

Tips for talking to your children about drugs at all ages:



Ages 2-4

- Children are too young to understand what drugs are.
- Promote healthy living.
- Encourage positive decision making.
- Encourage personal responsibility.
- Teach children to avoid dangerous household chemicals.



Ages 5-8

- Talk about short-term consequences of alcohol and other drugs. Long-term consequences are too difficult to comprehend.
- Condemn drug-related messages in media.
- Set clear rules for behavior.
- Promote problem-solving skills.
- Teach kids to avoid dangerous situations.



Ages 9-12

- Preach the importance of rules.
- Teach them how to say no to drugs.
- Empower them to make good decisions.
- Keep drug-related conversations fact based.
- Teach preteens the difference between fantasy and reality.



Ages 13-15

- Ensure teens know the consequences of breaking rules.
- Praise teens for positive decisions.
- Show interest in their daily lives.
- Teach them the negative effects drugs have on physical appearance.
- Don't rely on schools to prevent drug abuse.



Ages 16-18

- Use detailed, realistic messages when talking about drugs.
- Emphasize consequences of drugs, such as decreasing the chances of getting into college.
- Challenge them to be positive leaders.
- Use news reports as starters for drug-related conversations.
- Reward them for making positive choices.

Adapted from Partnership for Drug-Free Kids prevention tips.