



Resistant Teens

Most children are not thrilled at the prospect of medical or mental health interventions of any type. Asking teens to stop drinking or using drugs means that they suddenly have to make major changes to their lifestyle. It is typical for adolescents to resist making these changes.

Teens who need [Intensive Outpatient Treatment](#) for [Substance Use Disorders](#) typically spend a great deal of time (plus energy and money) planning for their drug/alcohol use and then using the drugs/alcohol they have gotten. After beginning treatment, it can take 2-4 weeks before resistant teens begin to understand the necessity of treatment. In part, they will minimize the problems they have had to justify continued use. Additionally, some drugs remain in their system for that period of time.

Helping Resistant Teens

You can help your resistant teens get through their struggles more quickly by taking the following steps:

- When you make the decision that your child needs to get help, **DON'T BACK DOWN**. Your child will likely disagree about it – expect a possible battle.
- Treat a [substance use disorder](#) as you would any serious medical problem. Teens do not get to choose whether they want to take medications ordered by a doctor. This is no different.

- Create [consequences](#) that work for your family. Your child likely does not own his or her own car, cell phone, etc. As parents, you can make use of these items contingent on complying with your rules.
- If you need help getting your child to treatment, you can call the police to request an escort (many police departments will help with this) or file unruly charges. If your child is involved with the court system, ask the judge or probation officer to require treatment that was recommended by a professional.
- Join NarAnon, AlAnon, SmartRecovery Friends and Family, or another [mutual support](#) group designed for parents and family members.
- Practice self care. This is a stressful time for your family. Try to find time to work out, eat well, or spend time with friends. Even 5-10 minutes a day of relaxation can make a difference in the way parents handle resistant teens

While it may be really hard to enforce your decisions, the dangers and consequences of continued use are real and serious. As the parent, you have to make the decisions. If you give an adolescent a vote on treatment, they may elect to do nothing and harm themselves irreparably.

Call ASAP at 513.792.1272 to discuss our [assessment](#) process and [treatment](#) options.