

Ten Point Drug Proofing

1. Set family rules on drug and alcohol use, early, when your child is in grade school or even before. Remind everyone of the family rules - often. An important fact: all of the terrible problems caused by alcohol and other drugs can be prevented completely by not using alcohol and other drugs.
2. Establish consequences for violations of these rules (such as loss of privileges).
3. Set aside a time every day to talk with your kids about what is happening in their lives, how they feel and what they think.
4. Help your children establish personal goals. Simple and achievable . . . short-term as in next week and long-term as in next month. Help your children to accept and learn from their inevitable failures.
5. Know your children's friends and spend time with them and their parents. Socialize together, share your lives. This does not mean that there is no time for separateness for adults and children.
6. Help your children feel good about themselves and their achievements, both large and small.
7. Have a system for family conflict resolution. Parents are in charge and their decisions are the rules. Parents carry their authority best when they are open to appeals from their children. Establish a process for review, such as seeing a religious adviser, a mutually respected family member or friend or a counselor if conflicts develop. Use the same system for conflict between parents themselves.
8. Talk about your children's futures early and often. Help your children know they will soon be out of the parental home, paying their own bills and making their own rules. Children become adults when they leave their parent's homes and financially support themselves, not when they get a driver's license.
9. Enjoy your children . . . accepting and appreciating that each child is unique with interests, abilities and goals that are different from you and anyone else.
10. Be a nosy parent! Ask your children questions. Know where they are and who they are with. Let your children know that you are being nosy because it is your job as their parents and because you love them.

