

## BC Centre for Safe Schools & Communities

### Resource Library

Phone: 1.888.224.7233

Website: <http://www.bccssc.ca>

At the BC Centre for Safe Schools and Communities, we maintain an extensive resource centre of print and video resources in a variety of topic areas including:

- Substance Abuse
- Alcohol and Drug Prevention
- Youth Violence
- Conflict Resolution

Sample titles include:

- *Face of Reality*: Youth and substance abuse
- *Choices & Consequences*: What to do when a teenager uses alcohol/drugs, a step-by-step system that really works

### **Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Line**

Lower Mainland: 1.604.660.9382  
Toll-free: 1.800.663.1441

### **BC Nurse Line**

Lower Mainland: 1.604.215.4700  
Toll-free: 1.866.215.4700

**National Anti-Drug Strategy**  
<http://nationalantidrugstrategy.gc.ca>



*“Promoting safe, healthy and inclusive schools and communities”*

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Toll Free: 1.888.224.7233

Fax: 1.604.870.5927

Website: [www.bccssc.ca](http://www.bccssc.ca)

### Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday  
8:30am - 4:30pm

Saturday, Sunday and Statutory Holidays  
CLOSED



# SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE



## Facts and Resources for Parents



# Substance Use and Abuse: Information for Parents and the Public

## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMONLY USED SUBSTANCES AMONG YOUTH?

- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Tobacco

### BUT CAN ALSO INCLUDE....

- Cocaine
- “Club Dugs” (i.e., Ecstasy)
- Stimulants (i.e., Ritalin)
- Hallucinogens (i.e., Mushrooms)
- Inhalants
- Prescription drugs (i.e., OxyContin)
- Steroids

## PROBLEMS CAUSED BY SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE CAN INCLUDE:

- Suicide
- Violent behaviours
- Increased risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV
- Death or injury related to overdoses and car accidents
- Severe medical problems, including brain damage
- Poor school work
- Loss of interest in social activities
- Loss of friends
- Problems at home
- Legal issues

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE?

### Physical

- Appearance of intoxication: droopy eyelids, red eyes, dilated or constricted pupils, odour on clothing or breath.
- Changes in sleep patterns: insomnia, inappropriate napping.
- Illness: frequently getting ill, runny nose, bad cough, chest pains.
- Appetite: constantly hungry, wanting sweets, extreme weight loss or gain.
- Hygiene: decline in personal grooming standards.

### Behavioural and Personality

- Mood: unexplained mood swings, depression, anxiety, persistent resentment, over-reaction to requests or mild criticism.
- Withdrawing: secretiveness, not informing parent of new friends or activities, less motivated, no interest in old hobbies, frequently absent from home, school and work, drop in grades, lack of energy, change in values, ideas, beliefs and friends.

## WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO PREVENT SUBSTANCE USE?

- Think first, act second; have a sound mind when approaching your child.
- Talk regularly with your child on a variety of subjects; using facts is very helpful.
- Be clear and focused on what you will be saying; steer the conversation in the right place.
- Help your child be independent and make informed decisions.
- Let your child pick the time and location to discuss substance use; help them feel comfortable.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD IS USING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL?

- Talk to him or her about it in an open manner; remember to remain calm.
- Acknowledge the problem; do not try to tackle the issue on your own; seek support from family or friends.
- Assess the problem; talk to someone you trust (professional, doctor, family, teacher) about possible options or do a search on-line for resources.
- Get help for yourself and your child.