

## Tips for Providing a Supportive Environment

- Know the facts about alcohol, other drugs and their effects. Be a credible source of information for your child and encourage them to ask questions.
- Set a good example by limiting your own consumption of substances. Make your position on alcohol and other drug use clear to your child so that they know where you stand.
- Set clear, firm and rational expectations regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs. Don't be afraid to follow through with reasonable consequences.
- Convey your concerns about the use of alcohol and other drugs and the risks associated without being judgemental.
- Get involved in your child's life by spending time together, knowing where your child is and getting to know your child's friends and their families.
- Show your child you love them unconditionally.

## Community Resources

### Referrals and Counselling

**Addiction Services, Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit**  
Simcoe 519-428-1805  
Caledonia 905-318-5367 Ext. 317 or 318  
Dunnville 905-774-3333 Ext. 221

### Withdrawal Management/Rehabilitation Services

**Holmes House** 519-428-1911  
(Crisis Line) 1-888-999-4966

### Helplines

**Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)**  
1-800-463-6273

**Drug and Alcohol Registry of Treatment (DART)**  
1-800-565-8603

**Mainline (information and support for IV drug users)**  
1-800-686-7544

### Surfing the Net for More Information

**Centre for Addiction and Mental Health –**  
[www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net)

**Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit –** [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org)

**Health Canada: Be Drug Wise –** [www.drugwise.gc.ca](http://www.drugwise.gc.ca)

**Mothers Against Drunk Driving –** [www.madd.ca](http://www.madd.ca)

**Your Life: Your Choice –**  
[www.2learn.ca/currlinks/Health/E/Parents/Frame.html](http://www.2learn.ca/currlinks/Health/E/Parents/Frame.html)

**Parent Action on Drugs –**  
[www.parentactionondrugs.org](http://www.parentactionondrugs.org)



#### Simcoe

P.O. Box 247, 12 Gilbertson Drive  
Simcoe, ON N3Y 4L1  
519.426.6170 / 905.318.6623 (free from 905)

**Email:** [info@hnhu.org](mailto:info@hnhu.org)

**Web:** [www.hnhu.org](http://www.hnhu.org)

#### Caledonia

282 Argyle Street South  
Caledonia, ON N3W 1K7  
905.318.5367



POPULATION HEALTH SERVICES

# Parents As Drug Educators

*Be the 'front line defense' against pressures*



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK  
HEALTH UNIT

## A Need for Parents to Step Up as Drug Educators

Educating your kids about alcohol and other drugs isn't always easy. As children grow and develop so do their social and environmental influences, increasing their chances of drug use. According to the 2003 Student Health Survey conducted in Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk:

- The proportion of students who drank alcohol in the last 12 months increased from 32% in grade 5 up to 87% in grade 11.
- The proportion of students reporting use of cannabis at least once in their lifetime increased from 2% in grade 5 up to 52% in grade 11.

**These trends strongly suggest the need to start drug education at an earlier age.**

As a parent, you have an at-home advantage when it comes to drug education. Please take a moment to review the following information to ensure you are providing a supportive environment for your child to make positive choices.



## WARNING SIGNS

The following are some warning signs that might be cause for concern, but remember to talk to your child and listen to what they have to say. Try not to over-react as some things have other explanations.

### Changes In Friends

- Ignores old friends
- Reluctance to bring new friends home or talk about them
- Reluctance to introduce friends' parents
- Friends don't stay around when adults are present

### Changes At School

- Lower grades
- Misses class
- Loss of interest in school and extracurricular activities
- Trouble with teachers and principal

### Changes In Behaviour and Attitude

- Change in eating or sleeping patterns
- Increased time alone, secretiveness, avoids family
- Lying and denying
- Trouble with the law (e.g., vandalism, fighting)
- Moody, irritable, hostile, anxious, depressed, overly sensitive
- Increased use of breath fresheners, room deodorizers, cologne

### Changes In Appearance

- Decline in cleanliness and appearance
- Red eyes, dilated/contracted pupils, frequent use of eye drops
- Visible signs of intoxication

**If You Suspect Drug Use...**



### Choose the right time to talk

Talk with your child during a quiet part of the day when you won't be interrupted.

### Focus on the behaviours

Calmly discuss your concerns with your child (e.g., changes in behaviour or objects you have found). Avoid name-calling, blaming and threatening. Emotional outbursts often only shut down communication.

### Take the time to listen

After discussing your concerns, listen to your child while remaining non-judgemental and supportive. Remember to avoid accusations.

### Show that you care

Discuss your personal concerns with your child and let them know you are concerned because you care for them.

### Set standards and follow through

Restate your position regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs while making your expectations clear. Be prepared to follow through with consequences that are reasonable.

### Don't be afraid to seek outside help

There are many confidential resources available to families. If you suspect a problem, be persistent in finding a solution by seeking outside help.