



THE CHAMPION

Tips for parents to prevent or reduce youth alcohol, tobacco or drug use

- Set a reasonable time for your child to be home.
- Be awake and interact with them when they come home.
- Clearly tell your children your expectations that they not use. (Every time they go out!)
- Talk with them in advance about situations that may arise around alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- Discuss together ways to avoid uncomfortable situations.
- Tell them why you make the decisions you do about chemicals, including medications.
- Offer your children a safe ride home if they call. (That means you have to be available.)
- Use teachable moments to give them accurate information about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- Get to know your son's or daughter's friends and share with them your expectations about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. They appreciate knowing you care about them.
- Together, decide what the consequences will be should you have any evidence or suspicion of alcohol or other drug use. (If your intuition tells you something is wrong, it probably is. Trust your perceptions.)
- Your kids have a hotline of communication . . . develop one among adults, too.
- Youth will often spend the night out if they plan to use. Know where they are going. Talk to the hosts and ask if alcohol or tobacco is allowed and to what degree the hosts plan to be involved and on-site.
- Tell your son or daughter in advance you will be checking up. Then do it. Make sure they are where they say they are.
- If your son or daughter is using tobacco in spite of all consequences, do not allow it in your home or vehicles or in your presence.
- Reduce the easy accessibility of alcohol around your home. Consider keeping your alcohol supply under lock and key.
- If problems develop and persist in the face of consequences, do not hesitate to take your child for an assessment to find out what the problem is and how to remedy it.
- Set a good example regarding health and safety.

Provide an environment that empowers your child

In more than 20 years of drug abuse research, the National Institute on Drug Abuse has identified important principles for prevention programs in the family, school, and community. Prevention programs often are designed to enhance "protective factors" (those associated with reduced potential for drug use), and to reduce "risk factors," (those that make drug use more likely). Research has shown that many of the same factors apply to other behaviors such as youth violence, delinquency, school dropout, risky sexual behaviors, and teen pregnancy.

Protective factors (reducing the potential for drug use) include:

- strong and positive family bonds;
- parental monitoring of children's activities and peers;
- clear rules of conduct that are consistently enforced within the family;
- involvement of parents in the lives of their children;
- success in school performance; strong bonds with institutions, such as school and religious organizations; and
- adoption of conventional norms about drug use.

Risk factors (increasing the potential for drug use):

- chaotic home environments, particularly in which parents abuse substances or suffer from mental illnesses;
- ineffective parenting, especially with children with difficult temperaments or conduct disorders;
- lack of parent-child attachments and nurturing;
- inappropriately shy or aggressive behavior in the classroom;
- failure in school performance;
- poor social coping skills;
- affiliations with peers displaying deviant behaviors; and
- perceptions of approval of drug-using behaviors in family, work, school, peer, and community environments.

SOURCE: National Institute on Drug Abuse, NIDA Notes, Vol 16, No 6, NIH Publication No. 02-3478, February 2002

Our Vision:

We envision a county where adults support positive youth choices in order to develop into healthy, responsible adults.

March 2015
Volume 8, Issue 1



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*Our Mission:
To improve and enhance the health, safety, and quality of life for our children and community by reducing substance use and abuse.*

*Twitter:
@champforwc
Facebook: Champ of Wadena County*





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Fast Fact

Giving can build asset #27 (equality and social justice), especially when young people choose to give money to charities that work to reduce hunger and poverty or promote human rights. Giving also can build cultural competence (asset # 34) if young people give to groups that promote tolerance, equality, understanding, and cooperation among different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups.

(Search Institute: An Asset Builder's Guide to Youth and Money, pg. 38.)

We're on the web!
www.champforwc.org

What's Coming Up...



Menahga Public Schools Holiday Break: 12/24/14-1/4/15
Sebeka Public Schools Holiday Break: 12/20/14 - 1/4/15
Verndale Public Schools Holiday Break: 12/24/14-1/4/15
Wadena-Deer Creek Public Schools Holiday Break: 12/24/14-1/4/15

Truly Thankful: 5 Tips to Teach Kids Real Gratitude

1. Make Do With Less.
 Pick something to give up for a week or month. For example, take-out or restaurant meals, or shutting off non-essential screens. This might be inconvenient, but everyone will begin to see how good they have it.
2. Develop a 'Silver Lining' mindset.
 Kids need to know that even when they are faced with difficulties, they still have it pretty good. Modeling how to find the silver lining in difficult situations can help kids learn to be grateful. For instance, if the game is rained out, remember you have a warm, dry house to come home to. Don't be preachy, but recognize that most setbacks have some kind of silver lining to be grateful for.
3. Schedule Service.
 Make family service a priority. Establish a family goal of 1 or 2 service projects per month throughout the year. Include kids in the planning and decisions about how and where you share your time and talents. Young people can see how others benefit from their help, and can also find joy from serving others and put their own blessings in perspective.
4. Give thanks-out loud!
 Make a habit of verbally thanking those who have helped you, expressing gratitude for the positive events in your life, including the help for putting the laundry away. When young people see how gratitude works and how nice it is to hear, they are likely to do the same.
5. Be routinely grateful.
 Research shows that people who are grateful are happiest. Take time daily to talk about 3 things that you are thankful for. Older kids can take pictures of things they are grateful for with their cell phones and share them at the dinner. Conversations at the dinner table promote family connectedness as well.

Adapted from article originally published by Amy McCreedy on ParentToolkit.com and TODAY.com . Amy McCreedy is the Founder of PositiveParentingSolutions.com and the author of "If I Have to Tell You One More Time ."

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In every issue!

Something To Try And Talk About

Here are some ideas for conversations at your next family meal or ride in the car.

- What is the first thing you notice about a person?

- Describe the most beautiful thing you have ever seen.
- If you could know one thing about the future, what would it be?
- If your life was made into a movie, who would play you? Why?

The benefits of eating together will last long after your meal ends, especially if you make family mealtimes a regular activity. For more ideas visit : <http://casafamilyday.org/familyday/tools-you-can-use/conv-starters/>