



GETTING YOUR CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL

Six Actions Parents Can Take to Help Keep Their Children Away from Drugs

- ❑ **Establish and Maintain Good Communications With Your Child.** The more you know about your child, the easier it will be to guide him toward more positive, skill-enhancing activities and friendships. Establishing a close relationship with your child now will make it easier for him to come to you when he has a problem.
- ❑ **Get Involved in Your Child's Life.** Participate in your child's activities (bring water for the soccer team, volunteer in your child's classroom, attend a recital or play, help with a science project) and praise his accomplishments. Your participation and encouragement tell your child that these activities are worthwhile and will help him identify and pursue other positive activities as he gets older.
- ❑ **Make Clear Rules and Enforce Them With Consistency and Appropriate Consequences.** Making rules, explaining the need for the rules, and consistently enforcing the rules are all important measures. If you let your child know up front that you do not approve of using alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs, your child is less likely to use those substances.
- ❑ **Be a Positive Role Model.** Children like to imitate adults. Avoid actions that say, "Do as I say, not as I do." A parent or caregiver abusing alcohol, tobacco, or illicit drugs may increase a child's chances of using drugs, using drugs early, and becoming dependent on a substance.
- ❑ **Help Your Child Deal With the Need for Peer Acceptance.** Children want others to like them. Youth say wanting to be accepted, wanting to belong, and wanting to be noticed are very powerful influences. In other words, youth drug use often stems more from the need for peer acceptance, rather than the inability to "just say no" to peers.
- ❑ **Monitor Your Child's Activities.** Keeping a careful eye on your child's activities is an important deterrent to alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use. One study found that children who had the least monitoring by their parents, initiated drug use at an earlier age. Establish relationships with your child's friends and their parents. When your child goes out, make sure you know where he is going, whom he is with, what he is doing, and when he will be home.



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration

CSAP
Center for Substance
Abuse Prevention

*~ Keeping Youth Drug Free, SAMHSA'S National Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug Information
800-729-6686, TDD 800-487-4889, Linea Gratis en Espanol 877-767-8432
www.health.org/govpubs/phd711/, www.health.org*

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