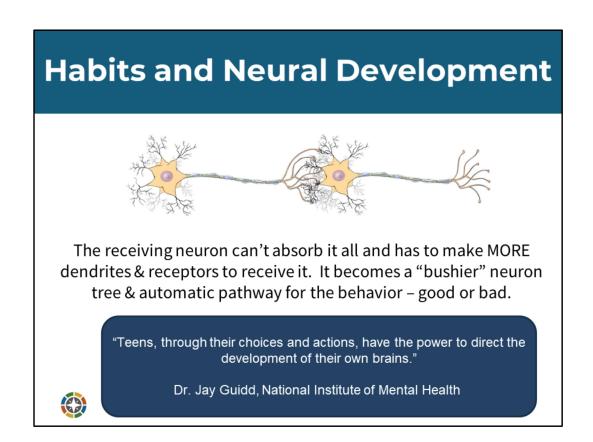


The strength of a child's life starts in the family. Families guide us, mold us and sustain us, but they can face many challenges; pressure, stress, communication, school challenges, behavioral problems. This workshop will discuss strategies to overcome the difficulties while strengthening family bonds to prevent problems and navigate them together.



Understanding how we and our children behave means understanding brain development. Since our brain affects everything in our body, our thoughts, feelings, and actions, it's essential for us to know how to teach our children to use their brains to develop healthy habits and create vital relationships.

Developing a strong family is something that parenting adults and children/teens do together. Researchers have discovered that we can use our brain development to make better decisions and that teaching children brain science and behavior will help their life outcomes.

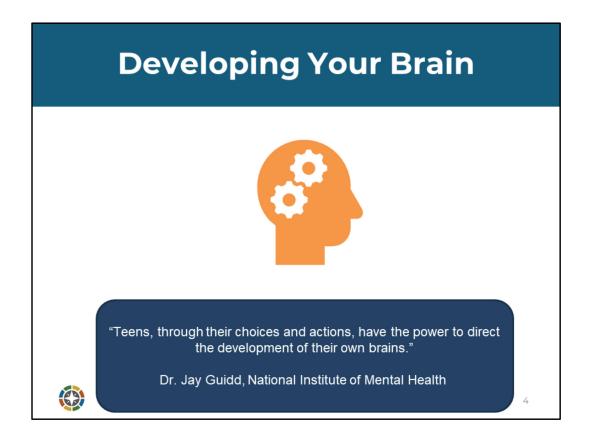


Your brain comes pre-hardwired to produce pleasure neurochemicals that make you feel good when you do prosocial behaviors. (Prosocial behaviors are things that benefit both you and society.) So, when we do good, like helping others, we feel good. Your brain makes about 150 neuro-chemicals., like dopamine (makes you feel happy), serotonin (makes you feel calm), and adrenaline (which speeds up body processes when faced with a threat.)

If we repeatedly think or intentionally repeat an action, the neuron sends more and more of the chemical each time. The receiving neuron can't absorb it all, so it grows new dendrites and receptors to receive it. That is how your kids wired their brain neurons to direct their bodies to walk, talk, feed themselves, or do math. At first, a skill might be difficult, and as babies, they had to work hard at it and keep trying. But now, walking is an

automatic pathway wired into their brains. That same principle is applied to behavior and they (and you) can direct new pathways.

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Brain health Is crucial to behavior Because oftentimes when our children choose a negative behavior, they receive a reward. It could be our attention or some other social reward, but in order to direct your brain to choose

healthy behaviors, they have to practice them. The more our kids practice healthy behaviors, the more their brains will make a strong connection towards those healthy behaviors. We can assist them in choosing those

healthy behaviors with a few essential parenting skills that we'll talk about today.

THE IMPORTANT POINT TO REMEMBER HERE IS: What we choose to learn, do and say thus becomes "wired" into the physical structure of our brain! The more we study and learn, the smarter our brain grows—not just in that one area—but smarter overall! With a bit of effort and practice, we can change our brain for the better, which changes our habits, and improves our life.

