

SUBSTANCES

Conversation Tips By Age

Open and honest communication between parents and children about substance use is key in fostering responsible decision-making and empowering our youth to resist societal pressures. Discussing hemp-derived intoxicants, cannabis/THC-derived intoxicants, prescription pills, and stimulants like meth, heroin, and cocaine allows parents to provide accurate information and dispel myths and establish a foundation of trust and understanding, making it more likely for their children to approach them when faced with peer pressure or difficult situations involving these substances. Addressing these topics and creating a safe space for open dialogue about mental health, self-care, and coping mechanisms will help children develop resilience and the skills needed to navigate life's challenges in a healthy and informed manner.

HIGH SCHOOL

Talking to high school students about drug use requires a more in-depth and nuanced conversation, as they may have encountered more exposure to these issues. Remember to listen actively, show empathy, avoid jumping to conclusions, and be prepared to listen. The goal is to create a space where your high school student feels comfortable discussing their thoughts, experiences, and concerns related to substance use. If they share information that suggests substance use, respond calmly and offer support, possibly involving a professional if necessary.

- 1** I've noticed some changes in your behavior lately, can we talk about what's been going on?
- 2** Have you heard about drugs being used by your peers?
- 3** How do you feel about legal and illegal drugs? What are your thoughts on using them?
- 4** Have you ever been offered drugs? How did you handle that situation?
- 5** What do you know about the risks and consequences of using drugs or alcohol?
- 6** How do you handle stress, anxiety or difficult emotions? Are there healthier ways you've found to cope?
- 7** If you ever found yourself in a situation involving drugs, would you feel comfortable talking to me about it?

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- 8 Do you know how to recognize substance abuse or addiction in yourself or others?
Follow Up Question: Do you have any peers or friends that you think may be suffering from addiction?
- 9 Do you have any concerns or questions about drugs that you'd like to discuss?
- 10 Can you help me understand what types of things you're going through? Is there anything you want me to know?
- 11 What have you heard or learned about drugs from your peers or the media?
- 12 Have you ever been in situations where drugs were present? How did you handle those situations?
- 13 What are your goals for the future? How do you think using drugs might impact those goals?
- 14 Have you ever been told something about a drug that you are not sure is true?
- 15 How can we work together as a family to make sure we're well-informed and making healthy choices?
- 16 Do you think schools are doing enough to educate students about the risks of drug use? What more do you think could be done?
- 17 What do you think are some effective ways to resist peer pressure or say 'no' to drugs?
- 18 Have you ever encountered situations where people were pressuring you or others to use drugs or alcohol? How did you handle it?