

# Substance Abuse

Teens who consistently learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to use drugs than those who don't.



More teens die from prescription drugs than heroin or cocaine combined.

The United States represents 5% of the world's population and 75% of prescription drugs taken.

60% of teens who abuse prescription drugs get them free from friends and relatives. 60% of seniors don't see regular marijuana use as harmful, but THC (the active ingredient in the drug that causes addiction) is nearly 5 times stronger than it was 20 years ago.

Supporting Your Child



## Understanding Children of Alcoholics

One in five adult Americans have lived with an alcoholic relative while growing up.

In general, these children are at greater risk for having emotional problems than children whose parents are not alcoholics. Alcoholism runs in families, and children of alcoholics are four times more likely than other children to become alcoholics themselves. Compounding the psychological impact of being raised by a parent who is suffering from alcohol abuse is the fact that most children of alcoholics have experienced some form of neglect or abuse.

A child being raised by a parent or caregiver who is suffering from alcohol abuse may have a variety of conflicting emotions that need to be addressed in order to avoid future problems. They are in a difficult position because they cannot go to their own parents for support. Some of the feelings can include the following:

**Guilt.** The child may see himself or herself as the main cause of the parent's drinking.

**Anxiety.** The child may worry constantly about the situation at home. He or she may fear the alcoholic parent will become sick or injured, and may also fear fights and violence between parents.

**Embarrassment.** Parents may give the child the message that there is a terrible secret at home. The ashamed child does not invite friends home and is afraid to ask anyone for help.

**Inability to have close relationships.** Because the child has been disappointed by the drinking parent many times, he or she often does not trust others.

**Confusion.** The alcoholic parent will change suddenly from being loving to angry, regardless of the child's behavior. A regular daily schedule, which is very important for a child, does not exist because bed and meal times constantly change.

**Anger.** The child feels anger at the alcoholic parent for drinking, and may be angry at the non-alcoholic parent for lack of support and protection.

**Depression.** The child feels lonely and helpless to change the situation.

Although the child tries to keep the alcoholism a secret, teachers, relatives, other adults, or friends may sense that something is wrong.

The following behaviors may signal a drinking or other problem at home:

- Failure in school; truancy
- Lack of friends; withdrawal from classmates
- Delinquent behavior, such as stealing or violence
- Frequent physical complaints, such as headaches or stomachaches
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol

## Top D

### 8<sup>th</sup> Graders

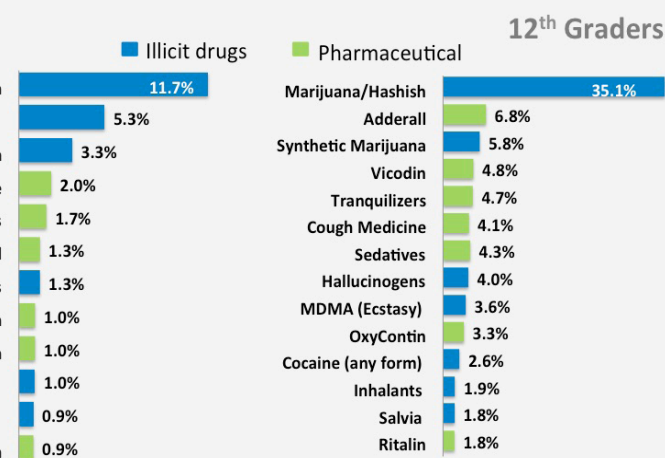
Marijuana/Hashish  
Inhalants  
Synthetic Marijuana  
Cough Medicine  
Tranquilizers  
Adderall  
Hallucinogens  
OxyContin  
Vicodin  
Cocaine (any form)  
MDMA (Ecstasy)  
Ritalin

- Aggression towards other children
- Risk taking behaviors
- Depression or suicidal thoughts or behavior

Some children of alcoholics may cope by taking the role of responsible “parent” within the family and among friends. They may become controlled, successful “overachievers” throughout school, and at the same time be emotionally isolated from other children and teachers. Their emotional problems may show only when they become adults.

Early professional help is also important in preventing more serious problems for the child, including reducing risk for future alcoholism. Child and adolescent psychiatrists can diagnose and treat problems in children of alcoholics. They can also help the child to understand that he or she is not responsible for the drinking problems of the parent and that the child can be helped even if the parent is in denial and refusing to seek help.

## Drugs among 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Graders, Past Year Use



\* Only 12<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed about sedatives use

# How can I prevent my child from using drugs?

There is no magic bullet for preventing teen drug use. But research shows parents have a big influence on their youth, even when it doesn't seem that way! So talk openly with your children and stay actively engaged in their lives.

## Signs of Use

### Physical

- Changes in eating habits
- Excessive tiredness
- Change in pupil size, red or watery eyes
- Shakiness
- Runny/red nose
- Hacking cough
- Smell of substance

### Behavior

- Change in friends (hanging out with known drug users)
- Stopping usual activities and hobbies
- Decline in grades, skipping, or tardy
- Forgetful, difficulty concentrating
- Moodiness, irritability, nervousness
- Inappropriate laughter, hyperactivity, chattiness
- Paranoid, need for privacy, secretive, lying
- Inexplicable need for money or stealing
- Change in hygiene

### Psychological

- Guilt
- Depression
- Decline in self-esteem



# Starting the conversation with your child/teen

Drugs can pose a particular threat to the health and well-being of children and adolescents at a critical point in their lives—when they are growing, learning, maturing, and laying the foundation for their adult years.

As a parent, your children look to you for help and guidance in working out problems and in making decisions, including the decision not to use drugs. Even if you have used drugs in the past, you can have an open conversation about the dangers. Divulging past drug use is an individual decision, but having used drugs should not prevent you from talking to your child about the dangers of drug use. In fact, experience can better equip us to teach others, including drawing on the value of possible mistakes.



**FRISCO**  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Student Services-Guidance and Counseling

469-633-6583

[www.friscoisd.org](http://www.friscoisd.org)

- ([http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families\\_and\\_Youth/Facts\\_for\\_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-Of-Alcoholics-017.aspx](http://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-Of-Alcoholics-017.aspx))
- (<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/marijuana-facts-parents-need-to-know/want-to-know-more-some-faqs-about-marijuana>)