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Youth Substance Use Facts

- Most Youth don't use
- Alcohol, Marijuana, and vaped nicotine are the most commonly used substances in adolescence.*
- Addiction is a childhood disease
- Marijuana has drastically changed
- Fentanyl is a game changer

2021 Monitoring the future survey

5



2021 Monitoring the future survey



Strong families avoid many adverse outcomes: substance abuse, teen pregnancy, school failure, aggression, and delinquency." (Hops et al., 2001)

The 3 skills needed to parent towards Prevention



Bonding

Creating warm, loving relationships, so a child feels safe, valued and loved.



Boundaries

Clear, firm rules against anti-social behavior, including not using alcohol or drugs.



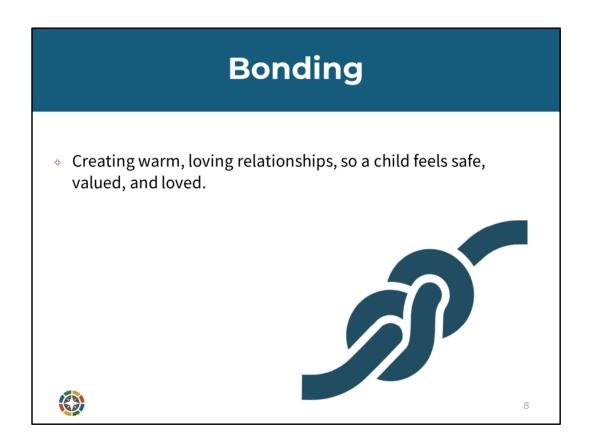
Monitoring

making sure they always stay in a healthy social environment. And monitoring your children's emotional well-being – like asking if they are happy, and mindfully listening to them.



7

Let's look at the three overarching skills of bonding boundaries and monitoring to see what everyday tips and tricks we can use for each one.

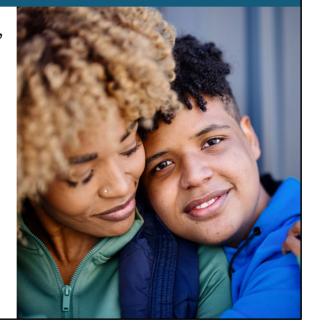


Research shows it is necessary to bond with children BEFORE giving them negative consequences, or the consequences won't be effective.

- Introduction 15 © 2012 Dr. Karol Kumpfer and Jaynie Brown

Bonding Skills

- ♦ One-on-One "My Time"
- Look for and compliment the good each day
- Have pleasant family meals together





Let's look at the following Bonding Skills:

One-on-One "My Time"

Look for and compliment the good each day

Have pleasant family meals together

One-on-One "My Time"

Do:

- Have fun playing one-on-one with each child daily.
- Let your child or teen pick the activity.
- Cheerfully give your undivided attention for 15 minutes.
- Notice the good your children do and make positive comments.

Do Not:

- Begrudge the time together--it will pay big dividends.
- Correct, criticize or offer suggestions for improvement.
- Ask "leading questions" to teach a lesson or push your point of view



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The purpose of My Time is three-fold a) to train parents to look for the good and give positive attention to children daily, b) to remind a child how good a parent's positive attention is so they want more of it, c) to increase bonding between parent and child and or teen.

"My Time" is a phrase coined by Dr. Karol Kumpfer, the creator of the Strengthening Families Program, to describe an essential skill of playing one-on-one with each child for 10 – 15 minutes DAILY. "MY TIME" IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS a parent can practice throughout kids lives.... The basic rules for My Time are: 1) The child gets to choose the activity 2) The parent's job is to notice the good and make only SINCERE positive comments to the child as they play together. 3) Parent is not to ask questions, nor give directions or suggestions, nor criticize. It is to be only a happy, positive playtime for your child. Having fun in one-on-one playtime creates feel-good bonding chemicals in a child's brain. Combining enjoyable play with sincere positive comments helps create warm and loving relationships we call "bonding," which is vital to good mental and emotional health.

Set a goal to spend 10-15 minutes of individual "One-on-One" playtime with each child every day. The rules for My Time are simple: your child gets to pick the game or activity, and the parent refrains from offering any criticism or suggestions. You relax, make positive comments, and enjoy spending a few moments together. For

variety, help your child make a list of fun games you can play in 10-15 minutes. Cut the list into strips and put them in a jar. Each day, let your child pull one out and do it. Dr. Amen, a renowned psychiatrist and brain disorder specialist, considers one-on-one playtime so essential to a child's mental health that he writes it on a prescription pad and gives it to a parent to fulfill.

THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS OF DOING "MY TIME" 1) Trains parents to look for the good 2) Increases parent's ability to say positive things to a child 3) Creates feel-good bonding chemicals in a child's brain, so they feel more attached to the parent 4) Shows a child that they are valued by the parent paying positive attention 5) Reminds a child how good a parent's positive attention feels -- so they want more of it 6) Strengthens the parent-child bond before attempting new approaches to Positive Discipline.

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Look for and Compliment the Good Each Day







Use Reinforcing
Compliments. Reinforcing
Compliments are
compliments that
encourage increase of good
behaviors.

Refrain from criticizing. If you need to give correction, keep a 4:1 ratio of positive comments to corrections. Ignore minor annoying behavior and praise the "positive opposite" of the negative behavior.



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We all have an "Emotional Bank Account." Compliments are like deposits in our account and increase bonding and positive behavior. They tell people what they did right, trigger rewarding, feel-good brain chemicals, so they want to keep doing it, and create bonding, so they like you and want to please you. We make compliments more effective by saying how the behavior benefits the person and adding a gentle touch. These are called "Reinforcing Compliments." We need to pair compliments with kindness, or the compliments we give won't count. Criticism makes withdrawals from our Emotional Bank Account. Children need at least a 4:1 ratio of positives to corrections to be emotionally healthy. Make a plan to STOP criticizing family members.



Another bonding strategy is to have pleasant family dinners.

In a study of 3000 volunteers wearing pagers worldwide, they were asked to record what they were doing and their level of happiness each time their pager buzzed. The highest happiness ratings came from eating a meal with family or friends. Eating together helps to bond. Family dinners are essential because families need time each day to connect; and for children to feel loved and nurtured.

• Research shows that children who have dinner with their families at least 3-5 times a week are 33% less likely to use alcohol or drugs. If family dinner is not possible – try making breakfast a main meal and bonding time. If that is impossible, try to have at least a snack together before bedtime, where you connect.

BONDING Checklist Creating Warm, Loving Relationships

- ✓ We tell our children we love them and make a point to look for and compliment the good in each family member. We avoid harsh criticism.
- ✓ We spend 10-15 minutes of one-on-one "My Time" with each child almost every day.
- ✓ We eat a meal together as a family at least three times a week and make our time together pleasant.
- ✓ We hold a weekly family meeting.

Here are a few other strategies to make a habit of bonding

Boundaries

 Clear, firm rules against using drugs and alcohol or anti-social behavior.

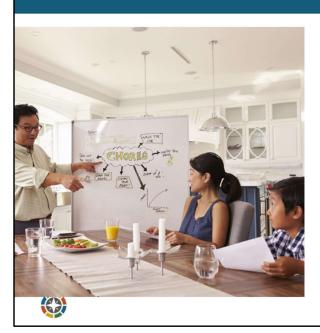


14



Research shows children want and need clear rules. Rules help them feel more secure, learn right from wrong, develop prosocial values, and grow up to be more responsible adults. Parents need to decide what qualities and behaviors they want from their children and make rules that reinforce them. Children should be involved in helping to make the rules, so they accept them.

Skills to Set Boundaries



- ♦ Make family rules
- Set up and use a system to reward good behavior
- Assign children responsibilities
- ♦ Make positive routines
- Use Positive Discipline, with consistent, mild, pre-established consequences

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Family Rules and Rewards

Ask yourselves...What rules would help?

- Create love and peace in our family?
- Create an orderly, well-managed home?
- Teach children pro-social values?
- Train children to become responsible, thoughtful adults?
- Protect our children, and prevent their drug and alcohol use?



Research shows children want and need **clear rules**. Rules help them feel more secure, learn right from wrong, develop prosocial values, and grow up to be more responsible adults.

Parents need to decide what qualities and behaviors they want from their children and make rules that reinforce them. Children should be involved in helping to make the rules, so they accept them.

