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Parent Leader

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Summertime Tips

Now that school is out, what do we do as parents? According to SAMHSA (Substance Abuse & Mental Health Service Administration) first time use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana jumps in the summer time. Kids are more likely to be home alone with a lot of free time and little monitoring. During the summer more teens and tweens try marijuana for the first time. What can you do? Well first, talk with your children.

Make sure you know where they are going, for how long and with whom they are spending their time. In addition, it is important to talk to your children about the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and to enforce the state laws in your home. In addition, you need to monitor your TV programming at home. You can go to www.televisionwatch.org to access an easy 1-2-3 guide to doing just that. If you do not have access to the internet, contact me and I will send you a free copy. If you are unable to be home with your children in the summer, be sure to have them enrolled in some type of summer activity. Studies show camp counselors, coaches and other positive adult figures play an important role in keeping kids drug free.

Waxhaw Elementary School Parent Corps®

"Parents Supporting Parents"

"The Courage to Be Imperfect"

It takes courage to be a "good-enough" parent. This is what the child psychiatrist, Rudolph Driekurs, calls "the courage to be imperfect." While there are plenty of perfect parenting standards to fail short of, there are no rules for how to be an imperfect parent. Here are ten un-commandments for developing the "courage to be imperfect":

1. Children should be encouraged, not expected, to seek perfection.
2. Accept who you are rather than try to be more than or as good as other parents.
3. Mistakes are aids to learning. Mistakes are not signs of failure. Anticipating or fearing mistakes will make us more vulnerable to failure.
4. Mistakes are unavoidable and are less important than what the parent does after he or she makes a mistake.
5. Set realistic standards for yourself and your child. Don't try correcting or changing too many things at one time.
6. Develop a sense of your strengths and your weaknesses.
7. Mutual respect, between parent and child, starts by valuing yourself. Recognize your own dignity and worth before you try and show your child their dignity and worth.
8. Unhappy parents are frequently discouraged, competitive, unrealistic in their standard for themselves and their children, over ambitious, and unbalanced in their love and limits.
9. High standards and expectations are frequently related to parent's feelings of inferiority and lack of adequate parenting resources.
10. Parents need to develop the courage to cope with the challenges of living, which means, they must develop the "courage to be imperfect."

Used with permission of the author, Ron Huxley, founder of the [Parenting Toolbox](#).

Mobilizing Parents for Community Action

On Fathers' Day, I traveled to Washington, DC to attend the "Second Annual Parent Corps® Conference" sponsored by National Families in Action. The conference began with Bertha K. Madras, PhD, Deputy Director for Demand Reduction in the White House Office for National Drug Control Policy. She stated that, "studies show that parents are the most important factor in helping adolescents decide whether to use engage in drug use or not. Adolescents in households in which parents set clear rules against marijuana use are 5 times less likely to use marijuana than in households that have no strong opinions or support use." She further states that

President Bush requested 12.7 billion dollars to support three key priorities for the 2006 Drug Control Strategy:

- Stopping use before it starts, by supporting Prevention
- Treatment and Screenings
- Disrupting the Market (targeting those that sell, traffic and promote use to children.)

J. Robert Flores, Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention spoke about mobilizing parents. Thomas A. Hedrick, Jr, Director and Founder of Partnership for a Drug-Free America then spoke about the prescription drug use problems facing our youth. I will be placing these articles on my blog for you to review. Again if you do not have access to the internet,

contact me and I will mail you a copy. Jack Stein, MSW, PhD, Deputy Director for the Division of Epidemiology, Services and Prevention Research at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) let us know that for every dollar spent on prevention yields \$10 in savings in health and social costs. The final outside speaker was Charles G. Curie, MA, ACSW, Administrator for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) spoke of their relationship with Parent Corps® and other grassroots efforts to mobilize parents. He stated that we are at "the core of everything possible, positive and productive for young Americans." I look forward to sharing with you what I have learned in the coming year.