

Drug and Alcohol Facts

- ▶ Binge drinking is consuming five or more drinks for males and four or more for females during one drinking session. Binge drinking often begins in early adolescence.
- ▶ Marijuana is the drug most often used by teens. Common street names for marijuana include *pot, grass, weed, ganja, Mary Jane, and dope.*
- ▶ While the teen use of cocaine, inhalants, and ecstasy has decreased, there has been an increase in the use of marijuana, prescription drugs, and over the counter drugs.
- ▶ Opioids include a number of commonly prescribed painkillers. They are highly addictive, and their use is on the rise. Prescription opioids include hydrocodone (vicodin), oxycodone, and fentanyl. Heroin is also an opioid.
- ▶ The use of electronic cigarettes or “vapes” is on the rise. Like regular cigarettes, e-cigarettes contain nicotine and are addictive.
- ▶ Research suggests that experience with alcohol triples from 4th to 6th grade.

For additional information, visit drugfree.org



WOODBURN PRESS

Elementary Parent InfoGuide

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

woodburnpress.com

Copyrighted Material

735-20

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco



Substance Information

While these substances are seldom used by elementary students, parents must stay informed in order to keep their children safe.

Alcohol – Underage drinking is widespread. Alcohol affects brain development, and there is a danger of alcohol poisoning.

Cocaine – This stimulant speeds up all body processes. Cocaine is addictive and can be snorted or injected.

Ecstasy – A popular “club drug,” this stimulant produces psychedelic effects for several hours.

Inhalants – Aerosol cans, gasoline, freon, and paint are all used as inhalants.

Marijuana – The leaves can be rolled into a “joint,” smoked in a pipe, smoked from a tube (bong), or consumed in food products (edibles).

Prescription and Over the Counter (OTC) Drugs Prescription and OTC drugs (e.g., cough syrup) are often the “drugs of choice” because they can be easily obtained from homes and stores.

Tobacco – Smoking cigarettes and vaping (e-cigarettes) are both harmful and addictive.

You Make the Difference!



Be a Great Parent! Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

At some point, most parents have concerns about their children using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. There is, however, a great deal that parents can do to keep their children safe and on the right track.

To keep your child healthy and safe:

- ▶ be involved in your child's life
- ▶ set guidelines and limits
- ▶ be informed
- ▶ know the warning signs
- ▶ take action if needed

Parents are the #1 deterrent to young people becoming involved with tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.

Keep Your Child Safe

- ▶ Promote healthy activities. Encourage involvement in school, family, and community activities.



- ▶ Get to know your child's friends and their parents. Before giving permission for your child to attend a sleepover, birthday party, or play date, talk with the host parents. Find out who will be there and what kinds of activities are planned.
- ▶ Keep tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs, and over the counter drugs (e.g., cold medicines) out of sight and inaccessible. Preteens are more likely to experiment with items found at home.
- ▶ Find "teachable moments" to talk to your child about the consequences of drug and alcohol use. *One discussion about drugs and alcohol isn't enough.*
- ▶ Be aware that preteens who are looking for a "high" sometimes inhale fumes from aerosol cans, paint, etc. This is called "huffing," and it can be very dangerous.
- ▶ Let your child know that there will be consequences for tobacco, alcohol, or drug use. *Knowing there will be consequences gives your child a reason to "say no."*

Be aware of Warning Signs

When students are using alcohol or drugs, there are often warning signs. These are some of the most common warning signs.

- ▶ Drop in grades
- ▶ Change in friends
- ▶ Change in behavior
- ▶ More defiant attitude
- ▶ Getting in trouble at school
- ▶ Talking about alcohol or drugs
- ▶ Change in sleeping and eating patterns
- ▶ Lack of interest in activities previously enjoyed
- ▶ Physical evidence of use (e.g., beer cans, odors on clothing, extra cold medicines, drawings of alcohol/drug related items, extra aerosol cans)



As a parent, your number one responsibility is to keep your child safe. If you believe that your child is involved in risky behavior, talk to your child about your concerns.

For help or advice, talk to your child's teacher, counselor, or physician.