



# How to Tell if Your Child is Using Drugs

If you suspect your child of using drugs, don't ignore the possibility. Most children who experiment with drugs don't understand the risk of addiction. For some, the stress of adolescence and peer pressure is too much to handle and drugs become a tempting escape. Parents can provide the guidance children need to turn away from drugs.

## SIGNS OF DRUG USE

- Neglected appearance or hygiene
- Poor self-image
- Poor school performance
- Withdrawal
- Secretive activities
- Disputes at home or school
- Drug use equipment
- Borrowing or stealing money
- Hostility toward family members

## MOST COMMONLY USED DRUGS

Marijuana, hallucinogens, stimulants, opioids, date rape drugs, and some common household products (inhalants, prescription drugs, etc) are the most commonly abused drugs among youth.

## TEACH YOUR CHILD TO AVOID DRUGS

**Set a good example:** Be cautious in the use of prescription and non-prescription drugs.

**Set up a contract:** Prohibit children from bringing drugs into the home.

**Discuss consequences:** Experimenting can lead to dependency as well as emotional, physical and legal problems.

**Nurture child's self-esteem:** Help build success in your children's lives.

**Teach assertiveness:** Children need to be able to say "no" with confidence.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT DRUG USE

1. Calmly and cautiously approach your child.
2. Don't confront children when they are under the influence.
3. Express your concern for the child's health and well-being.
4. Reassure your child of your support to help them stop using in any way possible.
5. Be sensitive to your child's feelings.
6. Encourage seeking help in a substance abuse support program.
7. Seek professional help.

## RESOURCES

**Drug Abuse Helpline**  
(800) 662-HELP

**Center for Community Support and Research**  
(For referrals to a support group)  
1-800-445-0116

**Drug Free World**  
drugfreeworld.org

**For more online tip cards, visit [kcsl.org](http://kcsl.org) under the "Resources" tab.**

**Parenting questions? Call the Parent Helpline.**

1-800-CHILDREN or email/text 1800children@kcsl.org



**Kansas Children's Service League**

