
Fax: 227-8353
Hotline: 227-3454

Email: hands@networksgy.com
Website: <http://www.hands.org.gy>

CHILDREN & DRUGS



WHAT PARENTS SHOULD KNOW

Don't put off talking to your children about alcohol and other drugs. Very early in their lives children start to worry about pressures to try drugs.

Parents must become involved, but most parents aren't sure how to tell their children about drugs.



Open communication is one of the most effective tools you can use in helping your child avoid drug use.

Talking freely and really listening shows children that they mean a great deal to you

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS SAY?

- ◇ Tell them that you love them and that you want them to be happy and healthy
- ◇ Say you do not find alcohol and other illegal drug use acceptable.
- ◇ Explain how this hurts people.
 - Physical harm**—AIDS, slowed growth, impaired coordination, accidents.
 - Emotional harm**—sense of not belonging, isolation, paranoia.
 - Educational harm**—difficulties remembering and paying attention.
- ◇ Tell them of the legal consequences that can arise from a conviction for drug use.
- ◇ Talk about drug free alternatives, these may include but not limited to sports, reading, movies, cycling, camping, fishing, etc. and also involve your children's friends.

HOW DO YOU SAY IT?

- ◆ Calmly and openly—don't exaggerate.
- ◆ Face to face—exchange information and try to understand each other's point of view
- ◆ Be an active listener, allow your child to talk about fears and concerns.
- ◆ Use various situations to teach e.g. television news, TV dramas, books newspaper, etc.
- ◆ Establish on-going conversations rather than a one-time lecture
- ◆ Do not send mixed messages, you must be willing to do as you say, don't use illegal drugs
- ◆ Exchange ideas with other parents to increase learning, figure out ways to handle situations and talk about which works best.