A few tips:

- -every family is different, and needs different rules, and that is okay. The critical thing to remember is not to make too many rules
- no more than eight or ten -- or kids can't remember them, and family life might seem too ridged. Here are five questions you might want to consider as you craft rules that reinforce what you want to happen in your home: "What rules would help us:
- 1) Create love and peace in our family?
- 2) Create an orderly, well-managed home?
- 3) Teach children prosocial values?
- 4) Train children to become responsible, thoughtful adults?
- 5) Protect our children, and prevent their drug and alcohol use?

Rewards are the best way to change children's behavior. Rewards must be

rewarding to the youth and include social rewards, like compliments or hugs; privileges, like activities or attending special events; or material rewards, like clothes, treats, money, or games. Social rewards are most effective. Rewards need to be something kids like and value, or it is not a reward to them, and they won/t want to work for it.



Responsibilities

Responsibilities help children:

- Learn important life-skills
- Develop a positive work ethic
- Feel a part of the family
- Feel competent
- Have higher self-esteem

BOUNDARIES Checklist Setting Clear, Firm Rules

- ✓ We have clear, firm family rules that are fair and consistently enforced.
- ✓ We talk about our rules on no alcohol, tobacco, or drug use; if alcohol or drugs show up at a party, kids are to call us and come home.
- ✓ We encourage and support schoolwork; we have set times for kids to do homework.
- ✓ We divide household chores among family members.
- ✓ We have rules (curfew) for each kid about what time to be home.
- ✓ We encourage our kids to participate in activities that promote a positive sense of self.
- ✓ We help our children develop skills in goal-setting, communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution.

Here are a few other strategies to make a habit of setting boundaries

Monitoring

Making sure children stay in a healthy social environment. This includes monitoring your children's emotional well-being — like asking if they are happy, and mindfully listening to them.





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Monitoring lets kids know that their parents care enough about them to provide the supervision they need to keep them safe. Monitoring keeps kids from doing some risky things. Parental monitoring gives kids an incentive to say "No" to their friends for fear of getting caught or because the monitoring policy gives them an excuse to say "No" and not lose face.

Skills to Monitor

- Teach them that alcohol, tobacco, and drugs harm the developing teen brain. Help them to practice saying no.
- * Talk, they hear you!
- Teach kids to choose friends wisely, monitor their activities and emotional well-being, get to know your children's friends and their parents, and share your "no alcohol or drugs" rules with them.
- Share pro-social family values; enjoy family traditions.



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Let's look at the following Skills to monitor

Teach them that alcohol, tobacco, and drugs harm the developing teen brain. Help them to practice saying no.

Talk, they hear you!

Teach kids to choose friends wisely, monitor their activities and emotional well-being, get to know your children's friends and their parents, and share your "no alcohol or drugs" rules with them.

Share pro-social family values; enjoy family traditions.

5 Conversation Goals

Talk! They Hear You!

- 1. Show you disapprove of underage drinking and other drug misuse.
- 2. Show you care about your teen's health, wellness, and success.
- Show you're a good source of information about alcohol and other drugs.
- Show you're paying attention and you will discourage risky behaviors.
- 5. Build your kid's skills and strategies for avoiding drinking and drug use.

https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you

Parents have far more influence in their teen's lives than we often believe. Kids report that parents are the most significant influence in their lives, even more than peers. They also report that parental disapproval of drinking is the number one reason they don't drink; finally, when parents bond clear no alcohol rules and monitor teens' activities, teens are much less likely to engage in risky behavior. The nationwide talk they hear you campaign is based on the premise that parents influence team decision-making. Here are five goals that will make a big difference when talking to your kids about this important topic.

Show you disapprove of underage drinking and another drug misuse. Over 80 percent of young people ages 10–18 say their parents are the leading influence on their decision whether to drink or not. Please don't assume they know how you feel about drinking and substance use. Send a clear and strong message that you disapprove of underage drinking and the use or misuse of other drugs.

Show you care about your teen's health, wellness, and success. Young people are more likely to listen when they know you're on their side. Reinforce why you don't want your child to drink or use other drugs—because you want them to be happy and safe. The conversation will go a lot better if you're open and show your concern for their well-being.

Show you're a good source of information about alcohol and other drugs. You want your teen to make informed decisions about alcohol and other drugs with reliable

information about its dangers. You don't want them to learn about alcohol and other drugs from unreliable sources. Establish yourself as a trustworthy source of information.

