

PREVENTION AT HOME

The information below is summarized from www.theantidrug.com, under Advice and then Monitoring. Refer to the website for much more helpful information on each item listed.

Here's What Parents Can Do.....

Ask Questions	Know who, what, when and where
Be More Involved	Establish time together Have Family Meetings Ask where your kids are going, who they will be with and what they will be doing. Try to be there after school Eat Meals together as often as possible
Be Prepared	Teens who learn anti-drug messages at home are 42% less likely to use drugs.
Make your position clear	Make your position clear when it comes to dangerous substances like alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Don't assume that your children know where you stand.
Make Clear Rules	Set rules & consequences in advance The rules must be consistently enforced Punishments should involve mild, not severe, negative consequences. Set a curfew Have kids check in at regular times when they are away from home or school Call parents whose home will be used for a party Make it easy to leave a party where drugs are being used Listen to your instincts
Address Peer Pressure	Role play different scenarios with your children.
Limit Media Access	Use Media messages as teachable moments
Praise Positive Behavior	Accentuate the positive
Be Honest	The most effective deterrent to drug use is you, the parent. Regardless of your own history with drugs or underage alcohol use, it's your responsibility to set limits for your teen.
Show Love	Spend time with your kids, talk to them, get to know their friends. Research shows that knowing your kids, who they hang out with - and their parents - dramatically reduces the likelihood that they will get into trouble with tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
Be A Good Role Model	Be a living, day-to-day example of your value system.

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- **Alcohol is a drug that needs to be respected.** While your child may believe that he or she wouldn't engage in hazardous activities after drinking, point out that because alcohol impairs judgment, a drinker is very likely to think such activities *won't* be dangerous.
- **Understand that no adolescent is immune to exposure to alcohol or other drugs.** Be open to hear what others are observing and trust your instincts. If you think something is not right, it probably isn't. Seek out the appropriate help.
- **Don't support teen drinking.** Your attitudes and behavior toward teen drinking also influence your child. Avoid making jokes about underage drinking or drunkenness or otherwise showing acceptance of teen alcohol use. In addition, never serve alcohol to your child's underage friends. Research shows that kids whose parents or friends' parents provide alcohol for teen get-togethers are more likely to engage in heavier drinking, to drink more often and to get into traffic accidents. **Remember:** it is illegal to provide alcohol to minors who are not family members.
- **Monitor alcohol use in your home.** Keep track of the supply. Don't allow un-chaperoned parties. Encourage them to invite friends over when you are home. This keeps you in-touch with their friends and activities.
- **Provide help.** Call parents of any child at an event that you notice is under the influence. It takes a lot of courage to deliver unpleasant news. Be willing to provide a ride or even call the police if necessary.
- **Connect with other parents.** Friendly relations can make it easier for you to call the parent of a teen who is having a party to be sure a responsible adult will be present and that alcohol will not be available.
- **Ask for help.** Give permission to other parents to call you if they see your son or daughter participating in activities of which they know you would disapprove. Encourage your children to ask for help if one of their friends is having problems.

PREVENTION AT HOME - Know the Glen Ridge specific “traditions”

- **The Glen Ridge Stroll** - Typically, in 7th or 8th grade, Glen Ridge kids begin to socialize by meeting up and walking around town as a group on weekends. They might start at one house and visit a number of houses, possibly acquiring more members as they go along. They might start out at a town event, such as the Arts Festival or a football game, or initially meet for lunch at Just Sandwiches. Eventually, the Glen Ridge Stroll may expand to include the Nevada Diner or Magic Fountain, and develop from a daytime activity to an evening one. This is a fairly typical way that Glen Ridge teens socialize in the summer and during vacations.
- **A companion activity of the Stroll is the Stash**, where kids deposit six-packs of beer and bottles of vodka in backyard bushes or wooded areas nearby someone’s house for later use. Parents have reported finding empty cans and bottles along hedges after spontaneous visits from children’s friends. Parents need to be prepared to discuss this phenomenon with their own children and, appropriately, with other parents in their network.
- Although **school dances** are well chaperoned by school staff and the town police, parents need to pay attention to the time periods before and after dances. Unsupervised activities taking place before and after dances provide opportunities for kids, who might not want to drink on other less exciting occasions, to do so at these times. Pre and Post Prom alcohol parties often occur. Any student who attends a school dance under the influence will be subject to the consequences of the Board of Education policies (see the Consequences section for details).
- **Non School Parties & Dances** – The same issues apply to dances unrelated to the school. There are “tradition” parties that arise like move up parties at the end of Junior year and at the end of eight grade.
- **Senior Week at the Beach** – Another Non School sanctioned event is the “tradition” of graduating seniors to rent shore houses for a week following graduation.

