

Quick List:
10 Steps to Help Your Child Say "No"

1. Talk with your child about alcohol and other drugs. You can help change ideas your child may have that "everybody drinks, smokes, or uses other drugs."
2. Learn to really listen to your child. Your child is more likely to talk with you when you give verbal and nonverbal cues that show you are listening.
3. Help your child feel good about himself or herself. Your child will feel good when you praise efforts, as well as accomplishments, and when you correct by criticizing the action rather than the child.
4. Help your child develop strong values. A strong value system can give your child courage to say "no" rather than listen to friends.
5. Be a good role model or example. Your habits and attitudes may strongly influence your child's ideas about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
6. Help your child deal with peer pressure. A child who has been taught to be gentle and loving may need your "permission" to say "no" to negative peer pressure.
7. Make family rules. It's helpful when you make specific family rules about your child not using alcohol or other drugs or smoking cigarettes. And it's helpful to tell your child the punishment for using them.
8. Encourage healthy, creative activities. Hobbies, school events, and other activities may prevent your child from using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs out of boredom.
9. Team up with other parents. You can join other parents in support groups that will reinforce the guidance you provide at home.
10. Know what to do if you suspect a problem. You can learn to recognize the telltale signs of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and get help.