Show you're paying attention, and you will discourage risky behaviors. Young people are more likely to drink or use other drugs if they think no one will notice. Show that you're aware of what your teen is up to, but subtly do this and try not to pry. Ask about friends and plans because you care, not because you're judging—you are more likely to have an open conversation.

Build your kid's skills and strategies for avoiding drinking and drug use. Even if you don't think your child wants to drink or try other drugs, peer pressure is a powerful thing. Having a plan to avoid alcohol and drug use can help children make better choices. Talk with your children about what they would do if faced with a difficult decision about alcohol and drugs. Practice saying "no thanks" with them in a safe environment and keep it low-key. Don't worry; you don't have to get everything across in one talk. Plan to check in frequently with quick chats and keep the lines of communication open.

Monitoring Skills

Three Skills and Five Ouestions

3 SKILLS

- Ask questions before children/teens go out and verify the information.
- 2. Set and enforce curfews.
- Meet the parents of children's friends; share your "no alcohol or drugs" rules and ask their help to monitor. Parent motto: "Trust but Verify."

5 QUESTIONS

- 1. Where are you going?
- 2. Who are you going with?
- 3. What will you be doing?
- 4. When will you return?
- 5. Will there be alcohol there?

Parents need three monitoring skills to be successful: 1) Ask questions before children/teens go out; and verify the information 2) Set and enforce curfews; 3) Meet the parents of children's friends, share your "No-alcohol or drugs" rules, and ask their help to monitor. Parent motto: "Trust but Verify." It is essential to involve your children's friends' parents in your monitoring because your kids may spend time at their homes.

Five questions to ask and verify:

- 1. Where are you going?
- 2. Who are you going with?
- 3. What will you be doing?
- 4. When will you return?
- 5. Will there be alcohol there?

This isn't just about what they may be doing but also what they may be exposed to.

MONITORING Checklist Knowing where your kids are, who they are with, and what they are doing

- ✓ We find out where our children are going, who they'll be with, what they'll be doing, and when they'll be home before they leave.
- ✓ We get to know our kids' friends' parents and share our rules about no alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.
- ✓ We see that our kids stay in an alcohol- and drug-free social environment.
- ✓ We make sure our children don't have access to our alcohol, tobacco, or prescription drugs.
- ✓ We promote fun, positive alternative activities to teen alcohol and drug use.

Here are a few other strategies to make a habit of monitoring,

Research shows that family traditions and happy family rituals help children feel more bonded to their family, which helps protect them from antisocial behavior, including alcohol and drug use.

Family traditions also give kids something fun to look forward to. A family tradition is an activity that brings the family together and gives them a feeling of belonging. It can be something you do at a set time--like a **Friday Family Movie Night or Sunday Dinner get-together**. Or it can be a unique way of celebrating special events like birthdays, holidays, or family successes. Family traditions are ways of celebrating events or happenings that help kids have fun and feel a sense of identity, belonging, and connectedness. A tradition can also be a "family cheer" to celebrate a success, like good grades or a group hug for making it through a hard day.

A happy family ritual is a set, loving way of saying or doing something that enhances an event's meaning and promotes family bonding. These include tender ways of greeting each other or ways to say, "I love you." ("I love you bigger than the sky!") Some families have a nighttime ritual that includes reading a bedtime story or giving back rubs and songs to help a child feel loved and secure. As teens grow, it could be a special snack when coming home from school while sharing the "best and worst part of the day;" or a quiet bedtime chat ending with, "I sure love you. Thanks for

being my son or daughter." These moments help family members feel loved and appreciated.

Happy family rituals are small acts of kindness that you do regularly on a daily or weekly basis to show caring, unity, and affection, which increases family bonding and lets family members know they are loved. • Examples include • Departing: group hug; memorable sayings: "Make it a great day!", "• Nighttime: songs, stories, back rubs, hugs, calm music, prayers • Morning: hugs, music, exercise



Family play time is scientifically proven to strengthen family bonds and promote healthy child development. The science is clear. Playing together as a family is one of the most important things you can do for your family's well-being. Play is essential to development because it contributes to children and youth's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being. Play also offers an ideal opportunity for parents to engage fully with their children.

