

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## DRUG ABUSE

The time to deal with the issue of drug abuse is now, before drug use begins. Parents can help children avoid drug use by using the tool of communication. It is important to know both what to communicate and ways to communicate.

### WHAT TO COMMUNICATE

1. Communicate the facts. Tell children about the negative physical effects of various drugs, including alcohol, the harmful social effects such as loss of friendships and interest in activities, and the harmful educational effects such as decreased attention and memory.
2. Communicate that drug use is not acceptable. Say that not only do you disapprove, it is against the law.
3. Communicate the ability to say NO. Teach your children how to say NO and that you expect them to say NO.
4. Communicate the alternatives. Help keep your children busy and active in other activities.
5. Communicate that your child is important to you.

### WAYS TO COMMUNICATE

1. Communicate honestly. Be frank in your discussions concerning drugs and express your feelings. Encourage children to do the same.
2. Communicate in general terms. Do not challenge your children's friends, but challenge negative behaviors or actions.
3. Communicate by listening. Hear what children say about their own experiences or what they have heard.
4. Communicate through the moment. Use situations as they arise to teach children or make a point.
5. Communicate by example.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are designed for parents and teachers to meet to discuss the needs of the child. Conferences are scheduled to share information, discuss progress, and make plans for the future.

To get the most out of the parent/teacher conference, parents and teachers alike must plan. The following tips for parents will help make the conference experience beneficial for all involved, especially the student.

### BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

- Schedule the conference in advance and keep the scheduled appointment.
- Talk to your child about the conference. Find out if your child has any comments, questions, or concerns that need to be addressed.
- Prepare a list of questions and comments for the teacher. Be ready to discuss your child's positive and negative school experiences.

### DURING THE CONFERENCE

- Be willing to share pertinent information and answer questions. Knowledge of home situations will aid the teacher in planning for the child.
- Ask questions. Use written notes to ask specific questions about your child's school experience.
- Take notes for suggestions or ideas for follow-up.
- Make plans with the teacher for future conferences or contacts, along with specific goals for your child.

### AFTER THE CONFERENCE

- Discuss the conference with your child. It is important that your child view the conference as a non-threatening situation.
- Begin working with your child on areas that need improvement and follow-up on suggestions made by the teacher.
- Stay in touch with the teacher. Progress should be checked on a regular basis.