

Warning Signs of Substance Use / Abuse

School Difficulties

- Truancy and tardiness
- Declining grades
- Difficulty with teachers
- Detentions / suspensions
- Lack of interest

Changes in friends

- The friend could be using
- Your child could be using

Change in attitude and personality

- Change in music
- Disrespectful to parents / adults
- Dressing down

Behavior change at home

- Not following house rules
- Late for curfew
- Frequent sleepovers with friends

Change in sleeping habits

- Days / nights mixed up
- Sleeping all the time
- Not sleeping much at all

Becomes Manipulative

Dramatic style changes

Poor hygiene

- Decreased interest in appearance
- Infrequent showering/bathing

Withdrawal from family

- No longer eating meals with family
- No participation in family events

Irresponsibility

Money

- Asking for money often
- Can't remember where spent
- Cash / items missing from home

Possession of items w/ drug connections

- Glow sticks/necklaces
- Pacifiers or suckers
- Cigarette lighter
- Always has purse/bag at side even at night

Change in eating habits

- Eating more than usual (pot)
- Eating less than usual (speed)

Secretiveness

Lying

Odd and late night phone calls

Mood swings

- Bursts of anger
- Paranoia (everyone out to get them)
- Argumentative

Suspicious eyes

- Red eyes
- Unusually large/small pupils
- Constant sunglasses
- Carrying Visine or other red out

Illegal activity

- Shoplifting/theft
- MIP (Minor In Possession)
- Coming home under the influence

Alcohol missing from home

- Clear alcohol replaced with water
- Water bottle filled w/ clear alcohol

Teen Alcohol Use Statistics

Alcohol is the most commonly used drug by children and adolescents in the United States. While one drink may not kill anybody, **it is hard for teenagers to stop at just one drink**, and that is where the trouble begins.

From the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

- Almost 42% of 9th grade students reported having consumed alcohol before they were 13.
- About 44% of ninth grade students reported drinking in the past month.
- 25% of ninth graders reported binge drinking (more than 5 drinks on one occasion) in the last month.
- The gap between alcohol use by boys and girls has closed. Girls consume alcohol and binge drink at rates equal to boys.
- 40% of children who start drinking before the age of 15 will become alcoholics at some point in their lives. If the onset of drinking is delayed by 5 years, a child's risk of serious alcohol problems is decreased by 50%.
- Among drivers ages 15-20, fatal crashes involving a single vehicle at night are three times more likely than other fatal crashes to be alcohol-related.
- 33% of 9th graders reported having ridden in a car driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol.

From Underage Drinking in the United States: A Status Report, 2004

- 92% of the alcohol consumed by 12-14 year olds is consumed when they are binge drinking.
- The **average age** at which 12-17 year olds began drinking is **13**.
- Heavy exposure of the adolescent brain to alcohol may interfere with brain activity and brain development, causing loss of memory and other skills.
- Every day, 3 teens die from drinking and driving.
- Approximately six teens die every day of non-driving alcohol-related causes, such as homicide, suicide, and drowning.
- On college campuses, 95% of all violent crime involves the use of alcohol.
- 90% of college rapes involve the use of alcohol by the assailant, victim or both.
- Teenage girls who binge drink are up to 63% more likely to become teen mothers.
- In 2004, **60.3% of 12th graders** and **19.9% of 8th graders** reported having been drunk in the past month.

From The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

- The substance use environment of a 12 to 17 year old has deteriorated over the past year. In the 2004 survey, 36 % of teens have friends who smoke cigarettes; up from 30% in 2003. 48% have friends who regularly drink; up from 44% in 2003. 38% have friends who smoke marijuana; up from 32% in 2003.
- 29% of teens report that drugs are their greatest concern, up from 23% in 2003. Only 12% of parents see drugs as a teen's greatest concern.
- Teen Party Scene – Many teens attend parties where substances are available. 9% of 12 year olds report that they attend parties where prescription drugs are available. By age 15, 58% report alcohol and 35% report marijuana is available at parties they attend. At age 16, the marijuana availability rate jumps to 55% and **by age 17, 73% of the parties they attend have some of all of these substances available.**