

## When Chemicals Invade Your Family-

### What to do if you suspect your child is using substances:

Early identification is key to assisting teens experimenting or abusing substances. As a parent you play an important role in that identification. The following information is to assist you if you suspect your teen may be using alcohol or other drugs.

#### Signs of Substance Abuse

Behavior	Physical Appearance	Social/School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Disrespectful</b></li> <li>• <b>Physically/verbally abusive</b></li> <li>• <b>Angry, confused, experiencing sudden mood swings</b></li> <li>• <b>Depressed</b></li> <li>• <b>Secretive, lying</b></li> <li>• <b>Stealing, losing things</b></li> <li>• <b>Money issues-too little, too much</b></li> <li>• <b>Change in eating, sleeping patterns</b></li> <li>• <b>Change in friends</b></li> <li>• <b>Withdrawing from family, friends, activities</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Loss of interest in hygiene &amp; grooming</b></li> <li>• <b>Sleeping too much or too little</b></li> <li>• <b>Loss of appetite</b></li> <li>• <b>Weight loss or gain</b></li> <li>• <b>Hyperactive or lethargic</b></li> <li>• <b>Constant physical complaints</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sudden change in friends</b></li> <li>• <b>Skipping school, increased unexcused absences</b></li> <li>• <b>Change in grades</b></li> <li>• <b>Change in attitude</b></li> <li>• <b>Sleeping in class</b></li> <li>• <b>Trouble concentrating and remembering</b></li> <li>• <b>Frequent trips to nurse</b></li> <li>• <b>Frequent trips to restroom</b></li> <li>• <b>Friends/teachers expressing concern</b></li> <li>• <b>Using drug related terms including, "pharming," "pharm party," "smoking out," etc.</b></li> </ul>

### If you suspect...

If you suspect your teen may be experimenting or using one or more substances there are resources to help you and them.

- Document your concerns. Writing down observations and behaviors may help put the pieces together for you and your teen.
- Talk to your teen. Often letting your child know you are concerned will open the door for a referral to the Counselor, School Nurse or School Based Health Center.
- If you have questions please don't hesitate to contact a professional for help.
- Avoid enabling your teen's behavior. The following is a list of enabling behaviors:

Denying-"He does not have a problem."

Justifying-"She has been under a lot of pressure."

Avoiding-"If we don't bring up the subject he will stop."

Minimizing-"Everyone tries it."

Protecting-"She was out late, I'll write her a note."

Blaming/Lecturing-"Don't you see the pain you are causing?"

Excusing-"She can't help it, she has been through a lot."

Taking responsibility-"It is probably my fault."

Controlling-"We won't allow alcohol near him."

Waiting-"It is just a phase."

Using-"If I use with him maybe he will see the problem."

## Common Drugs of Choice Physical Effects

Drug	Common Name/Slang	Physical Effects
Alcohol	Beer, Wine, Liquor	Decreased heart rate & blood pressure, dilated blood vessels, impaired motor skills & judgment
Nicotine	Tobacco, Cigarettes, Cigars, Chew, Dip	Increased heart rate & blood pressure, lower body temperature, stimulant
Marijuana	Weed, Pot, Hash, Herb, Chronic, Bud	Increased heart rate, lower body temperature, blood shot eyes, dry mouth, paranoia, depression, decreased coordination, apathy, confusion
Prescription Drugs	Hydrocodone (Vicodin-Vike), Oxycodone (OxyCotin-Oxy, OC; Percocet, Percodan-Percs) Benzodiazepines (Restoril, Alivan, Klonopin, Xanax, Valium-V, downers, candy, tranks) Rohypnol (roofies, rope, Mexican Valium)  Amphetamines (Adderall, Dexedrine)	Drowsiness, confusion, constricted pupils, clammy skin, slowed breathing, euphoria, sedation  Hallucinations, erratic behavior, irregular heart beat, nervousness, rapid breathing, irritability, impulsiveness, insomnia
Stimulants	Cocaine (blow, coke, crack, snow, too), Methamphetamine (crank, crystal, ice, meth, speed)	Alert, irritable, excitable, euphoric, enhanced senses, loss of appetite, increase in heart rate & energy,
Dissociative Anesthetic	Ketamine (Special K, K, vitamin K) Phencyclidine (PCP, angel dust)	Increased heart rate, blood pressure, impaired motor skills, delirium, depression, nausea/vomiting, memory impairment, illusions
Hallucinogens	Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD, acid), Mushrooms (magic mushrooms, shrooms), Mescaline (peyote) Salvia Divinorum (salvia)	Hallucinations, enhanced sensory perception, change in heart rate, blood pressure, impaired coordination
Club Drugs	MDA, MDMA (Ecstasy, E, X, Xtc, Adam, Eve)	Euphoria, increase body temperature, enhanced emotional response, sense of empathy, depression, change in brain chemicals
Anabolic Steroids	Anadrol, Oxandrin, Testosterone (roids, Arnolds, pumpers, juice, pumpers)	Elevated blood pressure, severe acne, testicular atrophy, violent behavior, aggression, hostility
Over the Counter Drugs	Dextromethorphan (dex, dxm, robo-fizzing, skittles, rojo, triple-c, tussin)	Hallucinations, euphoria, heightened perceptual awareness, mania, lethargy, slurred speech, rapid heart rate, profuse sweating, tremors, nausea
Stimulants	Ephedra, Green Tea Extract	Decreased appetite, high blood pressure, irregular heart rate, anxiety, stroke, nausea
Inhalants	Paint thinner, glue, gasoline, aerosol sprays, white out (huffing, sniffing, snorting, bagging)	Change in heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory, drowsiness, lethargy, confusion, hallucination, anxiety, inability to concentrate, memory impairment, loss of consciousness, nausea, vomiting

For more information, or if you have questions contact the school counselor (630-7902), school nurse (630-7911), School Based Health Center (630-7974) or your family physician.

**Web Sites:**

[www.prevention.samhsa.gov/about/](http://www.prevention.samhsa.gov/about/)  
[www.nida.nih.gov/](http://www.nida.nih.gov/)  
[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

[www.casacolumbia.org](http://www.casacolumbia.org)  
[www.Tobaccofree.org](http://www.Tobaccofree.org)  
[www.health.state.nm.us.org](http://www.health.state.nm.us.org)