

Parents, take five on March 5th.



March 5th has been designated Take Five Day, a time for you to **take five minutes to talk with your kids about drugs.** A five-minute conversation now and then can make a huge difference toward keeping your kids away from drugs. So Take Five on March 5th. Or don't wait. Start talking with your kids today.

For help with what to say, call the Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center toll-free Help Line.



Partnership For
A Drug-Free Iowa

1.866.242.4111
www.drugfreeinfo.org

Talking With Your Kids About Drugs

5-8 Years Old

- Now is the time to begin explaining what alcohol, tobacco and drugs are.
- Discuss how anything you put in your body that is not food can be harmful.
- Explain the idea of addiction, that drug use can become a bad habit that's hard to stop.
- Praise your children for taking good care of their bodies and avoiding things that might harm them.

9-11 Years Old

- Children this age can handle more sophisticated discussion; use their curiosity about traumatic events (such as car accidents or divorces) to discuss how drugs could cause these events.
- Friends become extremely important at this time, and older children may expose your child to alcohol, tobacco or drugs. Rehearse scenarios in which friends offer drugs.

- "Upsetting my parents" is one of the top reasons preteens give for why they won't use marijuana; give them permission to use you as an excuse, such as, "My mom will kill me if I drink a beer!"

12-14 Years Old

- Adolescence is often a confusing and stressful time as teens try to figure out who they are and how to fit in. Nearly nine out of ten teens agree that "it seems like marijuana is everywhere these days".
- Take advantage of a teen's concerns about social image and appearance to point out immediate, distasteful consequences of tobacco and marijuana use: bad breath, stained teeth, smelly hair and clothes. Point out that drug use is not only dangerous, but can also lead to broken friendships, even prison.
- Also point out long-term consequences, such as brain damage, cancer, and the potential for accidents, coma or death.

15-17 Years Old

- Older teens have already made decisions about whether or not to use drugs. Now is the time to help them continue to resist peer pressure.
- Use specific reasons to reinforce why drugs are bad: addiction, birth defects, car accidents, prison.
- These students are thinking about their futures; remind them that drug use could ruin their chances of college acceptance or embarking on their career choice.



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