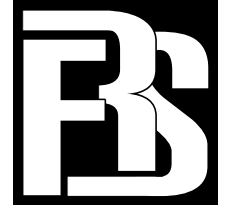


# You Can Make a Difference!

*"I don't need to worry about drug abuse yet.  
My child is only in the fourth grade." But...*

**FAMILY  
RESOURCE  
SHEET**



We hear many news reports about young people abusing tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. We can't wait until our children are teens to tell them what they need to know to avoid drug use. We need to start when children are young. This is when they begin to form opinions about drug use. They also form lifetime habits.

## Take Action Now!

It may seem like the advertisers, movie makers, and peer pressure work against us. It's easy to get overwhelmed. We may even wonder if there is anything we can do to keep our children safe from the danger of drug use. Fortunately, you can do several things. What you say and do has a big influence on your child.

- Give your children clear messages about the dangers of drug use.
- Talk about your family values related to drug use.
- Tell your child what drugs are and their dangers.
- State clearly your expectation that he or she will not use drugs.
- Set rules against the use of alcohol and other drugs. Enforce the rules.
- Be available when your child wants to talk. Be a good listener.
- Use television shows and news articles to begin a discussion about drugs and their harmful effects.
- Model safe and responsible drug use yourself. For example, only take medicines as prescribed and use legal drugs in moderation, if at all.
- Communicate with the parents of your child's friends. Agree to watch out for your children's health and support drug-free activities that are supervised by adults.
- Encourage your schools and communities to have strong "no use" policies for children, and to provide plenty of supervised activities for children.
- Encourage your school to adopt 24-hour-seven-days-a-week tobacco-free school policies.
- Supervise your child before and after school or arrange for supervision.
- Avoid "bargaining" with teenagers. For example, teens who are allowed to drink alcohol as long as they don't drive when drinking are more likely to be in a drinking and driving accident as a passenger.
- Help your school plan and conduct Red Ribbon Week activities or other drug abuse prevention events.

## For More Information Contact These Agencies or Websites!

- To get information on alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, visit these websites:
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
  - Michigan Department of Community Health: [www.michigan.gov/mdch](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch).
- Staying connected and involved with your child is crucial in preventing your child's use of tobacco and other drugs. Learn how to become more involved with your child by contacting the Office on Smoking & Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/tobacco/](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/) or 770-448-5705.
- For more information and resources contact:
  - American Cancer Society: [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) or 1-800-ACS-2345
  - American Lung Association: [www.lungsusa.org](http://www.lungsusa.org) or 1-800-LUNGUSA
- Learn about alcohol's affect on the body and ways to say "no" to alcohol at [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org).
- Take part in "Your Time—Their Future," a national public education campaign. The campaign shows how you can help children build confidence and self-discipline through positive activities. Its goal is to prevent and reduce the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs among youth. Visit <http://www.health.org/yourtime/>.
- To find out more about peer pressure, read the article "Study: Peers sway a child's interest in smoking, drinking as early as 6th grade." The article discusses a study by the National Institutes of Health and can be found at <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/HEALTH/01/23/teen.drinking/index.html>.
- Learn more about youth responses to peer pressure and the risks of smoking at [www.pbskids.org/itsmylife/body/smoking/](http://www.pbskids.org/itsmylife/body/smoking/). This is a great resource for you and your child.