

Connecting With Your Teen

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Do your teens spend less time with the family and more with friends? It's because they need to learn to think for themselves, and relationships with friends help them do that. During this time teens still need your love, support, and guidance as their parents.

Simple, everyday activities can reinforce the connection with your teen. Make room in your schedule for special times, but also take advantage of routine activities to show that you care. A few tips:



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Plan family connections; at least one family dinner each week that accommodates your teen's schedule is important and usually possible.

Look for everyday opportunities to bond with your teen. Time spent driving or walking the dog together offer chances for your teen to talk about what is on their mind. Try to listen more than you talk.

Get involved. Go to your teen's games and activities when you can. Ask about homework and school projects. Look for chances to learn about things that interest your teen.

Get to know your child's friends. Knowing who their friends are is an important way to connect with your teen. Make your home a welcoming place for his or her friends. Get to know friends' parents when possible.

The Greeting Checklist



The Hug is one of your best and most effective tools in the fight against substance abuse. Not only

can it tell you things about what your child is doing, but it can also reveal clues about what your child's friends are doing. Most importantly, it can bring you and your child closer together, maintain your strong rapport, and even help you respond to the prominent events of their life.

As complex as the issue of substance abuse is, the benefit of research has removed much of the mystery. We now know there to be specific factors that can either cause, or prevent a child from going down the wrong road.

If you address these factors early and thoroughly, you can virtually inoculate your child from the allure of substance abuse. As mentioned in "[Prevention Made Simple](#)", the best defense against substance abuse is the creation of an intrinsic belief system. Once in place, this belief system will shield your child in a way that no lecture, no punishment and no incentive based technique ever could. It's an investment that will save you years of worry and spare you endless frustration. But there's one caveat, this "inoculation" is actually a course of treatment that begins around age 3. You have a limited window of opportunity to do it, and by the time your child reaches the age of 14, you've either got it or you don't.

The good news is that our advice to you is the same, regardless of your child's age. So even if you realize that you've missed the mark during the critical early years, you've still got a chance to administer a solid booster in the pre-teen years. One last warning though, if you've already noticed that your teenage child is experimenting with alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, *you're in the wrong place*. Substance abuse is already part of your life, probably more so than you expect. For more information: "[Responding to Substance Abuse](#)"

Pre-College Parental Chat May Reduce Freshman Drinking

Parents who want to help their teens better navigate the world of college drinking

might consider a pre-college chat on the topic. New research suggests it will help douse their desire to imbibe when they hit campus.

"The research shows parents do influence a teen's decisions about drinking, even at this age," said study co-author Michael Cleveland, a research assistant professor at the Prevention Research Center at Pennsylvania State University.

Full article: [here](#).

CHEMICAL HEALTH TREND CORNER:



E-Cigarettes The newest nicotine fad is growing in popularity among our teens.

What is it? The e-cigarette is an electronic cigarette that looks and appears like the real deal but delivers nicotine to the lungs via vaporized liquid, not smoke, which means no tar or carbon monoxide are inhaled.

Why? It was originally invented and marketed as a way to kick the habit of smoking as you decreased the dosage of nicotine smoked. Teenagers are able to smoke without the smell or smoke trail. This has made it very easy for teenagers to hide their nicotine habit from parents, school and legal authorities.

Age restriction to purchase? You may purchase liquid flavored nicotine at your desired strength and fill up the dispenser which holds several hits.

Even though you need to be 18 years of age, teenagers are getting their hands on these e-cigarettes and liquid flavored nicotine.

Are Alcohol and Drugs Affecting Your Life?

Are you a teen concerned about your use – abuse – of alcohol and other drugs in your life? By answering 20 questions, you may be able to determine if you or someone you know is at risk of alcohol and/or drug dependence and in need of immediate assistance.

Self-Test for Teenagers

<http://www.ncadd.org/index.php/for-youth/self-test-for-teens>

'Cinnamon challenge' fad presents serious danger to teens, doctors say

Don't take the cinnamon challenge. That's the advice from doctors in a new report about a dangerous prank depicted in popular YouTube videos but which has led to hospitalizations and a surge in calls to U.S. poison centers.



The fad involves daring someone to swallow a spoonful of ground cinnamon in 60 seconds without water. But the spice is caustic, and trying to gulp it down can cause choking, throat irritation, breathing trouble and even collapsed lungs, the report said.

Full article:

http://www.twincities.com/national/ci_23083900/cinnamon-challenge-fad-presents-serious-danger-teens-doctors

Synthetic drugs 'far from gone away'

Two years after the mass overdose at a house party in Blaine, synthetic drug use continues across the state.

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In the weeks following 19-year-old Trevor Robinson's death, Minnesota lawmakers scrambled to find language that would better keep the substances out of Minnesota's head shops, music stores and other establishments selling them under the claim that they aren't intended for human consumption and don't contain specifically banned substances.

Full article:

http://www.twincities.com/minnesota/ci_2964561/synthetic-drugs-far-from-gone-away

**Having a drinking party
at your house?**



CONSIDER US INVITED. 

A new social host ordinance in McLeod County makes it a crime to knowingly provide a place where underage drinking occurs.

The consequences:
up to 90 days in jail and up to a \$1,000 fine
Teens who host parties can also be charged under social host.



For more information on social host ordinance,
visit <http://mcleodmeada.org>
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