

# Addiction is the #1 Preventable Adolescent Health Problem...

*We, as parents or caregivers, are much more powerful than we think. The #1 reason kids do not smoke or use drugs is fear of disappointing us. Kids who learn about tobacco and drug risks from parents are only half as likely to start using. Steps you can take:*

- **Begin the dialogue when your kids are young.** Talk early and often. Use “teachable moments” - like an incident in the town, school or home. See resources below for help.
- **Get and stay closely involved** with your kids’ lives as they head through middle and high school. You won’t connect well with your kids about serious issues if you haven’t been involved in their interests.
- **Keep monitoring your kids.** Know the “who, what, why, where, and when” of their activities.
- **Be the parent.** Your kids already have friends, they need you to be the parent and a positive role model. Teens like to be trusted. Build trust by having clear and consistent boundaries (rules) that are talked about in advance and based on love and concern for their well-being.

## and a Treatable Disease!

- **Addiction is a health problem** that does not happen because someone is “bad.”
- **Addiction runs in families**, just like cancer or heart disease. Families with a history of alcoholism or drug addiction should explain this to their children and let them know that they are at a higher risk for addiction.
- **You are not alone.** Substance abuse is common among teens and adults. Addiction doesn’t discriminate. It cuts across race, gender and economic lines.
- **Don’t wait -- know the warning signs and act early.** If you suspect your child has a problem, you’re probably right. Take the first step. Contact your health care provider or the resources below.

### **There is hope, help and healing available for your family:**

[www.timetotalk.org](http://www.timetotalk.org) (parents) • [www.checkyourself.com](http://www.checkyourself.com) (kids)

NH Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug Services • 1-800-804-0909 • [www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/ATOD](http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/ATOD)  
NH Try to Stop Tobacco Resource Center • 800-Try-To-STOP (800-879-8678)



For fact sheets go to: [www.chadkids.org/goto/childhealthmonth](http://www.chadkids.org/goto/childhealthmonth)

9/2007

Children’s Hospital at Dartmouth, Injury Prevention Center, NH Department of Health and Human Services,  
NH Department of Education, NH Pediatric Society, NH SAFE KIDS & Partnership for a Drug Free NH