

## 6 Parenting Practices to Help Reduce the Chances Your Child will Develop a Drug or Alcohol Problem

No one ever said parenting would be easy. When children hit the teenage years, the challenges are great. There are more significant threats that can affect their health and safety, like drugs and alcohol. And, unfortunately, helpful and reliable resources are scarce.

When raising a teenager, it is natural to feel that there is little you can do to change his or her behavior. But there is scientific evidence showing which parenting tips are most effective (and which are not). Parents often think that friends are more important to their teenager than they are. But studies and clinical experience suggest that parents can influence their teens.

Information alone is unlikely to solve complicated problems and nothing takes the place of a good clinical opinion for serious issues. But getting reliable information is an important first step. Despite how powerless you may feel we want to encourage you: Don't give up on your teenager or your power as a parent.

Here are 6 ways to help you reduce the chance that your teenage child will drink, use drugs or engage in other risky behavior.

**1. Build a Warm & Supportive Relationship with Your Child.** Children who have a warm and supportive relationship with their parents are less likely to use drugs or alcohol. One reason is that by being close with your child, you'll face less conflict when it comes to monitoring his or her behavior and social life.

**2. Be a Good Role Model** When It Comes To Drinking, Taking Medicine & Handling Stress. Research shows that when it comes to alcohol and other drugs, children are likely to model their parents' behaviors — both healthy and unhealthy ones. Children learn behavior by observing their parents' behavior. That means your child picks up on the way you cope with stressful situations and how you manage your emotions.

**3. Know Your Child's Risk Level.** Several decades of research shows that some teens are more at risk for developing a substance abuse problem than other teens. It is important to keep in mind that risk factors do not determine a child's destiny. Instead, they provide a general gauge as to the likelihood of drug or alcohol abuse. Here are 4 Common Risk Factors Associated with Teen Drug and Alcohol Abuse:

**A. Family History:** Family history of drug or alcohol problems, especially when it is the parent's history, can place a child at increased risk for developing a problem. Children can inherit genes that increase their risk of alcoholism, so having a parent or grandparent with alcohol problems may indicate increased risk for the child. Inheriting the gene does not mean the child will automatically become dependent on alcohol.

**B. Mental or Behavioral Disorder:** If your child has a psychiatric condition like depression, anxiety or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), he or she is more at risk for developing a drug or alcohol problem. Although not all teenagers with these disorders will develop a substance abuse problem, the chances are higher when they have difficulty regulating their thoughts and emotions.

**C. Trauma:** Children who have a history of traumatic events (such as witnessing or experiencing a car accident or natural disaster; being a victim of physical or sexual abuse) have been shown to be more at risk for substance use problems later in life. Therefore, it is important for parents to recognize and address the possible impact of trauma on their child and get help for their child.

**D. Impulse Control**

**Problems:** Children who frequently take risks or have difficulty controlling impulses are more at risk for substance use problems. While most teens understand the dangers of taking risks, some have particular difficulty resisting impulses to engage in risky behavior.

**4. Know Your Child's Friends.** Your child's friends can influence him to take part in risky behaviors. This is especially true if your child is more reliant on his friends than he is on you. Knowing who your child's friends are and what they are like helps you to be more prepared to intervene if a problem occurs. Have direct conversations with your child's friends whenever the opportunity presents itself so that you get to know them and their household rules in a positive context. Explain that it's normal to want to be accepted by others but it's best to focus on friends who are not engaging in substance use. Discuss with your teen the importance of choosing supportive, healthy friendships — and what it means to be a

good friend.

**5. Monitor, Supervise & Set Boundaries:** Research shows that when parents monitor, supervise and set boundaries their teens are at a lowered risk for using drugs and alcohol. Know where your child is at all times. Be aware of your teen's activities, especially during the after-school period, which is a high-risk period for teen drug use. Know who your child is hanging out with. Keep track of your child's academic performance. Be present during recreational events and parties — or at least make your teen aware that there is another adult supervising. Help your child with homework or other school-related projects. Explain to your child why you are setting boundaries. Firmly establish a rule that any drug or alcohol use will not be tolerated. Set firm but reasonable rules. Be clear about the consequences if the rules are not followed in advance and follow through consistently. Don't establish unreasonable rules or be overly harsh in

punishment or consequences if they break rules.

**6. Have Ongoing Conversations & Provide Information** About Drugs & Alcohol. This can help build a healthy, supportive relationship. It can also help you and your child avoid or reduce conflict as situations arise throughout their teen years. Talk regularly with your child about the risks of drug and alcohol use — especially in opportunistic situations. (Example: Seeing someone intoxicated; a news story about

addiction; before your child starts a new school.) State your disapproval of underage drinking and drug use. Research shows that this can decrease the chance that your child will try drugs or alcohol, and reduce the likelihood that he or she will transition from experimenting with drugs and alcohol to more regular or heavy use. Have conversations with your child on all topics — such as his or her activities, friends, school, job, hobbies, etc. In other words, be interested in your child's

life. This has been shown to protect against risk for teen tobacco use and the transition to drug and alcohol use. Remember: If you're having trouble communicating with your teen, seek out help from a professional. For tips on talking with your teen, visit [www.timetotalk.org](http://www.timetotalk.org).

This information was condensed from "6 Parenting Practices to Help Reduce the Chances Your Child will Develop a Drug or Alcohol Problem" at [drugfree.org](http://drugfree.org) & Sponsored by Estill Substance Abuse Coalition.

### BODY FITNESS CLASSES

The **BODY FITNESS EXERCISES CLASSES** led by Sister Loretta Spotila, RN will begin the Fall Sessions on **Monday, September 23, 2013**

Classes are on Mondays and Wednesdays From 9:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. School Central Office Building - Gym For more information, call 723-8505

## Little Mountains

### 8TH ANNUAL

# COIN & KNIFE SHOW

Buy, Sell or Trade

**SATURDAY, SEPT 14<sup>TH</sup>**

**8:00<sup>AM</sup> to 5:00<sup>PM</sup>**

Estill Co. Fairgrounds Event Building  
38 S. Irvine Road, Irvine, KY

**Free Admission and Free Parking**

Vendors please call (606) 723-6682 to reserve a slot  
40-table show -- \$15.00 per booth  
**(Concessions will be available)**

## Crooked Creek Christian Church

1980 Crooked Creek Road Irvine, KY

September 16 – 19, 2013 (7:00 PM)

### Monday – Youth Night

How to be a Godly Teenager – *Brother Leonard Stone*

### Tuesday – Men's Night

How to be a Godly Man – *Brother Ernie Perry*

### Wednesday – Ladies Night

How to be a Godly Woman – *Angela Pearson & Regina Adams*

### Thursday – Family Night

"Putting it all together" How to be a Godly Family  
*Brother Forrest Hahn*



Special Musical Guest  
Monday Night  
**64 to Grayson**

## Family Nurturing Week

**A revival of the Family**



A series of messages on what it takes to be a Godly Family in today's society

**Special Music Each Night**