

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.

YOUNG ADULT

Engaging in discussions about drug use with young adults is important for many reasons. Due to their increasing independence, ongoing brain development, and formative identity-building, this stage marks their transition to new environments where substance use might emerge, making open conversations vital for equipping them with informed decision-making skills. By addressing the potential risks to their developing brains and reinforcing family values, parents can guide their young adults towards responsible choices that align with their aspirations. These conversations also encourage critical thinking, dispel misconceptions, and empower young adults to navigate peer pressures and challenges with confidence, fostering a foundation for a healthy and self-aware future.

- 1 **How are you adjusting to college life? Are there any new experiences or challenges you've encountered?**
- 2 **Have you been exposed to any situations involving drugs on campus?**
What are your thoughts on drug use and its impact on academic and personal goals?
- 3 **Follow Up Question: What are your thoughts on drug use at college and how might that impact a student's academic, athletic, or personal goals?**
- 4 **What strategies do you have in place to handle peer pressure or situations involving drugs?**
Follow Up Question: Do the strategies that have worked for you in the past still work now?

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- 5 Are you aware of the resources available on campus for addressing substance use concerns?
Follow Up Question: Would you know who to turn to on campus if you were worried about a friend or peer?
- 6 How do you prioritize your health and well-being while navigating social events and college life?
- 7 Have you encountered any misinformation about drugs or their effects? How do you seek accurate information?
- 8 Are there any substances you're curious about or uncertain about? Is there anything you'd like to know more about?
- 9 How do you manage stress and difficult emotions? Are there healthier ways you've found to cope?
- 10 If you were ever in a situation where you felt uncomfortable or pressured regarding drug use, how would you handle it?
- 11 Are there any friends or acquaintances who you're concerned might be engaging in risky behavior?
- 12 How do you envision your college experience without the influence of drugs or excessive alcohol?
Follow Up Question: What do you wish for yourself for a college experience? How would drug or alcohol use impact that?