

LET'S TALK

Decision Making

WITH OUR KIDS!



PERSONAL WELLNESS 6-9
WELLNESS STRAND

Responsible Decision Making

Tips to Get Started

- Remember that you are a role model so your child learns by your example.
- When issues come up in the media, music, or the news, talk about it.
- Respond when kids are curious.
- It's okay not to have all the answers. Seeking information shows kids it's okay to have questions.
- Keep conversations informal and be open to your child's questions and ideas.
- Take a moment to consider your own personal wellness before starting any difficult conversation.
- Use correct names and terms (eg. Preferred pronouns and/or names).
- Check out [What Parents Need to Know About Teens](#) by David A. Wolfe.

ENCOURAGE TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS, DAILY LIFE, AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This builds a safe space for your teen to discuss what's on their mind while fostering independence.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Take an interest in a common hobby.
- Plan and eat a healthy meal together.
- Attend extra-curricular events.
- Get to know their friends.
- Discuss appropriate household chores.
- Set a time for homework and talk with them about what they are learning.
- Use the [D.E.C.I.D.E. Model](#) for decision making.

TEACH ABOUT YOUR FAMILY VALUES.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This helps your teen understand why rules may not be the same in different households.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Communicate family rules (e.g., curfews, cellphone expectations, etc.).
- Communicate expectations clearly and consistently.
- Model the behaviors you expect.
- Allow kids and teens to say no to unwanted affection, even from a family member.
- Prepare what to say in advance.

ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HOBBIES.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Being active helps foster healthy relationships while improving confidence, leadership skills and wellness.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Encourage your teen to be involved in an activity outside of school or home.
- Ask them about the things that bring them joy and set aside time to explore those interests.
- Explore volunteer activities within the community such as helping out a neighbour or through an organization.

Substance Use and Abuse

RECOGNIZE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS THAT MAY INDICATE SUBSTANCE ABUSE.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This allows you to provide support as soon as possible for addictions and mental health needs.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

Explore these resources:

- [How to Spot the Signs of Teen or Young Adult Substance Use](#)
- [Kids Help Phone](#)
- [Government of NB Addictions and Mental Health Services for Children and Youth](#)

WORK ON DEVELOPING POSITIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Modeling positive communication helps give teens the skills needed for healthy relationships.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Solve arguments by communicating rather than yelling.
- Take a time out from a heated discussion and let your teen know you need to calm yourself before continuing.
- Rehearse reasons for refusing drugs (e.g., my parents would ground me, I would get kicked off the team, etc.).

ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR TEEN'S ACTIVITIES.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This shows that you are interested in what they are doing and allows for opportunities to provide support when needed.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- Meet their friends.
- Know where they are going.
- Check in on academic performance.
- Encourage involvement in youth groups, clubs, and teams.

DISCUSS THE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCES ON THE BODY.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Discussing the effects of drugs will help them see the connection between their actions and their future.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

Explore these resources:

- [Drug Free Kids Canada](#)
- [Center for Addictions and Mental Health \(CAMH\)](#)
- [Talking Pot with Youth](#)
- [Youth and Prescription Painkillers](#)
- [The law regarding legal and illegal drugs in Canada](#)

TALK WITH YOUR TEEN ABOUT EXPECTATIONS.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Sharing personal values helps your teen understand your views.

IDEAS FOR FAMILIES

- It is okay for your child to fail. Failing can provide an important learning experience.
- Be clear about the consequences of breaking the rules.
- Be consistent!
- Provide structure such as family meals and bedtimes.
- Model responsible behavior around drinking, illegal drugs and medications.