Play is so essential to optimal child development that the United Nations High Commission has recognized it for Human Rights as a right of every child. Play (or some available free time in the case of older children and

adolescents) is essential to children and youth's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being.

When you're tight on time, make sure you at least do my time with them, And then sprinkle in a few more fun family things, maybe a card game or a dance party, Indoor hide and seek. You can even do some of it on the go. Maybe when you're in the car playing a license plate game or I spy Or name that tune.

When you have more time, think about other fun activities you could do as a family. Look for local activities. Are there things that are happening in the community that you can go to? Even a park or a nature trail.

Kenneth R. Ginsburg; and the Committee on Communications and; and the Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health Pediatrics January 2007, 119 (1) 182-191; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2006-2697 https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/1/182

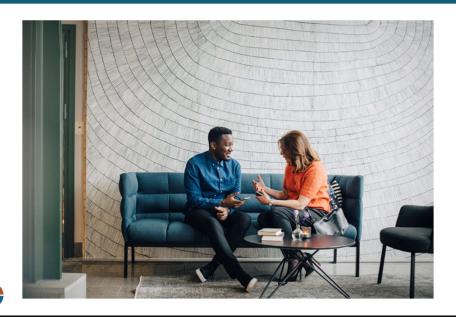


If you've just discovered or have reason to believe your child is using nicotine, alcohol or drugs, the first thing to do is sit down and take a deep breath. We know this is scary, but you're in the right place. Take a beat and prepare for the important conversation ahead. Some brief preparation now can lay a foundation for more positive outcomes ahead.

Visit drugfree.org for this and other important resources!

https://drugfree.org/article/prepare-to-takeaction/?gclid=CjwKCAiAgvKQBhBbEiwAaPQw3GhSmv5MPuic_9KbzCyUfq4kKP3Kih wro6xP-gBl252KAWhIMJI1mxoCF9kQAvD BwE

Get on the same page as the other parenting adults in your child's life



We're all familiar with children's trick of turning to one parent when the other says no. It's best if you, and anyone who shares parenting responsibilities with you, can get on the same page about substance use before raising the subject with your child.

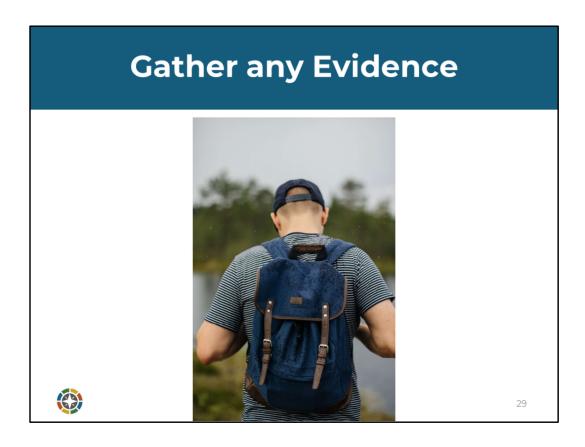
- Remind each other that nobody is to blame.
- Come to an agreement on the position you'll take.
- Even if you disagree, commit to presenting a united front.
- Pledge not to undermine or bad-talk each other.
- Remind each other to come from a place of love when talking to your child.



Your child may ask, "Have you ever tried drugs"? There are ways to answer honestly that keep the emphasis less on you, and more on what you want for your child. For instance, you could explain that you smoked, drank or tried drugs in order to fit in, only to discover that's never a good reason to do something. Focus on the fact that substances affect everyone differently. Just because your life wasn't harmed by substance use, you've seen it happen to too many others.

Don't let your response become a justification for substance use. Focus on the issue at hand. You want to keep your child healthy and safe, and this means avoiding substance use.

- Be honest but be sure they know you don't want them using.
- If you vape or use tobacco and your child calls you on this, mention that you are an adult, and yes, you can do this since it's legal but you understand that you shouldn't and it's not healthy. Underscore how hard it is to stop as an adult and that you want to help your child to avoid making the same mistakes.
- If you're in recovery, think of your past substance use as an experience you can use draw from to help improve your child's future. Tell your child, "I did these things but I made wrong choices, and I want you to know your family history."



It's understandable to have some reservations about snooping in your child's room or through their belongings. Remember that your primary responsibility is to protect their well-being. As you gather evidence, try to anticipate different ways they might deny responsibility, like the excuse "I'm holding it for someone else." Even if you don't have an airtight case, you'll be better prepared for the important conversation ahead.

