



NIDA Family Check Up: Supervision

All children and teens need supervision of their activities. Supervision does not mean always being able to see your child. You can set up systems to know what is happening even when children are not with you. National Institute on Drug Abuse reports, "supervision is the centerpiece of effective parenting during childhood. When youth begin to spend more and more time away from home, monitoring their behavior and whereabouts is challenging. Supervision helps parents recognize problems, promote safety, and stay involved."

The 4 Cs of supervision can help you address these issues:

Clear Rules

Have a few non-negotiable rules about your child's behavior, and state them clearly. A few examples:

- Require a phone number for any place your child will be apart from you.
 - Require 24-hour advance notice for sleep-over parties, dances, concerts, etc. This gives you time to check them out.
 - Allow select friends (or no friends) over when you are not at home

Consistency

Supervision is most effective when parents set clear limits and follow through with consequences for misbehavior. Be as consistent with praise and incentives when a rule as followed as you are when there are problem behaviors.

Communication

Regular communication with other parents and teachers

- Keeps you involved in your children's activities
- Creates resources to deal with problems
- Builds a strong safety network for your child
- Informs you of dangerous people or places

The 4 Cs of Supervision

Checking Up

This lets your child know that you care about his safety, and that your rules are important. It can be hard to check up if you are too worried that your child will resist these efforts.

- When a child gives you the number of a friend, call it to talk to the parent.
- Meet all the parents of your child's friends to make sure new situations are safe and supervised.
- Find out about the parties and special events your child want to attend to make sure that responsible adults will be supervising.

How do you supervise when you are not at home?

- Know your child's schedule.
- Call your child at varying times.
- Have your child check in with you or other caregivers when he or she reaches home or another destination.

- Surprise your child with a random call or visit.
- Remain in communication with adults who interact with your child.
- Know the parents of your child's friends, and make sure they are also supervising.
- Stay involved at school and other activities. Show up.
- Spend time listening to your child. Find out what is really going on.

Supervision helps parents recognize problems, promote safety, and stay involved.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse compiled a booklet of positive parenting techniques that help prevent or reduce drug abuse.

The other techniques were:

- [Encouragement](#)
- [Negotiation](#)
- [Setting Limits](#)
- [Communication](#)
- [Knowing Your Child's Friends](#)