



NATIONAL FAMILIES IN ACTION

Parent Corps



Monitoring– Keeping Watch Over Your Child

Monitoring is an effective way you can help your teen stay drug-free, and an important thing to do– even if you don't suspect your teen is using drugs. The idea of "monitoring" your teen may sound sinister, but it's actually a very simple idea that leads to great things. Teens who are not regularly monitored are four times more likely to use drugs.

Because monitoring conflicts with your child's desire to be independent, they are likely to resist your attempts to find out the deals of their whereabouts. Don't let this defer you from your goals. They may accept the idea more easily if you present it as a means of ensuring safety or interest in who

they are and what they like to do, rather than as a means of control.

The most important time of day to monitor is after school from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Children of all ages are at the greatest risk for abusing drugs during these hours.

- Know where your child is at all times. Make sure he/she knows you're asking out of love, not because of a lack of trust.
- Personally know all of your teen's friends. Interact with them whenever possible.
- Find out your teen's plan for the day. Looking for opportu-

nities to discuss daily events over dinner.

- Limit the time your teen spends without adult supervision. The potential for peer pressure or boredom leading to an after-school drug use habit are huge.
- Find out about adult-supervised activities such as organized sports, community service, or academic clubs.



Get the Conversation Going

Starting a conversation about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs with your kids is never easy. Take advantages of everyday "teachable moments" and, in no time at all, you'll have developed an ongoing dialogue with your child.

Teachable moments refer to using every day events in your life to point out things you'd like your child to know about. Point out alcohol, tobacco, and drug-related situations going on in your neighborhood. If you are at the park

and see a group of kids drinking or smoking, use the moments to talk about the negative effects of alcohol and tobacco. Use newspaper headlines and watch TV with your kids and ask them what they think.

Get the conversation going.

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Special points of interest:

- *Eat dinner at the table with no distractions, like the TV. Your audience will be much more captive without other things going on.*
- *Try not to make the dinner table a battleground. Don't nitpick over rules, manners and finishing the meal. If parents are nagging the kids the whole time they aren't going to enjoy eating meals with the family.*

The Family Role In Addiction: Denial, Enabling, and Co-Dependency

How much a family is affected by a substance use problem depends on how long they have lived with it, how advanced it is, how much shame and secrecy surround it, and the roles and responsibilities of the person with the disorder. If the problem is left untreated, family members will also develop destructive behaviors, such as denial, enabling, and co-dependency.

Families may have trouble seeing how unhealthy they are and how they contribute to the problem.

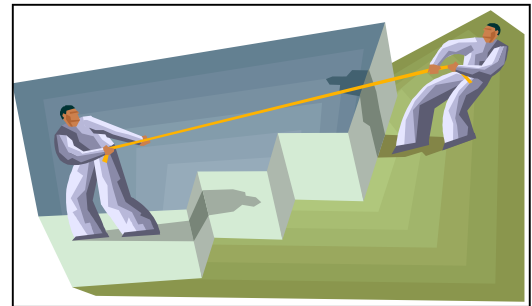
DENIAL

Denial occurs when family members do not recognize, or refuse to admit, that substance use is causing serious health, work, school, relationship, or financial problems. Family members are prone to denial about how serious the problem is, how it has “spread” through the family and affected family relationships, and how they themselves may contribute to the problem. As addiction in the family becomes more severe, the family’s denial may also, until the truth becomes so obvious and the crises so dramatic that denial doesn’t work anymore.

ENABLING

Enabling includes behaviors by family members that allow people with substance use problem to avoid the negative consequences of their actions. It can include many things, such as:

- Repeatedly covering up for the teen
- Moving someone when they pass out in the living room
- Staying silent in the face of repeated inappropriate or destructive behavior



Enabling can be done by parents, siblings, neighbors, friends, teachers, doctors, or therapists. Although enabling begins as a way to protect the person from harm, the enabler eventually becomes part of the problem.

