

Preventing Bullying

Bullying is violence. It can take many forms: physical, verbal, bullying by exclusion, and now even Internet bullying. You can help prevent your teen from getting involved:

Prevent Your Teen from Being a Bully

- Use an Active style of parenting.
- Have a family meeting about bullying.
- Find out and enforce the school's policy on bullying.
- Set consequences for bullying behavior.

If Your Teen Is Being Bullied

- Offer support—not criticism or pity.
- Use your Active Communication skills.
- For severe cases: Get help!

The Family Council Meeting

A family council meeting is a forum in which all family members solve problems and make decisions. Typically, a family holds this type of meeting once a week for twenty minutes to an hour, following an agenda. This allows much valuable communication among family members.

- **Who should attend:** Anyone who has a stake in decisions affecting the daily life of the family.
- **When and where:** Agree on a time and a place when all family members are most likely to be available. The dinner table is a great place for it.
- **Meeting agenda:**
 1. Compliments, thank-yous, and encouragement
 2. Reading the minutes from the previous meeting
 3. Old business/new business
 4. Chores and allowances
 5. Treat or family activity

FAMILY MEETING GUIDELINES

- Every person has an equal voice.
- Everyone may share what she thinks and feels about each issue.
- Decisions are made by consensus.
- All decisions are in effect until the next meeting.
- Some decisions are reserved for parents to make.

Supplement this video with the Active Parenting of Teens Parent's Guide

The 256-page Parent's Guide is a unique how-to book that provides:

- in-depth information about the Active style of parenting and complete explanation of skills taught in the videos.
- insight into today's teen issues such as online behavior, bullying, peer pressure, and gangs.
- valuable strategies for preventing high-risk behavior around drugs, sexuality, and violence.
- examples, charts, memory tools, and activities to help you put your new parenting skills into action.

...and much more!

GO ONLINE FOR MORE!

Continue your Active Parenting experience at www.activeparenting.com/ParentingTeens for the latest in parenting news.

Active Parenting has created a special place on our Web site just for parents of teens! The Parenting Teens page provides parents with information on topics that concern you and your teen. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to communicate online with other parents who share your experiences and concerns.

The Parenting Teens page gives you access to:

- dates and locations of upcoming Parenting Workshops in your area.
- a list of resources to point you in the right direction when you need more information on teen issues.
- a quiz to determine your parenting style.
- a Parents' Discussion Forum.
- a Parents' Bookstore with lots of useful resources and fun stuff.



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Active Parenting
of Teens :)
third edition

VIDEO 6:

Drugs, Sexuality, and Violence: Reducing the Risks Part 2

BY MICHAEL H. POPKIN, PH.D.

10 Strategies for Reducing Risky Behavior

Preventing your teen from becoming harmfully involved with drugs, sexuality, and violence is one of the greatest gifts you can give. These ten strategies outline a plan for doing everything you can to keep your teen out of trouble with the three major risks.

(Strategies 1-4 are covered in video 5.)

STRATEGY #5

Monitor and supervise teen behavior.

Research shows that positive parental involvement is a key factor in preventing delinquency, drug use, pregnancy, crime, and other teen problems.

- **Provide things for your teen to do.** Encourage your teen to take on a hobby, volunteer, join a club or a sports team, or work part-time to occupy idle time.
- **Know where your teen is and who she's with.** Be sure that she knows how to contact you or another adult if she needs to. Establish a reasonable check-in rule.

STRATEGY #6

Work with other parents.

Teens understand that there is power in numbers. Parents can also utilize this principle by forming a network to get agreement on issues such as curfews, chaperoning, and alcohol/drug use. This will help combat the age-old teen retort, "But everyone else is . . ." because "everyone else" will have the same rules! If your teen's school does not have a parent network, talk to your school counselor about how to start one.

STRATEGY #7

Provide healthy opportunities for challenge.

Challenge is a basic goal of teen behavior. Teens who don't feel challenged enough may resort to drugs, sex, or violence as easy but dangerous ways to achieve their goal. What can *you* do? Encourage your teen to get involved in...

Physical Challenges: rock-climbing, mountain biking, scouting, outdoor adventure programs, organized sports

Intellectual/Character Challenges: school clubs and competitions, skill-building jobs, volunteering, writing for a school newspaper, playing a musical instrument, dance

STRATEGY #8

Consult with your teen about how to resist peer pressure.

Peer pressure is more subtle and strong than most people realize. With some coaching, you can increase the chances of your teen saying "no" to invitations for drugs, sex, criminal acts, and other temptations. Resisting peer pressure requires three main things:

1. **Knowing your rights:** Help your teen realize that he has the right to say "no" to peer pressure.
2. **The courage to do what's right:** Help your teen recognize that he is strong enough to do what's right. Point out his strength each time he exhibits it.
3. **A good comeback line:** Teens need to be able to say "no" in a way that doesn't leave them feeling foolish. Give your teen some practice by going over potential peer pressure situations and helping him come up with comeback lines.

STRATEGY #9

Identify and confront high-risk behavior.

Preventing high-risk behaviors is more than a matter of setting guidelines and hoping for the best. You must be vigilant to make sure your teen is keeping her agreements and behaving safely. Know what to look for:

Signs that a Teen Is Using Alcohol or Other Drugs

1. Heavy identification with the drug culture
2. Signs of physical deterioration
3. Dramatic changes in school performance
4. Negative changes in behavior

If you have reasonable grounds to believe your teen is using alcohol or other drugs, the next step is to find (in her belongings) hard evidence with which to confront her:

Hard Evidence of Use

1. Possession of drug-related paraphernalia
2. Possession of drugs themselves
3. The odor of alcohol or drugs

If you do find hard evidence of use, plan a confrontation.

Confronting Your Teen

- Stay calm.
- Remember that this doesn't mean you're a failure as a parent.
- If you are married or have a partner in parenting, decide together how to handle it.
- Do not confront your teen while she is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Think about your goals and logical consequences for the meeting.

Stages of Drug Use

1. Experimentation

Most teens will try alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana. They see that "everyone tries it" and don't want to be the oddball.

2. Social Use

Many teens move on to using alcohol and other drugs at parties and other social settings.

3. Seeking

Teens begin to actively seek places where drugs can be found. It is usually here that addiction begins.

4. Habitual Use

Teens who develop a habit are driven by the desire to use the substance, despite negative consequences or effects.

STRATEGY #10

Calmly manage a crisis.

No matter what type of crisis arises, your calm handling of it can make all the difference. Keep the following issues in mind as you manage the crisis.

1. **Stay calm.** Don't blow up and don't give up.
2. **Don't hesitate to get help.**
 - Your family doctor, therapist, or community mental health center
 - Resources in the *Active Parenting of Teens Parent's Guide* and at www.ActiveParenting.com/ParentingTeens