ADDICTION IS REAL

Stop the silence.
Start the conversation.
Save a life.

www.addictionisreal.org
Kids Have Questions, Do You Have the Answers?
Why talk to your kids?

- Just as you protect your kids from illnesses like measles, you can help "immunize" them against the disease of addiction.
- If you don’t, they’ll seek answers elsewhere.
- Parents who are educated about the effects of drug use and addiction can give their kids correct information and clear up misconceptions.
Missouri Middle School Students:

- 12 is the average age of first use of alcohol
- 13 is the average age of first use of marijuana
- 33.7% of students saw little to no risk with alcohol consumption
- 36.5% of students saw little to no risk with marijuana consumption

These numbers mirror state & national averages.
Interesting Facts:

○ By 3rd and 4th grade children begin setting expectations of whether they will consume alcohol or restrain from doing so as they mature.¹

○ 2/3 of youth ages 13 to 17 say losing their parents’ respect and pride is one of the main reasons they don’t smoke marijuana or use other drugs.²

Sources: ¹ Center For Parenting Ed, ² Office of National Drug Control Policy
Good News

Bad News

The problem is only 1 in 4 teens report having these conversations. Don’t let your child be a statistic.

Sources: 1 National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD), 2 The Partnership at Drug-Free.org
Just bad news

90% of addictions start in the teenage years
1 in 6 teens have used medicine to get high
27% of teens and 16% of parents believe that using prescription drugs to get high is safer than using street drugs to get high.

Source: National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD)
Source: University of Michigan: 2013 Monitoring the Future Study
Top 8 Reasons Why Kids Use Drugs

- **Other People** *(Teens, Friends, Parents using)*
- **Popular Media** *(music, movies)*
- **Escape & Self-Medication** *(other mental disorders – depression, anxiety, ADHD, bipolar, etc.)*
- **Boredom**
- **Rebellion**
- **Instant Gratification**
- **Lack of Confidence**
- **Misinformation**

Source: Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
Causes of Addiction

Why do some people become addicted while others don’t?

○ Addiction is considered to be, on average, heritable about 50 percent of the time.¹

○ Genetics and environmental factors are thought to play equal roles in the onset of addiction.²

○ Abusing drugs or alcohol before the brain is fully developed (anytime before a person’s mid-20s) may increase the risk of addiction later in life due to the changes these substances make to growing brains.³

Sources: ¹ Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics, ² National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), ³ Clinical EEG and Neuroscience
Children who begin drinking at age 13 have a 45% chance of becoming alcohol-dependent. A person who starts drinking at the legal age of 21 has only a 7% chance of becoming addicted.

Source: National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD)
Judgment last to develop

The area of the brain that controls “executive functions” — including weighing long-term consequences and controlling impulses — is among the last to fully mature. Brain development from childhood to adulthood:

5-year-old brain  Preteen brain  Teen brain  20-year-old brain

Dorsal lateral prefrontal cortex (“executive functions”)

Red/yellow: Parts of brain less fully mature  Blue/purple: Parts of brain more fully mature

Source: Psychology Today, Parenting and the Amazing Teen Brain
Risk Factors Influencing Teen Behavior

- Genetics
- Less Parent Involvement
- Bullying
- Trauma/Abuse
- Risky Behavior
- Pot Legalization

Source: Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
MARIJUANA MAY HURT THE DEVELOPING TEEN BRAIN

The teen brain is still developing and it is especially vulnerable to drug use.

Regular heavy marijuana use by teens can lead to an IQ drop of up to 8 points.

HEAVY MARIJUANA USE BY TEENS IS LINKED TO:

Educational Outcomes
- lower grades and exam scores
- less likely to graduate from HS or college

Life Outcomes
- lower satisfaction with life
- more likely to earn a lower income
- more likely to be unemployed

NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT DRUGS & ALCOHOL

- Listen Before You Talk — Encourage Conversation
- Talk to Your Child and Ask Open Ended Questions
- Be Involved
- Set Expectations, Limits and Consequences
- Be Honest and Open
- Be Positive
- Family History

Source: National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD)
Be Proactive, Not Reactive
Practice Refusal Skills

- Discuss various ways to say “no” with your child and choose a couple options that are most comfortable.
- Rehearse/role play regularly.
- Be assertive and make eye contact when refusing.
- Expect offers to use alcohol/drugs to come from friends and acquaintances.

Compliment the person.

“Thanks for offering but I’m good.”

State the consequence or problem.

“The trouble is my parents drug test me.”

Offer an alternative that shows you value the person.

“Let’s just hang out instead.”

Leave in a way that doesn’t offend.

“I have to get to my brother’s basketball game. See you another time.”

ADDICTION IS REAL
Troubled Teen Warning Signs

- Extreme moods / defensive attitude
- Sudden drop in grades
- Spending a lot of time in their room
- Unhealthy obsession with new friend group
- Self-Harm
- Appetite changes
- No remorse for actions
- Sleep disturbances
- Frequent illness
- Consistent dishonesty
- Smells different / Lack of proper hygiene

Source: National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence (NCADD)
Get Help, Don’t Wait

Go to www.addictionisreal.org for Resources
How to Contact Us

www.AddictionIsReal.org

info@addictionisreal.org

Addiction is Real, Inc.

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The most dangerous three words that a parent can say:

NOT MY CHILD.
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