

TIPS FOR PARENTS OF KIDS ENTERING MIDDLE SCHOOL

As "tweens" transition from elementary to middle school, their independence grows. They may still seem young, but their new surroundings can put them in some mature and tempting situations. Middle school often means increased socialization with older kids as well. All of this creates new challenges for parents. Here are some facts and tools to help your child make good choices during this critical time.

Alcohol and drugs are really harmful to you because your brain is still developing

Know the facts:

Alcohol and marijuana use by maine teens doubles between 8th and 9th grade.

I know you learn about alcohol & drugs in health class, but I also want you to understand my concerns...

Stay Connected:

Youth who learn about the risks of alcohol and drugs from their parents are 50% less likely to use substances.

It's my expectation that when you're with your friends alcohol and drugs are not present

Set Clear Rules & Consequences:

If Maine teens don't think they'll be caught by their parents they are 5 times more likely to use alcohol.

If you're ever in a tough situation, use me as your excuse to have to leave...

Discuss Friendship & Peer Influence: Teen brains are not fully developed and decision-making is particularly challenging in social or emotional situations.

What is your curfew for your son/daughter?

Stay Involved:

Talk with other parents, get to know your kids friends, get to know your kids friends parents.

I'm really proud of the effort you've been putting into making new friends (algebra class, helping your little brother, etc).

Show You Care:

Let young people know that you care about them, and their future. Research confirms that praise can be one of the most powerful tools that you can use to influence your child's actions.



For more information visit: www.accesshealthme.org

Adapted from document created by: the Opportunity Alliance - Public Health Program