

Get In Touch

# Influence the Choice

For information on events, resources and more:



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“ The substance abuse epidemic is at a stage where prevention needs to start at the kitchen table in every household. ”

– Dr. Faisal Kahn, Director, Public Health- Seattle and King County

Influence the Choice

## Talking with your teen about substance use



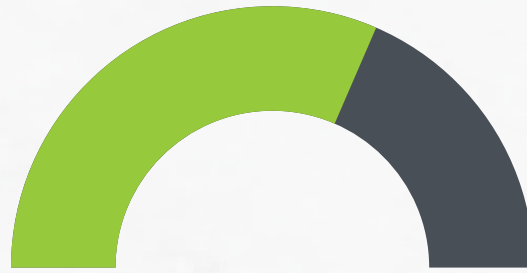
## Getting Started

# Kids *want* to hear from you

When teens know that their parents don't want them to drink or use other substances, they are 50% less likely to use.

But starting those conversations can seem daunting. Here are some ways to start the conversation.

- Observed worrisome behavior?  
Say: **"I've noticed that . . ."**
- Something happening in the community, in the news or on social media?  
Say: **"Have you heard about . . ."**
- Picking them up from school or a sports practice?  
Ask: **"Have your friends ever talked about . . ."** or **"What do the kids at school say about . . ."**
- Is your child heading for a party, event or just hanging out?  
Say **"Before you go, let's make a plan in case there are substances . . ."**
- And the all-purpose, **"Did you know . . ."**



63% of teens know how their parents feel about teen alcohol use

## Setting Expectations

# Be clear about what you expect

End the conversation with expressions of expectation and caring.

**"I don't want you to use or abuse alcohol or other drugs because . . ."**

- ✓ I love you
- ✓ I want you to stay alive
- ✓ I want you to be healthy
- ✓ I don't want you to become dependent
- ✓ I want you to be happy, just the way you are

## General Tips

# Things to remember

- Keep it short (so it doesn't become a lecture)
- Listen and learn; let others know you are paying attention to their perspectives
- You don't have to have all the answers
- Keep the conversation age-appropriate
- A bunch of little conversations are better than "the big conversation"
- It's never too early or too late to talk with your loved ones about drugs

