

Talking: The Antidrug

As a parent, it's important to have regular, non-judgmental talks with your child or teen about the dangers of alcohol and other drugs. Use age-appropriate explanations, and warn them of the dangers. For example; explain how alcohol and other drugs interfere with young people's motivation, attention, memory and motor skills. Alcohol use at an early age has an effect on brain development, and it can lead to poor school performance and destroy a person's ability to achieve their goals. Let your child or teen know that these aren't the outcomes you want for them.

DO:

- Be available to speak with your child. Make it easy for your child to talk with you and be honest with you.
- Believe in your own power to help your child to avoid using alcohol.

DON'T

- Don't react in anger-even if your child makes a statement that shocks you.
- Don't expect a perfect conversation; most of them won't be.
- Don't do all the talking. An important part of connecting with your child is LISTENING. Aim for a 50-50 conversation-you talk half the time and listen the other half.
- If they ask questions about something you don't know don't improvise. Tell your child that you will need to do some research and get back to them.