



KNOW

More™

Know More About
TEEN SUBSTANCE ABUSE



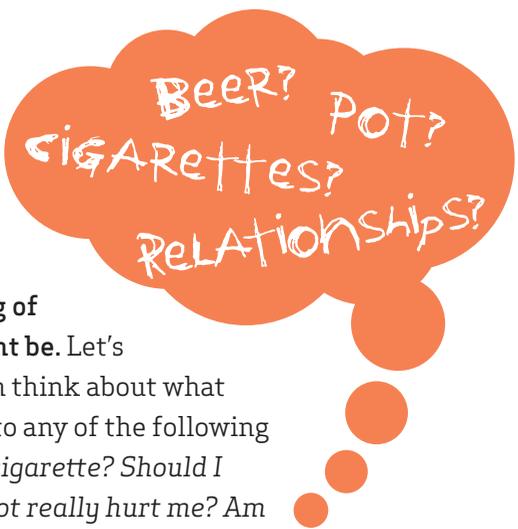


KNOW More™

Throughout life there are times when we all go through transitions. Whether it's going from elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school or high school to college, as we grow up life can be tough for many reasons. There aren't many tougher times in life than as a teenager. You're too old to be considered a child, yet you're too young to be seen as an adult.

So what do you do?

Well, in most cases many teens end up having to make decisions with limited experience and not a whole lot of understanding of what the consequences might be. Let's be real. Most teens don't even think about what could happen if they say yes to any of the following questions: *Should I smoke a cigarette? Should I drink a beer? Will smoking pot really hurt me? Am I ready for a "serious" relationship or should I do what my friends want me to do?*



The following information is provided to you as a resource to assist you in making healthy decisions based on what you **KNOW.**



LIVING ABOVE THE INFLUENCE

During elementary, middle or high school you may hear your friends, parents or even a coach tell you to “just be yourself” – but what does that really mean?



knowing who you are and what you believe in is important.

Recognizing the influences in your life (both good and bad) makes it easier for you to make important choices about who to hang out with and whether or not to try drugs or alcohol.

Instead of going along with what some people are doing, you could spend more of your energy on you – your style, your viewpoints, and your own way of doing things. You can't control what another person thinks about you. Isn't it more worthwhile to work on what you think about yourself, and not try to shape someone else's impression of you?

UNDERAGE DRINKING AND USING OTHER DRUGS

If you didn't already know, alcohol is the #1 drug of choice for young people all over the country. There are many factors that contribute to this, but one of the most common factors is that most people don't see drinking alcohol or using drugs as a big deal but alcohol and drug use is directly affecting the lives of thousands of young people everyday... and it's not pretty.

The reality is there is nothing good about using alcohol before you're old enough or using drugs illegally. Many people older than 21 would even say alcohol actually causes many problems for them as well. So whether you drink or not, it is important for everyone to know the truth. There may be someone in your class right now who will need you to be there for them at some point in the future. On the other hand, you may be the one who's already begun to drink or use other drugs. If this is you, or you know someone who has, it is NEVER too late to get help and start over again. Just because you've made mistakes doesn't mean you can't get back on the right track.



FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

! Alcohol can affect your mood and your thinking.

! Alcohol can hurt others, get you in legal trouble, and damage your relationships.

! Alcohol can harm your body now and when you grow up.

! Alcohol can get you hooked.

! Those who drink alcohol before age 15 are FIVE times more likely to have alcohol and/or addiction problems.

! Alcohol and other drugs contribute to DROP-OUTS.

! Each year, an estimated 5,000 people under the age of 21 die from alcohol related injuries.

! Alcohol is a factor in about 4 out of every 10 deaths from car crashes, drowning, burns, falls and other unintentional injuries.

Q: How old do I have to be to purchase, possess or consume alcohol in Louisiana?

A: 21 Years Old

Q: When can I buy and drink an alcoholic beverage?

A: You must be 21 before you can legally buy or have public possession of alcoholic beverages.

Q: What if someone sells or gives me an alcoholic beverage?

A: It is against the law to sell or give alcoholic beverages to a person under 21 or allow them to drink on licensed premises. Anyone who sells alcohol to someone under the age of 21 can be fined or go to prison.

Q: What if I'm riding in a car and someone else in the car has an alcoholic beverage?

A: No person of any age can have any open containers of alcohol in a motor vehicle, whether he or she is the driver or the passenger.

It is illegal for a person under the age of 21 to possess or transport alcohol. If no one in the car is above the age of 21, it is illegal for anyone in the vehicle to have alcohol, open or unopened.

Q: What if I'm not drinking, but I'm holding someone else's drink?