Common hiding places include:

- Dresser drawers, beneath or between clothes
- Desk drawers
- Small boxes jewelry, pencil, etc..
- Backpacks, purses or other bags
- Under a bed
- In a plant, buried in the dirt
- Between or inside books
- In containers designed to conceal fake lipstick tubes, fake soda cans, etc...
- Inside over—the—counter medicine containers (Tylenol, Advil, etc.)



If you think the conversation will be uncomfortable for you, imagine how your child will feel.

Be prepared for them to say things to shock you, deny even the most convincing evidence, accuse you of distrust or worse.

Prepare for how you'll handle an angry or resentful reaction from your child.

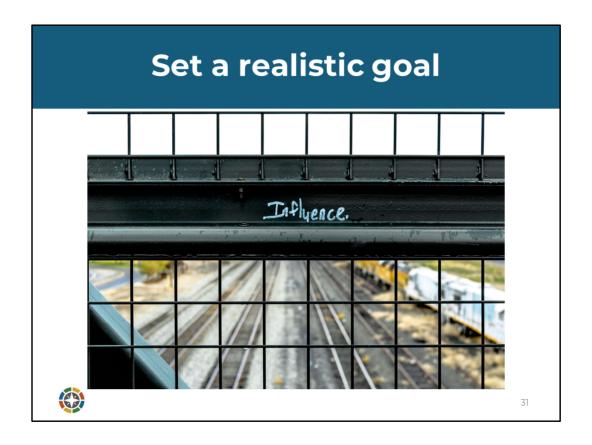
Practice, with help - https://drugfree.org/article/start-talking/

Resolve to remain calm, no matter what your child says.

Try not to be baited into responding with anger of your own.

If the conversation gets heated, take a pause and pick it back up again later.

Don't forget to tell your child that you love him or her, and this is why you're concerned.



Things will go more smoothly if you have a desired outcome for the initial conversation with your child. It's okay — and probably for the best — to keep expectations low. It may be unrealistic to expect them to admit to use and pledge to stop. A more reasonable objective, like expressing that you don't want them to use, can be a win. Keep expectations to a minimum, especially if this is your first conversation. Set a small goal and move toward it, one step at a time.



Before initiating the conversation, think through the rules you would like to put in place, and what the consequences of breaking them will be. This can help clarify the goal of your conversation, and help you set a clear next step. Read further on Setting Limits and Monitoring Behavior.

Going into the conversation, have a clear idea of the rules and consequences you'd like to establish.

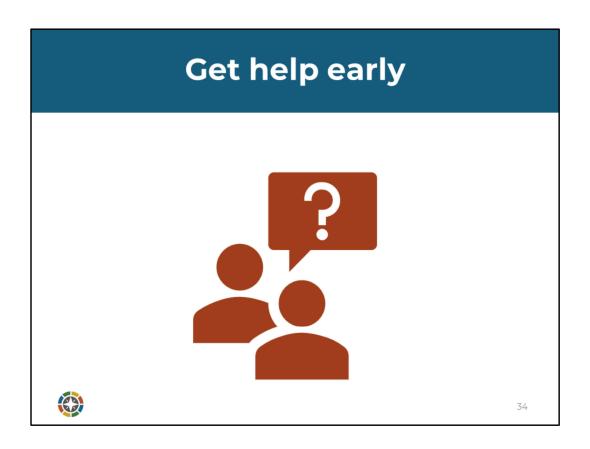
Be sure your spouse or co-parent is prepared to enforce these rules.

Listen to your child's feedback. They are more likely to obey rules they've helped create.

Don't set consequences you are unlikely to enforce.



It's important for your child to understand that a family history of addiction puts them at higher risk of substance use disorder or addiction. You can explain that their genes make them more vulnerable, creating even more reason to avoid substances.



The earlier the better

Resources

- https://strengtheningfamilieslessons.org/
- https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources
- https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/Resource
- https://www.mkewithkids.com/post/family-that-plays-togetherstays-together/
- https://www.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/mj_parents_facts_bro chure.pdf
- https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/NIAAA_Un derage_Drinking_1.pdf