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Parents Response

How parents respond to these activities can lay groundwork for expectations and consequences for later occasions when there is more likelihood that alcohol and drugs may be available.

- Do you want your child to call you to tell you when he or she is changing locations?
- Do you want them to use a land line (not a cell phone) so you can verify where they are?
- Do you want to contact parents to make sure that kids aren't congregating in an unsupervised house?
- How long do you want your child to be on his or her own without contacting you?
- Are you comfortable with your child's open-ended plans?
- Parents need to let their children know that they support their kids' emerging independence while still staying on top of things.

Refer to the Prevention at Home, What Parents Can Do, section for additional information and advice,

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF SUBSTANCE

Information taken from http://www.theantidrug.com/ei/signs_symptoms.asp

How can you tell if your child is using drugs or alcohol? It is difficult because changes in mood or attitudes, unusual temper outbursts, changes in sleeping habits and changes in hobbies or other interests are common in teens. You can also look for signs of depression, withdrawal, carelessness with grooming or hostility. Also ask yourself, is your child doing well in school, getting along with friends, taking part in sports or other activities?

What should you look for? A Watch List for Parents

- Changes in friends
- Negative changes in schoolwork, missing school, or declining grades
- Increased secrecy about possessions or activities
- Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfume to hide smoke or chemical odors
- Subtle changes in conversations with friends, e.g. more secretive, using “coded” language
- Change in clothing choices: new fascination with clothes that highlight drug use
- Increase in borrowing money
- Evidence of drug paraphernalia such as pipes, rolling papers, etc.
- Evidence of use of inhalant products (such as hairspray, nail polish, correction fluid, common household products); Rags and paper bags are sometimes used as accessories
- Bottles of eye drops, which may be used to mask bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils
- New use of mouthwash or breath mints to cover up the smell of alcohol
- Missing prescription drugs—especially narcotics and mood stabilizers

These changes often signal that something harmful is going on—and often that involves alcohol or drugs. You may want to take your child to the doctor and ask him or her about screening your child for drugs and alcohol. This may involve the health professional asking your child a simple question, or it may involve a urine or blood drug screen. However, some of these signs also indicate there may be a deeper problem with depression, gang involvement, or suicide. Be on the watch for these signs so that you can spot trouble before it goes too far.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I SUSPECT MY SON OR DAUGHTER IS USING?

- **Confront the problem.** Both parents should agree on a plan of action before talking with your child. Honesty regarding your feelings is important. However, keep in mind that anger and fear can at times get in the way to effective communication.
- **Be aware of denial.** This is a strategy that many people use as a way to cope with painful situations and allows you to avoid dealing with the problem. Feelings of shame and inadequacy are often associated with substance abuse. Many feel that they can handle it at home, but it's important to confront the problem.

If your child is under the influence of alcohol or another substance

- Remain calm
- Find out what he or she has taken and under what circumstances
- Take your child to the emergency room if they are incoherent and/or seriously ill
- Tell your child that you will talk about it the next day
- Do not shout or use physical force

The next day

- Talk to your child as soon as possible
- Have your child assume responsibility for his or her actions, including clean up
- Find out the circumstances related to their use including the people they were with
- Don't name call, belittle, blame or threaten.
- Refrain from discussing anything with your child if you are too angry or unable to talk without losing your temper
- Address what happened and the facts surrounding the incident.
- Seek help from appropriate community resources. Check with your insurance carrier for treatment options.
- Reinforce consequences.