

## HOMWORK FOR PARENTS

1. **EDUCATE YOURSELF ON THE CHALLENGES FACING YOUR CHILD AS HE/SHE ENTERS HIGH SCHOOL.** Keep in mind there is an increase in reported substance use from 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. **GET TO KNOW YOUR CHILD'S FRIENDS AND WHERE THEY HANG OUT.** Research shows that teens (12-17) get alcohol/drugs from friends and usually from inside a home, apartment or dorm.
3. **ROLE PLAY PEER PRESSURE SITUATIONS.** Helping teens come up with a “no” response to various situations they might face helps your child feel empowered, instead of telling your child to “just say no”. And parents, role play your reactions to your children...they are experts at throwing you a curve ball.
4. **MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS AWARE OF YOUR NO DRUG POLICY IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD...STICK WITH IT!** Do not assume your child knows your views on drugs and alcohol. Enforce rules with clear consequences for breaking them. Looking for respect from family and friends is one reason why children stay clear of risky behavior.
5. **TRY TO EAT AS MANY MEALS TOGETHER AS A FAMILY AS POSSIBLE.** Research has shown this to reduce alcohol and other drug use. Family conversation and bonding provide support for the peer pressure they will face. It gives them the opportunity to talk about they day's events and stay connected.
6. **MAKE SURE AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ARE WELL SUPERVISED.** The hours between 3-7pm are when kids are likely to get in trouble.
7. **IF YOU WORK, CHECK IN ON YOUR TEEN AFTER THEY GET HOME FROM SCHOOL.** Make sure you know their plans for the afternoon. Call their friends' parents if they are going to hang out or study.
8. **BE ALERT TO A DECLINE IN SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OR INVOLVEMENT.** Children with low grades or negative attitudes towards school are more likely to be enticed to try illegal substances. Stay in touch with teachers, even at the HS level.
9. **EXAMINE YOUR OWN ALCOHOL USE.** Adolescents are very observant and tend to be black and white in their thinking. If you have conversations with them about the dangers of drinking and driving, or getting drunk, and then you engage in what you warn against, your children will take notice. It will take away from your credibility, authority and minimize the impact of your rules.