



KEEPING YOUR CHILD DRUG FREE . . .

DO NOW LIST

1. **Teach** your values. Communicate them openly. Talk about why values such as honesty, self-reliance, and responsibility are important, and how values help children make good decisions. Teach your children how each decision builds on previous decisions as one's character is formed, and how a good decision makes the next decision easier.
2. **Educate** yourself on signs and symptoms of drug use and abuse. Information changes frequently. The following websites are great places to start as they are very informative:
www.nassaualliance.org
www.TheAntidrug.com
www.streetdrugs.com
3. Clean **out** your medicine cabinet – any unused prescribed medicines should be safely removed from your home; not flushed or disposed of. Call your police precinct to find out how and when you can drop off medication.
4. When requesting a prescription from a physician or dentist, request the smallest amount of medication; you can always refill it if you need.
5. Before you request medication, especially for your child, **discuss** the need for the quantity and dosage.
6. Know what you have, keep medication safely stored and monitored; no matter how well you know and trust your child or your child's friends.
7. **Communication** is the key. Communication is open, it is honest, and it is a dialogue. It involves both talking and listening. It is never too early to let your child know how important they are to you. Ask your child what their experiences have been and how they respond to pressures from others around them.
8. **Teach** them to say no, teach them to refuse dangerous substances, and to make healthy choices. You taught them to look both ways crossing the street, and to avoid the hot stove; you must do the same when it comes to drugs. Teaching implies modeling, as your child will learn more from what you do than from what you say. Recognize how your actions affect the development of your child's values.

9. Be a parent, not a friend; there will be plenty of time to develop a friendship when your child becomes an adult.
10. **Know your children's friends**, learn about their lives. The more you know, the more you can understand, and the more you understand, the safer your child is.
11. **Be aware**. If you see something, say something. **Call the police** if you observe any illegal activity.
12. **Understand** the strength and potency of the drugs available to your children, not just those available on the streets but also the medication prescribed by your own doctor. One night of poor decisions can be fatal. Communicate this to your children in a strong, yet loving way.
13. **Place time limits** on activities that keep your child isolated. Video gaming can disconnect your child from your family. **Monitor** the computer and other influences; computers should be located in a central place within your home, not your child's bedroom. Keep your child connected to your family.
14. Make **family time**. Somehow, with all the hectic demands of the day find the time – your children need to be your priority. You don't get a second chance to get time back.
15. If you suspect your child is drinking or drugging, **get help** immediately. Reach out to family, friends, school, the professionals in your community, or your local police precinct.
16. Make sure your pediatrician is knowledgeable about signs and symptoms of drug use and abuse. Ask him/her how they address the issue of substance use. Conducting a urine screen in your physician's office can alert you to a problem.
17. **Making excuses** for behavior that doesn't make sense or is illegal or illicit can be lethal. You know the expression, "if it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck." The earlier you can get your child help the sooner your child can begin to recover.

From the time a child is born
They are looking up to us
And asking
Who am I,
Who am I
And with every interaction we have
We are telling them

If you have any questions or concerns about someone in your life who you believe is struggling with issues related to drug use, please call. **Help is available!**

YES Community Counseling Center, 75 Grand Ave., Massapequa, NY 11758
(516) 799-3203 yesccc@vdot.net