



ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE USE

WHY IS ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE USE A CONCERN?

The adolescent brain is not fully developed. Long-term effects of the use of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, or other drugs can lead to poor performance in school and can get in the way of the brain functioning to its full capacity.

WHAT CAN PARENTS/GUARDIANS DO?

Parents and guardians are the **number one influence** on an adolescent's decision about vaping, alcohol use, or other substance use. Talking to your child about substance use and establishing clear boundaries can protect them from using and help them reduce or quit their usage if they've already started.

Strategies shown to help prevent adolescent substance use include:

- **Monitoring.** Parental monitoring is defined as knowing the general whereabouts of your child at all times, especially when school is out for the day.
 - **Role Modeling.** Adolescents imitate not only healthy behaviors but also unhealthy behaviors. This includes alcohol and other drug consumption.
 - **Building a Warm and Supportive Relationship.** A close relationship makes it easier when the time comes for you to monitor behavior.
 - **Appropriate Parent-Child Communication.** Provide information to your adolescent about the health and safety risks of alcohol and other drug use.
 - **Maintain Awareness of Peer Relationships.** The friend groups that adolescents' choose to spend time with are often influenced by the relationship they have with you.
- **Look for signs of vaping.** Look for vape devices and vape liquid or juice pods. Some vapes and pods look like a USB drive or common items, like pens. Other signs include: faint scent of flavoring, increase in thirst, increase in nosebleeds, and decrease in caffeine usage.
 - **Help your child quit if they've started.** If you also use nicotine, you can start a "quit journey" together.
 - **Text DITCHVAPE to 88709:** Text-based, youth-focused support to quit
 - Oregon Quitline (for 13 years and older): Phone, online and text counseling to quit nicotine and cannabis
 - English: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) quitnow.net/oregon
 - Espanol: 1-855-DEJELO-YA (1-800-784-8669) quitnow.net/oregonsp

For more information about how to talk to your kids about substance use or to learn more about specific substances, you can visit the Shared Future Coalition Website: <https://www.sharedfuturecoalition.org/parent-resources/talking-to-your-kids/>

To request this information in an alternate format, please call 458-281-3478 or send an email to heather.tang@deschutes.org.

