



# KEEP KIDS DRUG FREE FOUNDATION, INC.

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## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF TEEN DRINKING OR DRUG USE

How can you tell if your child is using drugs or alcohol? It is difficult because changes in mood or attitudes, show of temper, changes in sleeping habits and changes in hobbies or favorite activities are common teenage behaviors. So, what should you look for? **CHANGES WARRANT ATTENTION.**



It is important to keep an eye open for significant changes in physical appearance, personality, attitude or behavior. Look for potential causes for these changes; stay vigilant.

### Then WHAT?

These types of changes may signal that something harmful is going on... and that it can involve alcohol or other drugs. If there is concern that alcohol or other drugs are involved you may want to take your child to the doctor and ask that the doctor screen your child for drugs and alcohol. You may want to talk to your doctor or other professional about the deeper problems of depression or mood changes.

If you suspect gang involvement you should reach out to assistance within the school system or law enforcement to discuss your concerns.

The key is to monitor and pay attention to your child's behavior. Keep the lines of communication open.

Sources: *Parents: The Anti Drug*, *Addictions.org*, *Phoenix House*

### Overview of Things to Watch

- Depression or withdrawal... secluded behavior... breaking family curfews and staying out or with friends you do not know
- Carelessness in grooming or personal care
- Hostility
- Changes in friends
- Negative changes in schoolwork, missing school or declining grades
- Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfume to hide smoke or chemical odors
- Smell of smoke or alcohol
- Subtle changes in conversations with friends, e.g.; more secretive, using "coded" language
- Change in clothing choices, clothes with symbols, new fascination with clothes that highlight drug use
- Increase in borrowing money... money missing
- Lying
- Breaking the law
- Evidence of drug paraphernalia such as pipes, rolling papers, etc.
- Evidence of use of inhalant products (such as hairspray, nail polish, correction fluid, common household products) Rags and paper bags are often accessories
- Bottles of eye drops to mask bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils
- New use of breath mints to cover smell of alcohol or tobacco
- Missing prescription drugs... especially narcotics or mood stabilizers

### KEEP KIDS DRUG FREE FOUNDATION, INC.

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