



# Tips to Keep Teens Away from Drugs

There are many tips to keep teens away from drugs. These 8 are research based, and they are shown to work well. Which will you try first?

## How to Keep Teens Away from Drugs

1. Talk to teens early and often about the [risks](#) of drugs, including addiction, learning problems, and impaired driving. Encourage school, religious, and community groups not only to begin anti-drug messages in grade school, but also to continue these messages through the teen years.
2. If you have been smoking marijuana or doing drugs yourself, stop. You are your child's first and best [role model](#).
3. If you've smoked pot, you may feel hypocritical about telling your child not to. Have an honest conversation about the decisions you made, while focusing on the negative outcomes. Then explain why you think your teen should make different ones. Describe how [today's marijuana](#) is far stronger and more addictive.
4. Tell teens that you understand the urge to experiment, but even once can be too much with today's stronger drugs. Help your child find acceptable risks to take. These might include rock climbing, playing sports, hiking, etc.
5. Keep tabs on your kids. If there's a [party](#) at someone's house, make it clear drinking and

drugs are unacceptable. Call to ensure an adult will be present.

6. Ensure the lines of [communication](#) between you and your teen are open. When you talk to teens about what is going on in their lives, remind them that they can come to you with problems.
7. Teens who are busy with after-school activities are less likely to use alcohol and other drugs. Extracurriculars give teens opportunities to make friends, as well as feeling challenged, successful, and supported. If your child loses interest in activities he or she always enjoyed, look for other signs of use.
8. If you learn that your child has started using drugs, intervene quickly and [get help](#). Signs include becoming secretive or paranoid, starting to hang out with a new, rougher crowd, losing interest in activities that used to be important, needing money more often, and slipping performance in school. Additionally, many families find that money or valuables are missing.

## Will These Tips Work for my Child?

If your child is not actively using drugs, these strategies will help ensure that they do not start. Has your child [used](#) more than once or twice in his or her life? Call ASAP for an [assessment](#).

An ASAP [assessment](#) will let you know how to best help your child. We offer our [CHOICES](#) program for teens who have used a few times and our [TRIP](#) program for those who are using more regularly. We can also make a recommendation for other treatment options (or no treatment at all) depending on your family's situation.