

Healthy Teens

November 2018 Parent Newsletter



Articles

Can Your Teen Say No to Drugs?

Physical Activity: The benefits for teenagers

Can Your Teen Say No to Drugs?

Saying no is a skill some acquire easily, but most of us need to be taught or we learn from our experiences. If you want to protect your teen from harmful involvement with alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other drugs, it's important to arm them with that skill, because you won't be there the first time someone offers him or her alcohol or other recreational drugs.

The most effective way for teens to learn to say no is practice. Try role-playing with your teen. One of you can play a person who is offering drugs, and the other practices refusing. Then reverse roles.

The first step to saying no is finding your inner strength:

1. Check your "gut". This

means consulting your moral sense, which will remind you of what your value and what you prefer to do.

2. Present yourself assertively. Stand up straight, maintain eye contact, speak politely and confidently.
3. Prepare yourself to tolerate other people's reaction.

Brainstorm with your teen to find words that work best for them. Use firm language, humour, or change the subject. When all else fails, teach your teen to walk away or find help. Tell your teen it's okay to call you when they feel threatened.



If you need help teaching your teen refusal skills contact a school counsellor or contact your local AHS addiction and mental health office

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page11536.aspx>

Reminder

Routine immunization consent forms were sent home last month with Grade 9 students.

Also, as the best defense against influenza infection and illness, an annual influenza immunization is recommended for all Albertans six months of age and older. For more information about influenza immunization visit <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/influenza.asp>



Physical Activity: The benefits for teenagers

Participating in physical activity and sports holds many benefits to teenagers such as building life/career skills, supporting teamwork and developing leadership abilities. Physical activity can support improved self-esteem, self-image, and self-confidence among teens, as well as lower rates of depression. Even with all of these benefits to being active many teenagers are not meeting the recommendations for physical activity. According to Statistics Canada:



- 6% of girls and 13% of boys meet the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily.
- 19% of girls and 35% of boys participate in sport.

Here are some ways you can encourage your teen to be more active.

1. **Model active behaviour.** Parent participation in physical activity is linked to an increase in their child's participation. You can be a positive role model by trying new activities, being active on

your own or with your teen, or cheering for them.

2. **Make it fun!** Many teens who have been involved in sports in their younger years start to drop out in their teens. The reason may be that it has become more competitive and less about enjoyment. As a parent, you can encourage participation and fun over accomplishment and celebrate personal bests. Don't forget that social physical activity (pick up hockey on the street) or active transportation (biking, skateboarding, walking) is just as valuable as organized sport!

3. **Allow for your teen's input.**

The teenage years involve a lot of emotional and physical changes. By having a conversation with your teen, you are more likely to find options that allow them to feel comfortable and interested while participating in physical activity.

By continuing to encourage your teen in a positive manner, you can help them to stay involved and benefit from an active lifestyle.