A: If you are under 21, it is illegal for you to hold someone else's drink. It is illegal for a person under 21 to possess and transport alcohol.

Possession is not limited to ownership. It can also include having or holding property in an area over which you have control, such as your backpack, locker, or car.

Q: What will happen if I use a fake-ID to buy alcohol?

A: It is against the law for you to attempt to use a fake ID or driver's license, or to borrow a license that is not yours for the purpose of purchasing alcohol, cigarettes, or tobacco, or to gain entry into a bar or casino. By law, you will be asked to prove your age, and if you can't, the store cannot legally sell to you.

Q: Can my parents give me permission to drink at home?

A: Even if your parents give you permission to drink at home or elsewhere, it is still against the law if you're under 21 years of age. If your parents or any adult allow you or your friends to have a party involving the use of alcohol or other drugs, they can be held responsible for contributing to the delinquency of a minor and be fined or go to jail.

Q: Can I serve alcohol in a restaurant if I'm a server?

A: If you are 18 or older and work in a restaurant, you are permitted to serve alcohol if the patron provides valid proof of ID stating they are 21 years old or older or if they are accompanied by a parent, spouse, or legal guardian 21 years of age or older.



FACTS ABOUT TOBACCO



Most everyone knows that smoking causes cancer, emphysema, and heart disease; that it can shorten your life by 10 years or more; and that the habit can cost a smoker thousands of dollars a year. So how come people are still lighting up? The answer, in a word, is addiction. Once you start, it's hard to stop.

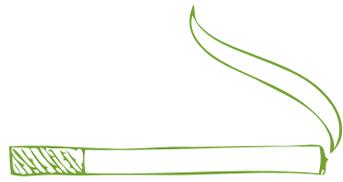
! Tobacco is our nation's leading cause of preventable death.

! Inhaling smoke contributes to lung disease such as emphysema and lung cancer. Use of smokeless tobacco contributes to mouth cancer. The actual smokers are not the only persons affected. Others around them who breathe the second-hand smoke can also be adversely affected. Recent studies indicate that breathing second-hand smoke contributes to lung cancer.

! Using any form of tobacco stains your teeth an unsightly color, and the smell lingers on your breath, in your hair and on your clothes. Some people say kissing a smoker is like licking a dirty ashtray.

! Every year, many people die in house fires that were started by someone who fell asleep with a cigarette or by a child that was playing with a cigarette lighter.

! Between 33% and 50% of all people who try their first cigarette will become daily smokers.



WHY IS TOBACCO DANGEROUS?

Smoking is a hard habit to break because tobacco contains nicotine, which is highly addictive. Like heroin or other addictive drugs, the body and mind quickly become so used to the nicotine in cigarettes that a person needs to have it just to feel normal. Plus it stinks and causes bad breath, bad skin and bad smells on your clothing and hair. Tobacco can be in the form of a cigarette, chewing tobacco, dip, cigars, or pipe tobacco.

Q: Can I buy cigarettes?

A: *It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase cigarettes or any tobacco products. Even if a friend tries to give you a cigarette, it is illegal if you are not 18 and that person may be charged.*

Q: Can I sell cigarettes if I work at a store that sells cigarettes?

A: *Yes. A person under the age of 18 can sell tobacco as part of his or her job.*

Q: What if a police officer finds cigarettes in my possession?

A: *A law enforcement officer can seize any tobacco or tobacco product found in the possession of a minor. The officer may also issue you a ticket, which will require you to pay a fine for the first violation. The fines increase for each subsequent violation.*



FACTS ABOUT DRUGS

There are many other dangerous drugs besides tobacco and alcohol. You should consider any drug not prescribed to you as dangerous. Drugs are chemicals that change the way a person's body works.

You've probably heard that drugs are bad for you, but what does that mean and why are they bad? If you've ever been sick and had to take medicine, you already know about one kind of drugs. Medicines are legal drugs, meaning doctors are allowed to prescribe them for patients, stores can sell them, and people are allowed to buy them. But it's not legal, or safe, for people to use these medicines any way they want or to buy them from people who are selling them illegally.

Illegal drugs aren't good for anyone, but they are particularly bad for a kid or teen whose body is still growing. Illegal drugs can damage the brain, heart, and other important organs. Cocaine, for instance, can cause a heart attack – even in a kid or teen. While using drugs, people are also less able to do well in school, sports, and other activities. It's often harder to think clearly and make good decisions. People can do dumb or dangerous things that could hurt them – or other people – when they use drugs.

WHAT ARE SOME DANGEROUS DRUGS?



