

Parent Discussion on Substance Use and Overdose Prevention – Tips and Resources

Victoria High School Parent Advisory Committee information night January 2017

Three things you can do:

Family support and connection is the biggest thing we can do to help our children. You must show your teens you care about them and their wellbeing is important to you. Never give up on this!

Know the facts about substance use and be a trustworthy source of accurate information. There is a public health emergency in B.C. People are overdosing on illicit substances in high numbers. Drugs like cocaine, crack, ecstasy, meth, and heroin can contain fentanyl or other lethal substances.

Learn more and keep learning. Go online, read books, watch videos. Learn about parenting skills and how to keep the conversation going. You are not alone - what you are going through with your teens is normal (because there are all kinds of normal).

How to have an open and supportive conversation:

Stay Calm: Be less critical. Be a good listener, be positive and problem solve as a team. Give room to ask questions. Respect their opinions. Ask what they are seeing, hearing and feeling. When asking, be open and respectful.

Conversation starters: Talk about what you've seen in social media, the news and in movies. Talk in the car, while making dinner or while walking.

Ask open ended questions, such as "What do you think about this?" or "Tell me what you've heard about this." Look for the answers together. If they won't talk, find another trusted adult they would feel comfortable with: a relative, teacher, counsellor or, neighbour.

While talking to kids about drugs can be tricky, there is help. Ask at your school, ask other parents and search online.

Resources and links

Web pages on substance use, overdose prevention and mental health

B.C. Government's Overdose Awareness website: www.gov.bc.ca/overdose

Island Health overdose prevention: www.viha.ca/mho/overdose.htm, and youth and substance use: www.viha.ca/youth-substance-use/

Information related to substance use and mental health: heretohelp.bc.ca, keltymentalhealth.ca and mindcheck.ca (substance use help and resources for youth)

Web information on parenting:

Advice on how to talk to your kids about opioid drugs: www.healthlinkbc.ca/substance-use/parenting-articles

Centre for Addictions Research BC Parent tips: www.uvic.ca/research/centres/carbc/assets/docs/hs-parents-list.pdf

Rosalind Wiseman: culturesofdignity.com. (also on [Facebook](#)) (see the [Blog](#) and [Books & Materials](#))

Thomas Gordon: www.gordontraining.com/free-resources/free-parent-resources (also on [Facebook](#))

Videos

Interviews with BC parents about talking to their kids www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/articles/alcohol-sense-videos

BC Council for Families: www.bccf.ca/bccf/resources/ - videos are at the bottom

CBC: the Fentanyl Epidemic www.cbc.ca/firsthand/episodes/unstoppable-the-fentanyl-epidemic

Books (available in the [Greater Victoria Public Libraries](#))

Get out of my life, but first could you drive me and Cheryl to the mall? A parent's guide to the new teenager, by Anthony E. Wolf

Sidestepping the power struggle: a manual for effective parenting, by Alison Miller and Allison Rees

Hold onto your kids: why parents need to matter more than peers, by Gordon Neufeld (*videos by this author will be shown at another Vic High parent information night*)

Kids are worth it! Raising resilient, responsible, compassionate kids, by Barbara Coloroso

Masterminds and Wingmen, by Rosalind Wiseman (for boys) and Queen Bees and WannaBes (for girls)

In the public library

In bookstores