



Parenting: The Drugs Question

it's all about relationships
not facts, stats and scare tactics

Parenting is a lot like being on a road trip. It can be fun to experience new places with your growing child, but it can also be challenging. Parents often wonder about the best way to protect their children when it comes to issues like alcohol and other drugs. Here are ten important tips parents can use to help their children (and others) navigate life successfully, including avoiding harm from alcohol and other drugs.

- ✓ **Stay connected** – more than anything, your child needs you! Young people who know they're loved have a stronger sense of self-worth.
- ✓ **Have fun**, and focus on building a positive relationship.
- ✓ **Show your child you believe in them** by supporting their interests and encouraging them to pursue their passions.
- ✓ **Help your child solve their own issues** – it helps build their resilience.
- ✓ **Resist the urge to know everything** – they're growing up and need some 'space' to find their own meaning of things.
- ✓ **Share clear, consistent expectations** – the more you discuss these openly with your child, the more likely they will understand your intentions, and the more likely they will adopt them.
- ✓ **Recognize that we all make mistakes**, and use them as opportunities to learn together.
- ✓ **Expect to be challenged** – be respectful and prepared to negotiate but clearly communicate your position and your own values.
- ✓ **Be available** – by encouraging open and regular communication, you're showing your child their thoughts and concerns matter.
- ✓ **Be a positive role model** – part of being a parent is modelling healthy behaviours and attitudes.

Helpful Resources

ALCOHOL SENSE

www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/topic/alcohol-sense

This resource, part of Healthy Families BC, provides parents and adult influencers with tips, tools and videos for starting conversations that will help guide kids towards healthy decisions when it comes to alcohol.

LET'S TALK Speaking with our kids about substance use – a resource for parents from Island Health

http://www.viha.ca/NR/rdonlyres/60CD92B6-4FEC-4C13-8CE9-E06C0D4C1C4E/0/lets_talk_schools_web.pdf

CANNABIS USE AND YOUTH: A PARENT'S GUIDE

www.heretohelp.bc.ca/sites/default/files/cannabis-use-and-youth-a-parents-guide.pdf

This guide provides an honest and thoughtful discussion on cannabis so parents can make better decisions about cannabis use—or non-use—in the context of your family and be better equipped to have productive conversations with their children.

"TALKING TO YOUTH" A resource to assist in communication about drug use and related concerns.

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/overdose/talking-to-youth>

HERE TO HELP

www.heretohelp.bc.ca

Resources to help people live well and prevent and manage mental health and substance use problems developed by the BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information (a group of BC-based mental health and addictions non-profit agencies funded by the Provincial Health Services Authority).

FAMILY SMART "IN THE KNOW" WEBINAR SERIES

<http://www.familysmart.ca/programs/in-the-know/>

There are numerous sessions that might be helpful including "Paying Attention: Relationship or Behaviour? – Talking to youth about substance use."

DISCOVERY YOUTH & FAMILY SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES, ISLAND HEALTH

<http://www.viha.ca/youth-substance-use/>

If your teen develops a problematic relationship with substance use, you and your family may benefit from a consultation with a substance use counselling professional. Talk to your family doctor or other health care professional for referrals, and visit the web site noted above.

Please note that referrals are also accepted from families, youth themselves, or any allied service. Community-based counselling services for youth, families, and parents. Services are free and available to anyone in the community directly or indirectly negatively impacted by substance use.
Tel: 250-519-5313 (South Island); Tel. 250-739-5790 (Central Island); Tel. 250-902-6063 (North Island)

GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA – MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE SUPPORTS

Important resources for information, support and treatment services for substance use and mental health concerns.

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/mental-health-support-in-bc>

THE ART OF MOTIVATION

www.uvic.ca/research/centres/carbc/publications/helping-schools/aom/index.php

This resource was designed to help school professionals and other adults engage in meaningful conversations with young people about their alcohol or other drug use. It applies the principles of motivational interviewing to support positive behaviour change.

RECOGNIZING RESILIENCE: A WORKBOOK FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF TEENS INVOLVED WITH SUBSTANCES <http://tinyurl.com/lqamv7a>

TOWARD THE HEART - A project of the provincial harm reduction program, has a variety of resources related to reducing the harms of drug use. For example, a [PDF poster](#) outlining the early signs of an opioid overdose and [tips to saving a life](#).

<http://Towardtheheart.com>

HELPING SCHOOLS

www.helpingschools.ca

Resources designed to help educators and other adults in the school community address substance use. The Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research is happy to provide consultation and support to schools, districts, and parent organizations. Contact ciandrew@uvic.ca for more information.