Hallucinogens:

Substances that affect the central nervous system distorting the way people think and sometimes distorting what is real. *The most well known hallucinogens are angel dust, PCP, LSD, marijuana, and mushrooms.*

Stimulants (uppers):

Substances that temporarily increase the function of the heart, lungs, brain or nervous system. *Commonly used stimulants are speed, crack, coke, crank, crystal meth, and yellow jackets.*

Sedatives (downer):

Substances that depress or slow down the body's functions inducing sleep or sedation. These drugs are also referred to as tranquilizers or sleeping pills. *The most well known are Valium, Quaalude, Nembutal, and Tranxene.*

Inhalants:

Substances that are sniffed or "huffed" to give the user an immediate high or head rush. *Aerosols and cleaning supplies are commonly abused.*

Narcotics:

Substances like heroin, cocaine, opium, morphine, oxycontin, and methadone are illegal, except by prescription.

It is illegal to use, possess, transport, sell, furnish, or give away any of these dangerous drugs without the proper license or prescription. So giving away any of your prescribed medications is illegal.



QUESTIONS ABOUT DRUGS

Q: Is it okay to take prescription drugs?

A: Yes, but it is legal only if it is prescribed for you by a doctor and is taken according to your doctor's directions.

It is illegal to take another person's prescriptions. It is also illegal to change a prescription or to use a fake ID to fill a prescription.

It is unlawful to alter any prescriptions, or to attempt to obtain a prescription from a doctor using fraud, theft, deception or misrepresentation.

Remember that under Louisiana law it is a crime to operate a vehicle under the influence of any controlled dangerous substance. Refusal to submit to a drug test is admissible into evidence in criminal cases.

Q: Can the police search for drugs at school?

A: Yes. In Louisiana, periodic, unannounced visits to any local public school for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal drugs are legal. Drug dogs are one method the police may use to search for drugs.

Q: What is a "Date Rape Drug"?

A: This is a drug used by an offender to render another person unconscious for the purpose of committing a crime such as rape or another sexual offense. These drugs may be colorless and odorless and can easily be put into someone's drink.

Some common date rape drugs are GHB, GBL, ecstasy, and roofies.

FACTS ABOUT DRUGS

! Many teens use drugs because they're depressed or think drugs will help them escape their problems. The truth is, drugs don't solve problems — they simply hide feelings and problems. When a drug wears off, the feelings and problems remain, or become worse. Drugs can ruin every aspect of a person's life.

! Some teens believe drugs will help them think better, be more popular, stay more active, or become better athletes. Others are simply curious and figure one try won't hurt. Others want to fit in and take drugs due to peer pressure. A few use drugs to gain attention from their parents.

! Although substances can feel good at first, they can ultimately do a lot of harm to the body and brain. Drinking alcohol, smoking tobacco, taking illegal drugs, and sniffing glue can all cause serious damage to the human body. Some drugs severely impair a person's ability to make healthy choices and decisions. Teens who drink, for example, are more likely to get involved in dangerous situations, such as driving under the influence or having unprotected sex.

MAKE THE CHOICE! NOW YOU **KNO!W**

How can I stay alcohol and drug free?

- Identify the problem
- Get the facts
- Think about the advantages
- Make your own decision based on values
- Think about your future

When saying "NO" doesn't work

- Use "I" statements
- Use body language
- Be firm
- End the debate

Alternatives to drinking and using drugs

- Be a companion
- Sports
- Politics
- Join a club
- Exercise

**DON'T LET
THIS BE YOU!**



KNO!W
More™

10 WAYS TO LEAD AN ALCOHOL & DRUG-FREE LIFE!

- 1 Value yourself.** There is no one EXACTLY like you.
- 2 Be dependable.** Good friends know they can count on each other to be there when times get rough.
- 3 Communicate.** Share your thoughts and feelings. It's the best way to get close to others.
- 4 Accept others.** Don't ask your friends to change. Accept them as they are.
- 5 Value others.** Let them know what they mean to you.
- 6 Be fun to be around.** Share your hobbies and interests. Learn about others interests, too.
- 7 Learn to like you.**
- 8 Feel confident** that you can handle anything, with a little help.
- 9 Praise yourself.**
- 10 Accept your strengths and weaknesses.**



For more information contact the Louisiana Attorney General's Office at www.ag.state.la.us or your parent, teacher, law enforcement officer, clergy member or youth center.

Parts of this booklet were derived from these sources:

- www.abovetheinfluence.com
- www.dosomething.org
- www.drugfreeAZ.org
- www.kidshealth.org
- www.lung.org
- www.teens.drugabuse.gov
- Mothers Against Drunk Drivers-Backstage Pass Project

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