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DETROIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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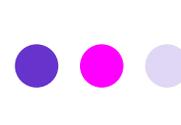
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Detroit Public Schools
Clinical Prevention and Intervention
Services

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IT'S TIME TO
TALK



Ways to Communicate



George and Maxine waited up for their daughter, LaRonda, after a football game. She was well past the agreed upon time. She arrived two hours late and appeared to have

been drinking. She smelled of alcohol, her speech was slurred, and her walk was unsteady. Maxine refused to explain what had happened and went to her room, slamming the door! Both George and LaRonda were concerned and unsure of what to do, but they knew that the misuse of drugs and alcohol could lead to:

Academic problems
Social problems
Legal problems
Physical harm
Accidents

School psychologists recommend a five-step communication process as a tool for better family communication. Using these steps can help prevent drug and alcohol problems.

The Five Step Process

Step One: "I care . . ."

Easily overlooked, children need reassurance that you care and love them.

Tell your children that you are concerned and care about what is happening.

Step Two: "I see . . ."

Describe the behaviors you have observed. What did your child do and say?

Don't be judgmental and don't criticize. Separate the behavior from the child. Stick to the point, no opinions.

Step Three: "I feel . . ."

Calmly state how you feel.

Do not blame your child.

Talk about your concerns and anger.

Listen to how your child feels.

Listen openly to your child's point of view.

Only by listening carefully can you hope for results.

Step Four: "I want . . ."

Clearly state your expectations about curfew time.

Tell your child you do not want them drinking or doing drugs.

Step Five: "I will . . ."

Offer support for your expectations.

Provide reinforcement and consequences.

Provide literature about chemical use.

Offer to drive if your child needs a ride.

Offer to have drug-free parties.

Possible Indicators of Alcohol/Drug Abuse

- Less time spent at home
- Inconsistent behavior
- Missing money or objects
- Changes in eating ("munchies") or sleeping patterns
- Chronic dishonesty
- Slurred or incoherent speech
- Indifference to grooming and hygiene
- Fatigue, depression, moodiness
- Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Odor of drugs or alcohol on clothes
- Memory lapses
- Secretive about spare time activities
- Defensive about behavior
- Leaving school early
- Change in friends or peer group
- Deterioration in social relationships
- Possession of large amounts of money
- Dilated pupils, glazed, red, bloodshot or unfocused eyes
- Blisters around nose, sore cracked lips
- Abnormal coughing
- Headaches
- Uncontrolled, inappropriate laughing
- Stomach and leg muscle cramps
- Talk of invincibility
- Empty aerosol cans and containers

Not sure what to do? Talk to your child's teachers, counselor, school social worker or school psychologist.