

10 Parenting Tips

1. *Be an engaged and hands-on parent to your kids.*
Discuss your family values and expectations about alcohol, marijuana and other drug use. Empower your children with facts to make good choices. Ensure they know the effects of alcohol and marijuana on brain development, the law, and social / physical risks. Make them aware of the consequences should they choose to use substances.
2. *Remove easy access in your home.*
Put away and/or lock up alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, including prescription medicines.
Easy access = potential problems.
3. *Ensure your house is not used for parties while you are away.*
If you are gone from home for the evening or out of town, take measures to ensure your house isn't used for parties or gatherings. Communicate with your neighbors. Have someone check on your house. Have clear rules and plans in place for your kids if they are not away with you. It is never a good idea to allowing parties or gatherings while you are away as the temptation and risks are too high. Allowing kids to have "just a few friends over" often leads to a party.
4. *Do not allow your child to attend large or loosely supervised parties that are not alcohol/drug free and are not supervised by an adult.*
Ensure that a parent is present at larger gatherings and agrees to a no alcohol or substance use event before you allow your son/daughter to attend.
5. *Proactively communicate with your child's friend's parents.*
Call before your child goes out for the night or spends the night with a friend to confirm an adult will be home all night and that the kids will be supervised. If the kids are going out for the evening, confirm where they are going, how they are getting there, and who will be supervising them.
6. *Set and enforce check-in times, curfews and other safety rules.*
Having healthy boundaries creates healthy habits.
7. *Give your kids a safe way out or exit plan from risky situations.*
Establish a code or phrase only you and your child know about, and let them know its ok to ask for help when they need it.
8. *Look for signs of behavior, paraphernalia and various forms of cannabis – honey sticks, dabs, vapes, edibles etc.*
If you notice your child acting different – glassy eyes, under the influence of marijuana or other erratic behavior – pay attention and look for evidence. Talk to them. Investigate. Don't ignore the signs.
9. *You are your child's role model; set a good example.*
They learn from you. Drink moderately and responsibly. Don't serve alcohol at pre-homecoming, prom, graduation, or sports team parties, etc. Don't use alcohol, marijuana or other banned substances with your children.
10. *You are the parent, not your child's friend.*
Parenting is rewarding and can also be challenging. Create trust and an attitude of understanding while maintaining your role as a parental figure. Above all, talk with and listen to your child. Love them for who they are, but don't be afraid to set high standards.