**Healthy Futures Parental Resources**

Below is some information from the organizations Partnership for Drug-Free Kids and Shatterproof on how you can engage with your children about the dangers of drug use, spot the signs if they’re using, and what steps to take if they are. I encourage you to look at the information below and follow the links provided to learn more.

**Partnership for Drug-Free Kids**

**Have a Conversation, Not a Confrontation**

Finding out your teen uses drugs definitely stirs up a parent's emotions. It can be a very confusing time. But the best way to help your teen – and to make sure he or she hears you – is to remain as calm as possible throughout the conversation. Also, it's as important, if not more, that you listen to them. One very important note: Do not start the conversation when you can tell your child is drunk or high. Hold off until they are sober.

**Here are a few tips for having more productive conversations:**

1. **Show your concern**. – Express to your child that you're worried about them (example, "You haven't been yourself lately").
2. **Keep a cool head**. – Try your best not to overreact to what your child has done in the past. Instead, focus on making it clear what you want them to do in the future.
3. **Be direct**. – Clearly state your concerns as well as any evidence you've found ("You're not showering, your grades have dropped, and I found empty beer cans in your car").
4. **Watch your tone of voice**. Even though you want to scream and yell, it's important to speak in a calm, relaxed voice so that you don't push your teen away.
5. **Let your teen know you value their honesty** and are willing to listen without making judgments (but this doesn't mean there will not be consequences).
6. **Try not to be defensive**. When they make generalizations or critical remarks, don't take them personally. They are opportunities for discussion.
7. **Talk about your own memories** of being a teen and the mistakes you made. This can help you and your child relate to each other better.
8. **Show your love**. Physical connection can play an important role, too. Put a hand on your teen's shoulder or give him a hug when it feels right.
9. **Set up and use family meetings** to full advantage. Get input from each person on rules, etc., curfews, on the consequences of breaking rules.
10. **Give lots of praise and positive feedback**. Teens need to hear the "good stuff" just like the rest of us. They need to know you can still see beyond the things they've done wrong. Don't be controlled by your teen. While it's important to listen and be sympathetic to your teen, remember you're the parent and you know best.

For more information, please visit [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org), and from there you can learn more about the drug crisis, speak with specialists, explore treatment options, and hear the stories of other parents.

**Shatterproof**

**Treatment** - One of the hardest steps is to recognize the need for help. The following are the steps you can help your child or loved one take to seek professional treatment.

**Step 1 – Schedule an Assessment:** The first thing to do is to schedule an assessment from a personal physician or a qualified addiction specialist.

**Step 2 – At Your Assessment:** The clinician or doctor will begin by asking questions to learn more about the patient’s life and their substance use, such as how long substances have been used, and if there’s family history of misuse or addiction. The assessment will also include a physical examination to determine their general health. Tests for other diseases may also be included. After the exam, the doctor will recommend a treatment plan, which may include a treatment center, medication, behavioral therapies, counseling, or a combination of these options.

**Step 3 – Making a Treatment Plan:** If they’re referred to a treatment center, it can worked with your doctor or an addiction specialist to determine which type of facility is right for them recovery. There are more than 14,500 specialized drug treatment facilities in the U.S., including both inpatient and outpatient options. Both types of programs can be effective for treating substance use disorders but a qualified professional can help determine which will be most suited to their individual needs.

To find both inpatient and outpatient options, call the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services helpline, at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or visit <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/> to find a facility in your area.

If your treatment includes medication, your doctor may write a prescription and provide any necessary medical advice. Medication may also be administered through a treatment facility or licensed clinic.

Your doctor or clinician can also help you locate support services including counseling, 12-step or other peer support programs in your area. You can find additional resources by contacting the SAMSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or visiting the Behavioral Health Treatment Service Locator online.

Shatterproof is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to ending the devastation that addiction causes families. For more information about them, please visit [www.shatterproof.org](http://www.shatterproof.org).