

Tips & Tricks to Help Your Teen

Set Clear Boundaries - It all starts with being clear about what you expect from them. What they can do and what they cannot do. State it clearly. Repeat often.

Model Responsible Use – Our behavior speaks much louder than words, especially with adolescents. By all means enjoy a cold one, or glass of wine. But pay attention to when, how much, and how often you drink. What do your teens see?

Connect with Other Kids & Adults – Sort of like the old adage to keep your friends close and your enemies closer...who are your teens spending time with? Get to know their friends. And then get to know their parents too.

Be “That House” – To the extent that you can, make your home the place where your teen wants to hang out with their friends; a variation of the previous tip.

Time-Limited Conversations – Having conversations about these topics can be tough for both parties. To give a clear signal that it won't be long, try it on the drive home from somewhere, when you're 5 minutes from home. Your teen will know that the conversation won't go on and on and on.

Practice No – Most drugs & alcohol will be offered by a friend. So helping them practice turning down an offer is will help them feel more confident. Possible options include

- That's not my thing...I'm not into that...nah, I'm good...
- Coach says...we have a game...I'm conditioning...
- Mom/Dad will kill me...and they WILL find out...you don't KNOW my parents

Devise an Escape Plan – BEFORE they find themselves in a situation (party, car, road trip, park) where they need to get away, set up a code word. You can then show up however you're needed. Discuss if you should show up as the evil-angry-you-get-home-right-now parent, or the concerned-family-emergency-we-need-you-home-now parent.

