

Newsletter inserts for elementary schools to
accompany "Top 10" Posters

Insert #1

Keeping Your Kids Drug Free

Follow the recipe, use the right ingredients, and the end result is a perfect batch of cookies. If only parenting were like that and kids came with directions, especially for keeping them safe.

So what can we do? By helping children develop certain qualities - cooperation, responsibility, respect, hopefulness, honesty, kindness, to name a few - parents, schools and the community can help them build resistance to drugs and other harmful things. These qualities form the building blocks of a healthy future.

What can kids do?

Recently, your school received a series of posters called "Top 10 Ways to Stay Drug Free." Each poster highlights something that kids can do to stay drug free. These ideas will help them build the qualities mentioned above...

- Make the choice to be drug free! Better still, make the choice with a buddy!
- Hang out and have fun with the drug free crowd.
- Get "high" on other things!
- Choose role models you can really look up to!
- Talk to your parents or other adult friends...about everything!
- Be in the know! Get the facts!
- Feeling pressured? There's more than one way to say no. Practice, practice, practice!
- Your future may seem far away – don't ruin your dreams with drugs today.
- Don't let someone else make decisions for you. Think for yourself!
- There is only one you! Be proud of yourself and the choices you make!

Insert #2

Keeping Your Kids Drug Free!

Kids are less likely to misuse drugs & alcohol when their parents/guardians are interested and involved in their lives.

What can parents do?

- **Talk to your kids!** Start small...talking about the little things makes talking about the big things easier. Try these conversation starters: "Describe your perfect day." "What is the best thing about your life?" "What is the hardest thing about being your age?" "If you could change one thing about the world what would it be?"
- **Establish family or house rules and enforce them.** Although most would never admit it, kids really do want and need boundaries. They also need to know you care enough to follow through when they cross them. Kids need to know what you expect from them, and what they can expect from you.
- **Stay involved in their lives.** As kids grow older it is appropriate to allow them more freedom but it is critical for you to remain closely connected to what's happening – where are they, who are they with, what are they doing?

Insert #3

Keeping Your Kids Drug Free!

Kids who feel like a valued part of their school & community have “one up” on those who don’t when it comes to making healthier choices about drugs and alcohol. These students are more likely to delay their experimentation with drugs and alcohol, which is linked with fewer long-term problems.

What can schools & communities do?

- **Make sure students know what you expect from them and related consequences.** Be consistent and fair – kids need to know what they can expect from you.
- **Celebrate your young people** – take note of their accomplishments, celebrate their successes, and support their goals.
- **Provide opportunities for teachers and students to work together outside of the classroom** – fundraising, school spirit, assemblies, sports events, etc.
- **Give young people a voice.** Work together to solve problems. Ask for ideas.
- **Provide safe places for kids to go** – gym, parks, after-school programs, youth centres.