



SAFE COMMUNITY COALITION

Drug Awareness

When most parents talk about drugs, they voice some of their greatest fears and concerns. Drug addiction can destroy your relationships and family life and can cause great harm. Our children are being bombarded with information on drugs from many different media. Even though these sights and sounds are not usually promoting drug use, they can reinforce a child's impression that use is "normal"—a standard, even expected, part of growing up.

If your child exhibits one or more of these signs, drug abuse may be at the heart of the problem:

- Withdrawn, depressed, tired, and careless about personal grooming
- Hostile and uncooperative; frequently breaks curfews
- Relationships with family members have deteriorated
- Hanging around with a new group of friends
- Grades have slipped; and school attendance is irregular

- Lost interest in hobbies, sports, and other favorite activities
- Eating or sleeping patterns have changed; up at night and sleeps during the day
- Eyes are re-rimmed and/or nose is runny in the absence of a cold
- Household money has been disappearing

If you suspect your child is using drugs, you should voice your suspicions openly, avoiding direct accusations. If you encounter reluctance to talk, enlist the aid of your child's school guidance counselor, family physician, or a local drug treatment referral and assessment center. They may get a better response. Drug abuse occurs in families of all economic and social backgrounds, in happy and unhappy homes alike. Most important is that the faster you act, the sooner your child can start to become well again.

Written by Chairman Drug Awareness Committee, Madison ELKS Lodge #410