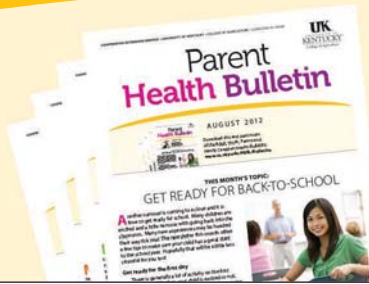


# Parent Health Bulletin



OCTOBER 2014

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

# TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT DRUGS

It is important to talk to your child about how drugs make changes to our bodies and the way our bodies work. It may seem that younger children are getting exposed to drugs. A Partnership for a Drug-Free America recognizes that 11 million American children and young adults between the ages of 12-29 need help with drug and alcohol problems.

As a parent you can be a big help when talking to your child about drugs. Kids that talk and learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are 50 percent less likely to use drugs. Here are some ideas to start a conversation with your child about drugs.

### Legal drugs

There are legal drugs and it is likely that you and your child have taken such drugs. Talk to your child about medicines and how they are legal drugs when taken correctly. You can talk about what a prescription is and how important it is to follow the doctor's directions. You will also want to talk about

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# Illegal drugs can harm the body, especially a kid's body, because of physical and brain development.

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how it is not legal to take someone else's drugs or to take more of the drug than the doctor prescribed.

Cigarettes and alcohol are also legal drugs when they are used at the proper age. In the United States, you have to be 18 to legally buy cigarettes and 21 to legally buy alcohol. Smoking can harm the body and excessive drinking can lead to many health problems.

## Illegal drugs

When people talk about drugs or a drug problem, illegal drugs often are involved. Drugs such as marijuana, Ecstasy, LSD, cocaine, methamphetamine (meth) and heroin are considered illegal. Talk to your child about how these types of drugs can harm the body, especially a kid's body, because of physical and brain development. Many of these drugs can also damage the body's organs.

You may want to talk to your child about how drugs affect school or sport performance. If a person is using illegal drugs or legal drugs in an illegal manner, he or she often is less likely to be doing well in school or sports. Drugs can make it hard to think about doing the right thing and sometimes, people on drugs do very dangerous things.

## If your child asks: Why would someone use drugs?

There are different reasons why people use drugs. Talk to your child about some of the reasons such as:

- he or she wants to fit in with another group of people

*A Partnership for a Drug-Free America recognizes that 11 million American children and young adults between the ages of 12-29 need help with drug and alcohol problems.*



- he or she is "bored" or has "nothing better to do"
- he or she does not think about what is bothering them when they use drugs

Using drugs often causes even more problems. Talking to your children about drugs is not easy, but it is very important to start sooner rather than later. Here are some sources to use for more information:

- Tips for Parents on Keeping Children Drug Free <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/involve/drugfree/drugfree.pdf>
- D.A.R.E <http://www.dare.org/>
- Partnership for Drug Free Kids <http://www.drugfree.org>

## REFERENCES:

- DrugFree. Org (2014) Drug and Alcohol Fact Sheet <http://www.drugfree.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Partnership-Drug-Alcohol-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
- Nemours KidsHealth (2014) What you need to know about drugs [http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/drugs\\_alcohol/know\\_drugs.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/drugs_alcohol/know_drugs.html)

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