



Tips to help children stay drug-free:

1. Accept the role of parent as a responsibility - let others be their friend.
2. Make parenting a priority - be there.
3. Educate yourself about the problems facing today's children - they are different from the problems you faced.
4. Give clear messages about expectation - be specific about how you expect them to behave.
5. Enforce stated consequences when family rules are broken - children who don't follow family rules today may break society's laws tomorrow.
6. Clearly state consequences of failure to follow family rules - consequences are not negotiable.
7. Be aware that many in the community put children's buying power above children's wellbeing - don't expect the community to reinforce family values.
8. Don't assume that the parents of all your children's friends have the same rules you do - some have different rules, some have none.
9. Believe that children want rules to guide them - allow them to paint you as the "bad guy."
10. Remember that teenagers need parental supervision as much as toddlers do - it's just a different kind.
11. If necessary love your children enough to let them hate you - for a while.
12. Know children are never too big for encouragement and love - even when they are grown.

Tips for talking with your child about drugs

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Although such topics as the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs are emotionally charged, they are a natural and necessary part of a communicating process you have with your child.

Clearly, the best time for such a conversation about drugs is when your child brings up the topic. As hard as this may be to believe, some children actually do this.

For most parents, however, it's not this easy and it may become your responsibility to raise the subject. You'll want to pick a time and a place that makes it possible for you and your child to be comfortable and undisturbed.

Remember that the purpose of this encounter is communication, so listen to everything your child has to say. Observe his or her nonverbal cues - they will let you know how he or she feels about having this conversation. Listening means paying special attention to what is said, both verbally and non-verbally.

Communicating with your child about drug use should not be a one-time occurrence or a one-way process. Conversations about drugs are not like inoculations that can protect children for all time. Talk with your children often as they grow from preschool to adulthood.

(Editor's Note: October is Red Ribbon Month. The ribbon is worn as a symbol of drug awareness and a commitment to fight the war on drugs.)

Community Needs Assessment available

Charleston AFB has received copies of the 1999-2000 Air Force Community Needs Assessment and will be distributed them to randomly selected active duty members and spouses this week.

The surveys will be sent to work addresses of service members while spouses receive theirs in the mail.

The Air Force Family Advocacy Program, in conjunction with the Air Force Family Matters Office and the Family Member Support Flight Program, is sponsoring this Community Assessment. The information collected will identify community needs and improvements needed in current services to better meet requests of service members and their families.

According to the last Community Needs Assessment results, additional support to individuals and families during deployments and contingencies was needed to help alleviate stressors associated with family separations and long working hours.

As a consequence, the Air Force established a full-time Personal and Family Readiness Program Manager position within the Family Support Center. Another result of the last survey was the establishment of the Charleston AFB Integrated Delivery System Team. This team is comprised of base helping agencies working together to provide Team Charleston with more timely and efficient programs and services.

Feedback is valuable and family members are strongly encouraged to complete the surveys. They will show base helping agencies where they have gaps and where they need to focus energy.

For information, call 963-4406. *(Submitted by the Family Support Center)*