CO-DEPENDENCY

Like enabling, the term co-dependency refers to being over-involved in another person’s life, having a preoccupation with other people’s behavior and a sense of guilt when not tending to the other person’s needs. Experts encourage co-dependent family members concerned about a loved one to remind themselves regularly: “I did not cause the problem”, “I cannot cure the problem”, “I cannot control the problem”, and “I can offer assistance, but the person with the substance use disorder must take responsibility for it and must be the primary person responsible for getting help.”

Experts also urge all family members to take care of themselves by getting enough sleep, eating right, and having time for themselves. Family members living with substance users often neglect their own care because they become preoccupied with caring for the other person.

PG-13 Movies contain More Smoking Than R-Rated Films

In a report released on December 27 from a Dartmouth study says that movie-films with G, PG, or PG-13 ratings contain more images of smoking than R-rated movies.

Researchers say smoking in movies is mostly shown in a positive or neutral light, which undermines anti-smoking messages.

Experts, meanwhile, say parents should talk with their kids about how smoking is portrayed in the movies and elsewhere. Talking with your teen about how they can make informed decisions. It will

empower your teen giving them a strong sense of self-esteem.

Tips for Parents:

Some signs that your child may be smoking: coughing, hoarseness, an irritated throat, bad breath, decreased athletic performance, shortness of breath, a greater susceptibility to colds, stained teeth and/or clothing. If you discover that your child is smoking, try not to overreact. Ask them what is it about smoking that appeals to them, and remind



them of all downsides to smoking.

Only about four or five percent of the smokers who attempt to quit each year succeed in permanently kicking the habit.

But 40 to 50 percent who repeatedly try to quit are successful.

If your child has decided to quit smoking, be supportive. Help them avoid places and situations where they would normally smoke. Take their mind off of smoking by encouraging exercise and eating healthy snacks.

“Social Host” Ordinance the New Way to Make Parents Pay

More cities and counties across the USA are cracking down on underage drinkers with laws that give police authority to bust home parties and fine adults who permit them.

These “social host” ordinances, some carrying fines of \$2,500 or more, have been enacted in hundreds of locales, according to the Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center in Calverton, MD. Many were passed after a 2003 federal study warned of the health risks of teenagers binge drinking and urged tougher enforcement.

Every state prohibits furnishing alcohol to minors, but many of these are criminal offenses that sit on the shelf for months and clog the courts, cost taxpayers more money and takes time and energy to

prove the host knew underage drinking was taking place.

Social host ordinances can be handled administratively. They permit police to respond to complaints, break up parties



and fine adults if they see minors drinking alcohol or in possession of alcohol. Parents do not get off the hook if they are out of town or are unaware of an underage drinking party at their home.

Alcohol is a factor in several of the leading causes of death among American’s youth and in a recent poll from MADD (Mother’s Against Drunk Driving) reported that 75% of teens surveyed said they did most of their drinking at house parties.

No group is keeping track of these laws, but MADD says they’ve spread rapidly as communities see them used successfully. Currently the Cobb Underage Drinking Task Force is looking into creating an ordinance for our community.

Teen trends: Inside the Minds of Today’s Teens

Parents and caregivers often feel like they’re way out of touch with their teens. So, what it’s like being a young adult today? Here are the top five trends you should be aware of:

1. They’re stressed

Today’s teens are stressed out. Factors include school work (they have more than ever. Sure the internet speeds things up but that just means that they’re given more work), college pressures, advanced placement courses in high school, and being overscheduled. The (stereotypical) Gen X slackers they are not.

2. They’re Hyper-Sexualized

Things like mini-skirts in schools, guys taking Creatine to get bulked up for sports. Real World MTV hook ups with young adults sleeping with strangers in each episode, online dating sites and Internet porn...This stuff is in their face every day. Teens are trying to act older,



while older people are trying to act younger. So you’ve got kids trying too be adults (like Baby Boomers in particular) trying to be kids. It makes for a weird dynamic-and can confuse the teen as to who’s the role model? Surprisingly,

Kids are more mature about things than you’d expect.

3. Friends are the New Family

Well duh, you say, a person’s friends have been important to every generation. But this cohort seems to equally value their circle of friends as their secondary family. They are far more group oriented than Gen Xers.

