



ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE...WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

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| <p><u>Academic Problems</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drop in grades/achievement level • sleeping in class • refusal to do homework • dropping out of sports or other activities • frequent suspensions/expulsions • all day truancy • frequent requests to leave the room • skipping classes | <p><u>Parental Complaints</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased family involvement • increased isolation in room • increased fighting with siblings • breaking curfew, sneaking out at night • vague about friends and location out • missing money/valuables from home • receiving strange phone calls • liquor/prescription drugs are missing • smell of alcohol/marijuana |
| <p><u>Behavioral Changes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • withdrawn behavior • mood swings • frequent temper outbursts • increased irritability • defensiveness about drug/alcohol use • disorientation/confusion • hypersensitivity • paranoia and/or depression • talk of suicide/suicide attempt • extremely poor hygiene | <p><u>Physical Warning Signs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drastic loss or weight gain • frequent bruises, cuts, track marks (IV use) • bloodshot, puffy or glassy eyes • dilated or constricted pupils • frequent use of eye drops • nausea and/or vomiting • rapid and/or slurred speech • nose bleeds or sores around nose • unsteady gait |
| <p><u>Social Problems</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change in peer group • little interest shown for old friends • rebellious against authority figures • decrease in job performance/attendance | <p><u>Legal Problems</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DUI or drug related arrests • possession of alcohol/drugs/paraphernalia • theft and/or vandalism • traffic accidents, speeding/careless driving • selling and/or fronting drugs |

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| <p><u>What Youth Might Say....</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “I don’t use drugs” ○ “I have the flu/sinus problem” ○ “I have difficulty remembering/concentrating ○ “I have only used once” ○ “This/Life is not worth it” ○ “I can handle it; I don’t get drunk or high” ○ “Everyone’s doing it” | <p><u>What It Might Mean....</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the youth might be drinking ○ might be using heroin/snorting cocaine ○ might be cognitive impairment due to substance use ○ might be using frequently since youth strongly minimize their use ○ might be suicide risk ○ suggests increased physical tolerance ○ suggests that using drugs is OK and/or is the norm |
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