

Teenage Girls: Drugs, Sex, and Peer Pressure

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Goals for Tonight

- Hear about trends in drug use and sexual activity
- Learn ways to help your daughter assert herself in healthy ways to resist peer pressure
- Have the opportunity to ask questions



Pop Quiz!



Peer Pressure



- What it looks like
 - ◆ Overt, contextual, virtual
- Who is Susceptible?
 - ◆ Low confidence, tendency to be a follower, using alcohol or drugs, don't feel like part of a group

Resisting Peer Pressure

- What Teens Can Do
 - ◆ Learn assertiveness skills, learn to change subject, have responses prepared
- How Parents Can Help
 - ◆ Talk about peer pressure, but look for neutral lead-ins
 - ◆ Monitor exposure to media
 - ◆ If you don't like her friends, voice your concerns.
 - ◆ Be available for tough situations, come up with plans ahead of time.
 - ◆ Be a role model



Drugs, Alcohol, & Tobacco



Substance Use Trends Among High School Girls

Substance	Lifetime Use (%)	Use within Past 30 Days (%)
Alcohol	76*	45*
Cigarettes	50*	19
Marijuana	35	17
Inhalants	14**	--
Cocaine	7	3
Hallucinogens	6	--
MDMA (Ecstasy)	5	--
Methamphetamine	4*	--
Heroin	2	--

Adapted from CDC report (2007)

* = Usage rate is equal to boys'

** = Usage rate is higher than boys'

Some Facts about Teen Substance Use

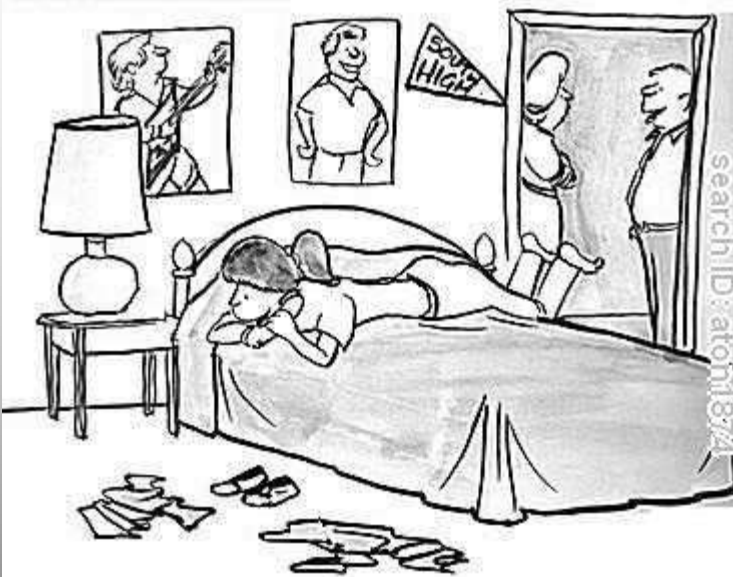
- Experimentation is normal in adolescence.
- Half of American youth have tried cigarettes by 12th grade.
- 25% of 8th graders have tried cigarettes.
- Marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the nation.
- Half of teens have tried an illicit drug by the time they finish high school.
- 26% of teens know a friend or classmate who has abused prescription drugs. 3.3% of youth aged 12-17 abused prescription drugs in 2005.
- 2.1 million teens aged 12-17 abused prescription drugs (drug of choice ages 12-13) in 2007
- 6% of 12th graders have abused OTC meds
- Teens can get information about how to use drugs on-line from websites such as: www.erowid.com

Talking to Your Daughter about Drugs and Alcohol

- Youths ages 12-17 who believed their parents would strongly disapprove of their using a particular substance were less likely to use that substance
- Discuss myths: smoking won't make her look more grown up, coffee and showers don't make you sober, inhalants are very dangerous.
- Role play situations with peer pressure. Help child come up with things to say, ways to change subject or walk away.
- Set limits around drug use
 - ◆ Firm 'no use' rule
 - ◆ Be a role model
 - ◆ Ask daughter to stay away from parties where drugs and alcohol are available



Know When to Be Concerned



"She's approaching the world record for 'Consecutive Hours on the Phone'."

- **Risk factors for a more serious problem:** First use before the age of 13 or 14, family history, stress, untreated mental illness
- **Signs your child might be using:** Red eyes, new group of friends, trouble concentrating, withdrawal, poor school performance, weight change, loss of interest in normal activities, mood swings, excessive energy, clumsiness, forgetfulness

Resources for Parents

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug information

<http://ncadi.samhsa.gov>

Teenshealth.org

Parents. The Anti-Drug

www.theantidrug.com

Sexuality



Some Facts about Teens and Sex

- It is normal for adolescent girls to start having crushes on boys, girls, teachers, movie stars, etc.
- Sexual experimentation is normal in adolescence.
- Teens in North Carolina are more likely to have had sexual intercourse compared to the national average.
- Girls who are more religious or less physically developed delay intercourse.
- Teens who feel connected to their families and schools are less likely to initiate premature sexual activity.
- Friends tend to exaggerate sexual experiences.
- Youth exposed to sexual content on T.V. were more likely to overestimate the frequency of sexual activity among peers and more likely to have more permissive attitudes toward premarital sex.

Teenage Girls and Sex

- 46% of high school girls have had intercourse
- 4% of girls have had sex before age 13
- 36% of high school girls are currently sexually active (this is the same for boys)
- 45% of teenage girls did not use a condom the last time they had intercourse (boys: 32%)
- 10% of girls report that they have never been taught about HIV and AIDS
- 1 in 3 girls is estimated to get pregnant before age 20.



Sexual Orientation



- Adolescence is a time of identity development.
- Many gay, lesbian, and bisexual people become aware of their orientation in adolescence.
- Sexual orientation is not a choice.
- If your daughter is questioning this, be supportive, open, and nonjudgmental.
 - ◆ This may be emotional or difficult for you or for other family members, so seek out resources such as PFLAG (Parents, Family, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

Talking to Your Daughter about Sex

- Start giving information about two years before you anticipate she will need it.
- Address physical, emotional, ethical, psychological, spiritual dimensions.
- Create an accepting environment at home.
- Talk about risks, abstinence, birth control, etc.
- Discuss the pressure that exists from media and peers.
- Use teachable moments.
- Don't try to cover everything in one sitting.
- Don't be preachy. Make it a discussion.
- Model healthy relationships.

Sexual Assault

- About one in ten girls who first has sex before age 15 describes it as involuntary.
- Risk factors: early abuse, low self-esteem, poor communication
- Have the date rape conversation with your daughter.
 - ◆ It can happen to them or their friends
 - ◆ Talk about ways to stay safe, how to say 'no,' signs of unhealthy relationships, etc.
- Have the date rape conversation with your son.
- If this happens to your daughter, remain calm, do not blame her, let her talk about what happened *if she wants to*. Have resources on hand and seek help.

Sexuality Resources

Teens Health

<http://teenshealth.org>

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PLFAG)

www.pflag.org

Time Out Youth (local organization for GLBT youth)

www.timeoutyouth.org

Planned Parenthood

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org>

**RAINN Sexual Assault Hotline:
1-800-656-HOPE**

Presentation and Handouts Available at:

www.southeastpsych.com

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