

Teen Substance Abuse

Parents can play a big role in getting a teen healthy and free from addiction by speaking with them and having an open conversation about drugs and addiction.

In 2012, 6.5% of 8th graders, 17% of 10th graders, and 22.9% of 12th graders used marijuana in the past month.¹

Once addiction develops, the effects on the brain interfere with one's ability to make voluntary decisions, leading to drug craving and compulsive drug use.

The health impact of drug abuse can be serious. It can lead to cardiovascular disease, stroke, cancer, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and lung disease. Some of these effects occur when drugs are used at high doses or after long-term use, but some may occur after just one use.

Here is a list of commonly abused drugs and their related health risks:

Acid/LSD/Mescaline

- Altered states of perception and feeling, hallucinations and nausea.
- For LSD and mescaline—increased body temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, loss of appetite, sweating, sleeplessness, numbness, dizziness, weakness, tremors, impulsive behavior, rapid shifts in emotion.
- LSD—flashbacks, hallucinogen persisting perception disorder.

Alcohol

- In low doses, euphoria, mild stimulation, relaxation, lowered inhibitions.
- In higher doses, drowsiness, slurred speech, nausea, emotional volatility, loss of coordination, visual distortions, impaired memory, sexual dysfunction, loss of consciousness/increased risk of injuries, violence, depression, hypertension, liver and heart disease and possible fatal overdose.

Cocaine/Methamphetamine

- Increased heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature, metabolism, feelings of exhilaration, increased energy, mental alertness, tremors, reduced appetite, irritability, anxiety, panic, paranoia, violent behavior, psychosis/weight loss, insomnia, cardiac or cardiovascular complications, stroke, and seizures.
- Cocaine—nasal damage from snorting.
- Methamphetamine—severe dental problems.

1. National Institute of Drug Abuse
www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/high-school-youth-trends



Ecstasy

- Mild hallucinogenic effects, increased tactile sensitivity, empathic feelings, lowered inhibition, anxiety, chills, sweating, teeth clenching, muscle cramping/sleep disturbances, depression, impaired memory and hyperthermia.

Heroin/Opium

- Euphoria, drowsiness, impaired coordination, dizziness, confusion, nausea, sedation, feeling of heaviness in the body, slowed or arrested breathing/constipation, hepatitis, HIV, and possible fatal overdose.

Inhalants

- Varies by chemical, although common effects are stimulation, loss of inhibition, headache, nausea or vomiting, slurred speech, loss of motor coordination, wheezing/cramps, muscle weakness, depression, memory impairment, damage to cardiovascular and nervous systems, unconsciousness, sudden death.

Marijuana

- Euphoria, relaxation, slowed reaction time, distorted sensory perception, impaired balance and coordination, increased heart rate and appetite, impaired learning, memory, anxiety, panic attacks, psychosis/cough, frequent respiratory infections, and possible mental health decline.

PCP

- Feelings of being separate from one's body and environment, impaired motor function/anxiety, tremors, numbness, memory loss, nausea, analgesia, psychosis, aggression, violence, slurred speech, loss of coordination, hallucinations.

Steroids (Anabolic)

- No intoxication effects/hypertension; blood clotting and cholesterol changes, liver cysts, hostility and aggression, acne.
- In adolescents—premature stoppage of growth.
- In males—prostate cancer, reduced sperm production, shrunken testicles, breast enlargement.
- In females—menstrual irregularities, development of beard and other masculine characteristics.

Prescription Medications

- This category includes a wide array of depressants, stimulants and pain relievers. Symptoms vary but include; drowsiness, confusion, weight loss, insomnia, high or low blood pressure, poor coordination, poor judgment and possible depression.



Contact Us

Your program provides access to tools and other resources online or call us directly to speak to a professional counselor who is available everyday at any time to provide confidential assistance at no cost to you.

Visit MagellanHealth.com/member

Resources

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov

National Institute of Drug Abuse

www.drugabuse.gov

The Partnership® at Drugfree.org

www.drugfree.org

Independence Blue Cross,
Family of Companies EAP
1-800-424-4238

For TTY Users: 1-800-456-4006
Magellan Self-Screening: 1-866-272-4093

What parents can do:

Explain your concerns to your teen and make it clear that you love him or her and are worried about his or her well-being. It's important that your teen knows you are supportive but that you will not tolerate drug use. Open communication can go a long way in helping your child get back on track.

Here are some steps you can take to help your child and put a stop to this behavior:

- **Set rules and consequences.** Your teen should understand that using drugs comes with consequences. Make sure these are very specific. Don't make empty threats or set rules you cannot enforce. Make sure your spouse or partner agrees with the rules and will enforce them.
- **Monitor activities.** Know where your teen goes and know his or her friends. Check possible hiding places for drugs—in backpacks, between books on a shelf, in DVD cases or in make-up cases. Explain that this lack of privacy is a result of being caught using drugs.
- **Help your teen find other interests.** Encourage healthy hobbies and activities, such as team sports and school clubs.

- **Talk to your child.** Drug use can be the result of other problems. Maybe your teen is not fitting in at school or is reacting to a major change in his or her life, such as a divorce.
- **Get help.** Sometimes teens need to hear your message from another adult to whom they will listen, such as a coach, family doctor, teacher or aunt or uncle.