



Families Need to Communicate Now More than Ever

- If you haven't been a family that communicates, start now
- Accept and reflect your kids' thoughts and emotions
- Conversation starter cards
- Mealtime and bedtime discussions
- Ask open ended questions
 - *Help me understand that*
 - *What outcome were you hoping for?*
 - *How might you do that differently next time?*

Improve Connection With Your Teen:

- Be honest and dependable
- Enjoy time together
- Network with other parents - describe what you're experiencing, discuss what works and doesn't
- Be absolutely clear that you don't want your child using substances - discuss results and dangers of abuse. Leave no room for interpretation
- Don't make up what you don't know – get answers together
- If they ask if you used drugs, repeat that you don't want them to do so
- Be a better listener! Paraphrase what you teen just said. Check for understanding. Ask for their input about family decisions.

Avoid Cutting Off Discussion

- If teen makes statements that challenge or shock you...
 - Turn them into a discussion
 - Ask teen why they think people use substances
 - Ask them to consider whether the effect is worth the risk
 - Be clear about the risks

Listen first, speak second

- Pay complete attention (with eye contact) when your teen is talking to you
- Ask open-ended questions that require more than 'yes' or 'no' response
- Wait for responses, don't put words in teen's mouth

Reserve judgment

