

Keeping Teens Drug Free All Year Long

Experts agree that summer is the riskiest time of year for teens. Research shows that more teens use drugs and alcohol for the first time during the months of June, July and August than any other time of year. Now is a perfect time to talk with teens about alcohol and drug use.

Here is a **S-U-M-M-E-R** checklist courtesy of the www.theantidrug.com.

Set Rules - Young people are less likely to use drugs, alcohol and tobacco if their parents set clear rules and talk about the consequences. Discuss the facts as well as your beliefs.

Understand and Communicate - Once you've explained the risks of drug and alcohol use, listen to what your teen has to say, without judgment.

Monitor Your Teens Activities and Behaviors - Unsupervised time can be especially risky for teens. Don't be afraid to ask where they will be going, who they will be with or what they will be doing.

Make Sure You Stay Involved - Whether it's attending sporting events, a summer road trip or just hanging out in the backyard, teens depend on their parents for love and support. Be there for them.

Engage Your Teen In Summer Activities - Encourage your teen to work a summer job, join a sports team or find a volunteer opportunity. Teens who volunteer are 50% less likely to engage in unhealthy or destructive behaviors.

Reserve Time For Family - Hectic summer schedules often keep families from spending significant time together. Establish a weekly routine with you teen - even if it's just going out for ice cream. Time together lets your teen know they can count on you if they have a problem.