

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.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

When bringing up this topic, your main goal is to create an open and supportive environment where the middle schooler feels comfortable discussing their thoughts and experiences. Providing them with accurate information, understanding their perspective, and emphasizing their well-being are key aspects of this conversation. If you believe the situation is serious or potentially harmful, consider involving a trusted adult or a professional who can offer guidance and support.

- 1 **Have you heard your classmates or friends talk about drugs? What do you think about that?**
- 2 **Is there anything that you are curious about or want to know more about when it comes to drugs?**
Do you know how to recognize peer pressure?
- 3 **Follow Up Questions: Have you experienced peer pressure? Are you comfortable handling it or is there anything I can do to be helpful to you? Are you comfortable making decisions that are best for you that others may not agree with?**
- 4 **What led you to think about trying drugs? Is there something specific that you're curious about or looking for?**
- 5 **Do you feel comfortable talking about your experiences or thoughts regarding drugs? I'm here to listen and help if you want to share.**

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- 6** Have you talked to anyone else about this, like friends, family, or a trusted adult?
- 7** Which drugs are you considering or have tried?
- 8** Why did you try that particular drug?
- 9** Are you aware of the potential short-term and long-term effects of using drugs?
- 10** Have you considered the legal consequences of using drugs?
- 11** How do you think using drugs might affect your relationships with friends and family?
- 12** Are you aware of healthier coping strategies or alternatives to dealing with stress, pressure, or other challenges you might be facing?