

Talking to your kids about drugs

Talking to your child about alcohol and other drugs can be challenging. You might feel unsure about the subject. Here are some tips:

- Listen to what your child has to say, and keep the lines of communication open.
- Encourage your child to ask you questions, and think of ways to open a conversation with them.
- Ask questions that require more than a one-word answer. This may help you to engage in real conversation with your child

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Start young when talking to your child about drugs. For example, whenever you give a fever medicine or an antibiotic to your child, you can discuss why and when these medicines should be given and about safe medication storage.

Talk to your child about other strategies they can use to feel better as well. (i.e.) what are some ways you can feel better if you have a headache?

- Cool cloth Deep breathing
- Rest A warm bath

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Encourage your child to ask questions about tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. If you're unsure, find the answers together to learn about it.

Plan to talk about it many times throughout your child's developing years.

Practice refusal skills. Talk about what they could do if they were offered tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs. Practicing how they could respond sets them up for success if faced with an uncomfortable situation.

Talking to your kids about drugs - Cannabis Facts

- Although most youth in Alberta do not use cannabis, even occasional use has risks.
- All forms of cannabis is still illegal for anyone under the age of 18 in Alberta.
- For youth who use cannabis often and over time, it can affect brain development and may increase the risk for mental health problems.
- Youth are especially vulnerable to the effects of cannabis since brain development is not complete until about the age of 25.
- Parents and caregivers play an important role in their child's life— stay connected, know their friends and be prepared to answer questions.

MORE RESOURCES

drugsafe.ca search "What Parents need to know"
 ahs.ca/amh search "Parent Information Series"

Information on mental health, community supports, programs and services in your area:



Addiction Services Help Line
 1-866-332-2322

Mental Health Help Line
 1-877-303-2642

