

SIGNS THAT YOUR CHILD MIGHT BE USING DRUGS

Since mood swings and unpredictable behavior are frequent occurrences for preteens and teenagers, parents may find it difficult to spot signs of alcohol and drug abuse. But if your child starts to exhibit one or more of these signs (which apply equally to sons and daughters), drug abuse may be at the heart of the problem:

- Your child is withdrawn, depressed, tired and careless about personal grooming.
- Your child is hostile and uncooperative; he or she frequently breaks curfews.
- Your child's relationships with family members have deteriorated.
- Your child is hanging around with a new group of friends.
- Your child's grades have slipped, and his or her school attendance is irregular.
- Your child has lost interest in hobbies, sports and other favorite activities.
- Your child's eating or sleeping patterns have changed; he or she's up at night and sleeps during the day.
- Your child has a hard time concentrating.
- Your child's eyes are red-rimmed and/or your child's nose is runny in the absence of a cold.
- Household money has been disappearing.

ACTING ON YOUR SUSPICIONS

If you suspect that your child is using drugs, you should voice your suspicions openly when he or she is sober or straight and you're calm.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:

- Taking **action** sooner rather than later is always best. When you suspect that your child has been drinking or using drugs, take action to stop it as soon as you can.
- Substance use and abuse can occur with mental health disorders. A trained professional can assist in determining the best way to help your son or daughter.
- If your family is working with the Department of Human Services, Court, Probation, Jefferson Center for Mental Health, Diversion or any other agency, discuss with your caseworker or your son or daughter's caseworker what resources may be available and appropriate.

**THE OFFICE OF
DROPOUT PREVENTION
AND RECOVERY
303-982-6559**



**I AM CONCERNED
THAT MY CHILD
MAY BE USING
ALCOHOL
OR DRUGS**



The following resources can help to determine support in the Jefferson County Community:

Jefferson County Juvenile Assessment Center
<http://jeffcojac.org/> (Free)

You can call to schedule an assessment (interview with your son/daughter) that will assist in determining what Jefferson County resources may be the most appropriate. The key areas assessed include mental health, substance abuse, family dynamics, school performance and peer relationships. They do not provide treatment; however, they can connect you to service providers.
720-497-7770

Jefferson Center for Mental Health

<http://www.jeffersonmentalhealth.org/>
(Ability to pay based on income, number of dependents and availability of other funding sources.)

You can always contact the Center's 24 hotline to determine support that may be available. The person answering the phone will know information about all Jefferson Center Programs and resources in the community. Services are available in Spanish.
303-425-0300

My Primary Care Provider

(Depends on your insurance carrier.)
You can schedule an appointment with your son or daughter's primary care physician to assess their health, find out benefits and determine additional resources.

My Employee Assistance Program

(Depends on your workplace.)
Each program works differently. However, if you have access to an Employee Assistance Program, they are often able to assist you in identifying resources and working with your insurance.

Licensed Treatment Providers

If you know the level of treatment you are trying to locate and have determined insurance coverage/ability to pay - treatment providers can be contacted directly. Call the Division of Behavioral Health at 303-866-7480.



WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ON MY OWN?

The following web site is loaded with resources regarding specific drugs, tips for parents, sample conversations to have with your son or daughter, frequently asked questions as well as many other resources: <http://www.theantidrug.com>

I WANT EVEN MORE INFORMATION

Understanding the Science of Drug Abuse:

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov>

Youth Alcohol Awareness Site:

<http://www.thecoolspot.gov>

National Institute on Drug Abuse:

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/nidahome.html>

**HAVING THE CONVERSATION
WITH YOUR TEEN...**

KEY TALKING POINTS:

- We are here to support you. What can I do to help you not use?
- We are here to make it clear that we will not tolerate any drug or alcohol use by you.
- We have rules in the family. The rules do not permit teen drug or alcohol use.
- Even though you think everyone is using drugs or alcohol, it is illegal and not allowable.
- You can endanger your life and the lives of others. We don't want anything bad to happen to you. I don't know what I'd do if I lost you.
- We count on you as a family member. Your brothers and sisters look up to you and care about you. What would they do if you were gone?
- Drug and alcohol use can ruin your future and chances to... graduate, go to college, get a job, and keep your driver's license.
- Sometimes kids use drugs and alcohol because there are other issues going on like stress, unhappiness and social issues. Have you thought about this? Are there other problems you want to talk about?
- Are your friends using? How are you handling that? Is it hard to not use in that environment?
- We won't give up on you because we love you. We're going to be on your case until you stop completely. If you need professional help we will be there to support you and help make it happen.