

TIPS for TALKING TO YOUR TEEN

- Keep your best motives in mind by asking yourself what you really want
- Make it safe for your teen to talk; state what you don't intend and what you do intend
- Confront with facts about what's happening, not judgments
- Discuss, agree on, and stick with boundaries
- Evaluate the dialogue to make sure it's a two-way conversation

ABOUT THE RESEARCH. The study collected responses via an online survey of 1,017 individuals in November of 2006. Margin of error is approximately 3%.

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According to a survey we conducted in association with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), **57 percent of parents admit to having some degree of difficulty in getting their teens involved in meaningful conversations about their concerns, such as who their friends are, how they dress, and how school is going.** And 74 percent have difficulty getting their teens to respond to these concerns and are not sure their teens are even listening when they do talk.

And when it comes to discussing tough topics like drug use, 52 percent of parents admit to some degree of difficulty with those conversations. Even more troubling is that parents know drugs are part of a teen's world today. Fifty-six percent of parents believe their teen goes to parties where drugs are available and 48 percent believe their teen has friends who use drugs. Despite that, few parents do anything about it.

The research shows the strategy most often used by parents to monitor their teen's activities is to keep the fridge stocked with food so teens and their friends will be more likely to hang out at home under parental supervision (52%). Few parents are checking up on their teen (7%), asking questions to try to find out what's going on when it comes to drugs (21%), or going through their teen's belongings (29%), even though research shows teens who are not regularly monitored by parents are four times more likely to use drugs.

And when parents have wondered if their teen might be exposed to drugs, 26 percent of them did not speak up because they did not believe their teen would be influenced by drugs. Twenty percent did not speak up because they had already discussed drugs with their teen in the past, 17 percent worried their teen would deny there was a problem, and 13 percent worried that initiating the conversation would communicate a lack of trust to their teen.

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KEY RESULTS

74% of parents have difficulty getting their teens to respond to their concerns

52% of parents have difficulty with conversations about tough topics like drug use

56% of parents believe their teen goes to parties where drugs are available

48% of parents believe their teen has friends who use drugs