

[Substance Abuse: A Focus on Youth](#)

Did you know that daily marijuana use is now at a 30-year peak level among high school seniors? That 40 percent of youth have tried cigarettes by 12th grade, and 10 percent of 12th graders are daily smokers? That alcohol remains the most widely used drug by today's teenagers?^[i] That prescription medications are some of the most commonly misused drugs by teens, *after* tobacco, alcohol and marijuana?^[ii]



If you aren't already, it's time to open conversations with the young people in your community and help them before their lives and their futures are compromised by substance abuse or devastated by addiction.

Here are resources from National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), Office of Adolescent Health (OAH), the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to help you get started or enhance your existing efforts to serve the youth and families in your community.

[National Institute of Drug Abuse \(NIDA\)](#)

Addiction can happen at any age, but it usually starts when a person is young. If a teen you know continues to use drugs despite harmful consequences, he or she may be addicted. According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), through scientific advances, we know more than ever before about how drugs work in the brain. We also know that addiction can be successfully treated to help young people stop abusing drugs and lead productive lives. Intervening early when you [first spot signs](#) of drug use in your teens is critical.

[NIDA Teen Talk](#)

Learn about teen drug use and the brain- this site features videos, games, blog posts and more!

[Easy-to-Read Drug Facts](#)

Videos like "Anyone Can Become Addicted to Drugs" and "Why are Drugs so Hard to Quit" provide critical information in an easy-to-understand format. The website also provides information on the different drugs (i.e. heroin, bath salts, prescription pain medications, MDMA, Meth etc.) circulating in our schools and communities.

[What to Do If Your Teen or Young Adult Has a Problem with Drugs](#)

Helpful answers to timely questions about teens and substance abuse to share with families in your community.

[Office of Adolescent Health \(OAH\)- Drug Use in Adolescence](#)

Illicit drug use - which includes the abuse of illegal drugs and/or the misuse of prescription medications or household substances - is something many adolescents engage in occasionally, and a few do regularly. By the 12th grade, about half of adolescents have abused an illicit drug at least once. The most commonly used drug is marijuana but adolescents can find many abused substances, such as prescription medications, glues, and aerosols, in the home. Many factors and strategies can help adolescents stay drug free: Strong positive connections with parents, other family members, school, and religion; having parents present clear limits and consistent enforcement of discipline; and reduced access in the home to illegal substances. (Click [here](#) for more information.)

Visit the [OAH's Library of Federal Adolescent Health Resources on Substance Abuse](#) for a comprehensive range of federal resources on adolescent substance abuse (including the abuse of prescription drugs).

Here are a few highlights:

[Partnership at DrugFree.org](#)

Resources for parents or other caregivers looking for information and strategies to prevent, or stop, illicit drug use by adolescents.

[Get Smart About Drugs](#)

An online resource from the Drug Enforcement Administration for parents. It includes research, news, quizzes, and videos to educate parents about how to identify and prevent drug abuse among children and young adults.

[Growing up Drug Free- A Parent's Guide to Prevention](#)

A joint effort between the Department of Justice and the Department of Education that provides information and research specifically for parents on why kids use drugs and how parents can be involved in helping stay drug free.

[Above the Influence](#)

The adolescent-oriented website from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

[Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention for Youth: A Practitioner's Guide](#)

From HHS, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

[SAMHSA Children, Youth and Families](#)

Children and youth are viewed and understood in the context of their families, their communities, and their cultures. SAMHSA works to promote systems of care that involve parents in treatment planning and decisions for children:

[Building Blocks for a Healthy Future](#)

A website where parents, caregivers, and educators can find great tips and tools that help children make healthy decisions as they grow up.

[National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day](#)

Raises awareness about the importance of emphasizing positive mental health as part of a child's overall development from birth.

The [Safe Schools/Healthy Students](#) initiative [substance abuse treatment helpline](#) at **1-800-662-HELP**.

A program designed to prevent violence and substance abuse among our nation's youth, schools, and communities. Confidential, free service, along with referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations, are available for individuals and family members facing substance abuse and mental health issues.

[Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator](#).

To find a local substance abuse treatment facility.