

1. **Make it clear that it is NOT okay for your teen to experiment** with alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. Set clear and consistent “no use” rules. Share the facts and the consequences of use.
2. **Eat meals together** with your children and talk – as often as possible – without the TV on.
3. **Set a positive tone** and avoid judgments and accusatory language. Listen, discuss, and ask questions. Focus on the positive: instead of criticizing, praise special talents and nurture interests.
4. **Wake your child** in the morning and make sure they get to school.
5. **Know where your child is** after school and on weekends. Check that they are where they said they would be. Beware of sleepovers – teens will migrate to homes where they have the most freedom and least supervision.
6. **Make sure an adult is home** when your teen goes to a friend’s house after school. When your teen is invited to a party, call the home and speak to the parents or adult chaperones. Make sure they will be there and that no alcohol will be served (call, no matter how much your teen objects.)
7. **Monitor teen media** (music, videogames, websites such as Facebook & MySpace, TV and texting). Keep the computer in a common area in the house.
8. **Establish rules about the people your teen can be with.** Get to know your teen’s friends and their families. Ask questions. Don’t be afraid to say “NO.” Your teen is not your friend. He/She is your child.
9. **Set firm rules, clear limits and consequences** to breaking them. If you establish a consequence or punishment for misbehavior, stick to it. Don’t allow your teen to talk you out of it.
10. **Keep track of and lock up unused prescription pain medications** (eg. Percocet, Oxycodone) in your home. Monitor ADHA medications (eg. Adderall, Ritalin.) Teens are abusing these medications to get high.
11. **Do fun things together** (not just homework, chores and errands). Help your teen deal with stress. Involve your teen in a weekly family, social or religious activity. Talk with your teen about their hopes and dreams.
12. **Set a good example** by demonstrating the value and healthy lifestyle you want for your teen. Avoid coming home after a stressful day and saying in earshot of your teen, “I had a bad day I really need a drink” (and then drinking beer, wine or hard liquor.)

**Parents are the most powerful influence on teens when it comes to drinking and drug use. Not friends. Not school. Parents.**