

TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUGS: THE EARLIER THE BETTER

A drug is anything taken into your body that changes the way you act, think or feel. Alcohol, cannabis, medication, vitamins, and caffeine are a few examples of drugs.

Talk to your children early and often about substance use. This can help them to share their interests and areas of concern with you. Research shows that general communication with your child is associated with delayed alcohol and drug use. This is very important as the brain continues to develop into the mid-twenties and early use can negatively affect brain development.



Here are some tips to help delay your child's use of alcohol and drugs:

- Take time to talk to your children.
- Set clear and consistent messages.
- Spend time together as a family.
- Be in the know: Know their friends, what are they doing and where they are when out with their friends.
- Talk about the qualities your teen should look for in a friend (i.e., honesty, respect, kindness).
- Know the facts about alcohol and drugs.
- Always keep substances out of reach and locked up.
- Return any expired or leftover medicines to your local drug store.
- Be a positive role model.

Always remember that you are the most important influence in your child's life! For more information, please visit york.ca/substance-use.

For more information, please visit york.ca/healthyschools.

Empowered youth empower choices.

[This document has been prepared and approved by The Regional Municipality of York. We encourage you to share this information in your communications with families in its entirety. Any modification to wording or by reproducing it in part with other wording can alter the original meaning and may no longer be accurate.]

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