



“Why do good kids get into using and abusing alcohol and drugs? How can I prevent my child from becoming involved?”

Although there are no perfect answers, a recent survey by The National center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University uncovered these interesting statistics...

- **High stress** teens are 2 times more likely to smoke, drink, get drunk and use illegal drugs.
- **Bored** teens are 50% more likely to smoke, drink, get drunk and use illegal drugs.
- Teens with **\$25 or more a week in spending money** are nearly 2 times more likely to smoke, drink, get drunk and use illegal drugs.
- Teens that have **2 or more** of these characteristics are 3 times as likely to be at risk for substance abuse.
- More than **50% of the nations 12-17 year olds** are at greater risk of substance abuse because of high stress, frequent boredom, too much spending money, or a combination of the three.

What can I do?



- Try to **manage the stress in your household**. Families do best managing stress when they work together for solutions. Teens are often left out of major decisions and although they may not say anything, they often have very personal fears regarding the effect of family changes on their lives. (By the way, consider how much importance you place on academic and athletic performance in your home. Watch your teen for stress warning signs; irritability, lack of sleep, poor eating habits, isolating.)
- Combating boredom is **not** putting TV's and video games in your child's room. This encourages isolation, which is often at the root of boredom. Teen boredom is a result of a lack of meaningful interaction with the world around them. Make **spending time together a priority**, healthy family time is the most meaningful time for teens whether they admit it or not.
- It has been said that “Money is at the root of all evil”. Teens want to work and make money however, there is another side. It is not too early to make your teens **accountable for the money they make and how they spend it**. Teach them how to budget their money, encourage values and priorities in spending.



For more information CASA's top risk factors see <http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/teens/a/blcasa030819.htm> or <http://alcoholism.about.com/library/blcasa010223.htm>

