

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOLESCENT DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE OR ABUSE:

ILLICIT BEHAVIORS

- Drug or alcohol use (*this is not a mistake; denial often obscures the obvious signs*)
- Theft
- Disappearance of possessions, money, clothes
- Possession of drug-related paraphernalia
- Possession of weapons
- Drug- or alcohol-related posters, signs, tee shirts, etc.
- Use of goldenseal or other OTC herbs

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- Marked drop in grades
- Lack of concern about grades
- Little or no investment in homework, studying, etc.
- Poor concentration
- Poor memory
- Marked drop in classroom participation
- General loss of interest in school
- Excessive procrastination / avoidance
- Frequent lates or cuts
- Loss of interests in sports, activities, school events
- *Improved* behavior and *appearance* of focus

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS

- Frequent lying, and excuses that are plausible but suspicious
- Excessive sleeping or drifting
- Defiance of rules
- Verbal or physical abuse
- Mood swings
- Excessive talking
- Non-communicative

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

- Change in friends
- Change in hangouts
- Unknown friends who avoid parents
- Always out of the house with no particular destination
- Secretive / suspicious phone conversations
- Hang-up phone calls
- Callers who refuse to identify themselves
- Significantly older or younger acquaintances

- Isolation
- Argues that drug use is alright
- Argues that teachers / parents don't understand drug use
- Lives day-to-day with no long term planning or commitments (apathetic)
- Extreme avoidance of family / extended family functions
- Use of street vocabulary
- Demands / steals money from siblings, parents, friends, classmates

WARNING SIGNS OF PRESENT INTOXICATION

- Smell of alcohol, marijuana, or strong chemical
- Appears disoriented or confused
- Excessive sleeping, inability to arouse
- Loss of muscular coordination
- Unexplained happiness, giddiness, laughing
- Unexplained or uncharacteristic aggression
- Dilated, red, or unusual eye appearance
- Slurred speech
- Hyperactive
- Hyper-anxious
- Excessive indulgence in food