4. Traditional Family Has Been Redefined

Many teens report very close relationships with their parents, rather than rebellious relationships. Parents are becoming more like a friend than a parent in some cases. The family unit itself has changed: more single dads/moms, and



stay at home dads, gay parents who are dating, adopted siblings, etc.

5. Diversity isn’t something they’re taught-it’s their reality

This generation is one-third non-Caucasian. They sometimes take diversity for granted. Just witness the infamous Justin Timberlake/Janet Jackson Super Bowl incident—50 years ago the scandal would’ve been over the interracial flirting, not just the breast-baring moment. Today, you’ve got popular shows like Degrassi where the white cheerleader flirts with the black football player, and coming out as gay in middle school/high school is normal. This is not to say every teen is 100% comfortable with it-obviously prejudice still exists—but attitudes towards these issues have certainly relaxed. “Live and let live—as long as you’ve not hurting anymore” is the emerging philosophy.





NATIONAL FAMILIES IN ACTION

Pat Giuliani
Walton Parent Leader
Pat.giuliani@parentcorps.org

404-409-9112
www.parentcorps.org

**Drug Prevention
Starts Here**

Parent Corps®

As we begin a new year with new hopes, expectations and goals I would like to thank you for your support of Parent Corps® over the past 2 years. Although adolescent drug use in American is down by 19% in just the past 4 years we are still faced with new challenges, including the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medicines, meth, steroids and inhalants. I pledge to you that I will continue to educate parents at Walton High School and in the Walton community about these drugs and other drugs that threaten our children. Please be sure to talk about Parent Corps® to families in your neighborhood, faith base groups, athletic groups or social groups, inviting them to become members. It is important that all parents are getting educated on the trends today's teens are doing and that we are working together as a community in our efforts to help raise them to be drug-free. Please feel free to share this newsletters with others and encourage them to check out Parent Corps® web page and my web page for additional newsletter and information.

I hope you and your family have a blessed 2007 full of good health and cheer. Thank you again for your continued support of Parent Corps® and the programs we will be offering at Walton in 2007.

How to Influence Your Teens View on Drugs

Talking and making choices about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs use are nothing new to teens. Today's teens are savvy about drug use, making distinctions not only among different drugs and their effects, but also among trial, occasional use, and addiction. They witness many of their peers using drugs-some without obvious or immediate consequences, others whose drug use gets out of control. By now, your teen has had to make tough decisions about whether he would give in to peer pressure and experiment with drugs or go against some peers and stay clean.

All of these experiences-along with messages from you, teachers, friends, the media, and entertainment sources—have guided your teen toward his or her current attitude about drugs. By age 16, kid's exposure to drugs and their attitudes toward the messages they received from their parents are fairly firm— but this doesn't mean you should stop talking to your teen about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. By keeping the conversation going, you'll help your teen enter his adult years healthy and ready

to raise the next generation of drug-free kids.

Tips for parents:

Give general messages about drug use the heave-ho—your teen needs to hear detailed and reality-driven messages.

Topics you might want to talk about with your teen include:that even trying a drug or using it occasionally can have serious permanent consequences, that anyone can become a chronic user or an addict, and the potentially deadly effects of combining drugs.



Emphasize what drug use can do to your teen's future. Teens look ahead and think about their future. Discuss how drug use can ruin your teen's chance of getting into the college they've been dreaming about, landing the job she's perfect for, or joining the military and following in her father's footsteps.

Encourage your teen to volunteer somewhere they can see the impact drug use has on your community. Teenagers tend to be idealistic and enjoy hearing about ways they can help make the world a better place. Help your teen research volunteer opportunities at local homeless shelters, hospitals, or victims services centers.

Use news reports as discussion openers. If you see a news story an alcohol-related car accident, talk to your teen about all the victims that an accident leaves in its wake. If the story is about drugs in your community, talk about the ways your community has changed as drug use has grown.

Compliment and encourage your teen for the all the things he does well and for the positive choices he makes. Let them know that he is seen and appreciated. And let him know how you appreciate what a good role model he or she is for the younger generation. Let them know how deeply disappointed you would be if they started using drugs.