

Talking about Drugs as a Family

When children feel comfortable talking to trusted adults, they're less likely to seek answers from their peers. Likewise, children who aren't informed about drugs are at greater risk of experimenting with them. Children are never too young to learn about the benefits of making healthy choices.

- * Be a positive role model. If you make healthy choices, it's easier to convince your kids to do the same.
- * Spend time together. Doing family activities together creates opportunities to talk with your child. Even something simple like taking a walk or playing a game can give you time to catch up with one another.
- * Teach your kids how to choose friends wisely. Point out those friends who are thoughtful and respectful.
- * Talk with your children about the dangers of alcohol and tobacco use. Show children that you care about their health and safety.
- * Offer loving but firm advice with clear boundaries and consequences. Set specific goals and limits. Make it clear that tobacco and alcohol use by young people will not be tolerated.
- * Prepare your child for the fact that other families will have different standards of acceptable behavior.
- * Don't joke about alcoholism, drunken behavior or drug abuse.
- * Focus on the positive instead of the negative. Everyone likes to be praised for a job well done. Celebrate your children's successes and help them find ways to feel good about themselves.

