

IF YOU THINK THEY'RE USING: DRUG ABUSE IN TEENS 13-18

If you're at all concerned that your teenager is using drugs or alcohol, take action right now to help your child get back on track to a healthy life.

- **Look for the warning signs of drug or alcohol use or addiction.** Keep in mind: Most of these symptoms tend to be gradual so you need to watch for them over time. Don't jump to conclusions, but do investigate any suspicions you have as fully as possible. Trust your intuition. Please note: Many of the warning signs for teen drug abuse are the same as those for depression or for the ups and downs of being a teenager. There's also the possibility it's a physical or emotional problem.
- **Talk to your teen about drug abuse without going on the attack.** Also, don't try to talk with your child if he or she seems under the influence. Wait for a calm moment and then explain the behavior you're worried about. Don't do all the talking; give your child the chance to explain his behavior.
- **Ask a doctor, mental health professional, or a professional substance abuse counselor for help if your teen seems evasive or if his or her explanations are not convincing.** This step will help you rule out physical or mental illness. If your child is using, a health professional skilled in diagnosing adolescents with alcohol or drug problems will help you figure out the best addiction intervention program for your teen's needs. Programs for teen drug abuse come in many types including self-help, outpatient, in-patient, and 24-hour hospitalization programs. To find treatment programs in your area, call your family doctor, local hospital, county mental health society, or school counselor for a referral. You can also call 800-662-HELP (800-662-4357) or the Partnership's Bilingual Helpline (1-855-DRUGFREE).
- **Get your family the help it needs.** Consider personal or family counseling. Live or online support groups will help you move forward and teach you how to help your teen through recovery and into the future and most groups are offered in Spanish. Also, Al-Anon and Alateen are support groups that help families and friends of people with alcohol problems recover from the effects of living with a problem drinker — whether the person is still drinking or not. More than likely, someone at an Al-Anon meeting knows of a counselor who specializes in substance use disorders.



This information is taken from the Partnership for Drug Free Kids-Parent Toolkit:

<http://www.drugfree.org/the-parent-toolkit/age-by-age-advice/13-18-year-old-using-tips/>

The Hidden in Plain Sight Project is brought to you by the Camanche-DeWitt Coalition and the Gateway ImpACT Coalition. We want to encourage you to talk to your kids about alcohol and drugs. Kids who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are significantly less likely to use drugs. For more information, please contact us at 563-241-4371.