

## Youth & Drugs

### "How do I know if my child is abusing drugs or alcohol?"

If you find drugs or items such as smoking pipes, it is a strong indication that your child is using or experimenting with drugs. Behavior is another indicator.

Watch for:

- Abrupt mood swings or attitude changes.
- Sudden decline in attendance or performance at work or school.
- Sudden resistance to discipline at home or school.
- Poor relationship with family and friends.
- Unusual temper tantrums.
- Borrowing money from friends and relatives.
- Stealing from home, school or work.
- Increased secrecy about actions or possessions.
- Hanging out with new group of friends (especially ones who use drugs)

These behaviors may indicate drug use but they may also indicate normal growing pains. The best way to know for sure is to observe your child, get to know his or her friends, but most importantly, TALK. Communication is essential for your child's growth and safety.

If you know that your child is taking drugs, take action and do not ignore the problem. Explain the harmful effects of drugs, including the long-term effects to one's physical, social and mental well-being.