

**EMBARGOED UNTIL THURSDAY, FEB. 9, 2006**

**White House Office of National Drug Control Policy  
National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign**

**TIPS FOR PARENTS  
How to Raise Healthy, Drug-Free Girls**

Adolescence is a time of change and upheaval. This can be a challenging time as you watch your daughter grow independent, make decisions and develop into a young adult. Some risks that are unique to teen girls, such as decreased self-confidence, depression and early puberty, can lead to drug and alcohol use. Even during this difficult time, parents are the most important influence in their child's life. You can help your daughter navigate this exciting, but stressful time. Below are tips on how to raise healthy, drug-free daughters.

**MAXIMIZE time together to build a strong bond with your daughter.**

Spend time just listening to your daughter's thoughts and feelings, fears and concerns. Teens who have a close relationship with a parent are much less likely to drink, take drugs or have sex.

- Really listen to what your daughter is saying. Make the time to ask your daughter about her school, friends, activities and interests.
- Talk to your daughter about tough issues, such as the dangers of drug and alcohol use.
- Make special time each week to talk and enjoy each other's company.

**MODEL coping skills to manage stress and pressure.**

Adolescence can be a stressful process for teens. You can be a more supportive parent by understanding where the stress is coming from and model positive, healthy behavior and coping skills.

- Set examples on how to cope with stress, such as setting realistic goals, learning to prioritize, getting enough sleep and engaging in physical activity.
- Teach your daughter skills to handle negative peer pressure, such as how to say no.

**MOTIVATE your daughter's self-confidence by recognizing her strengths, skills, and interests.**

Research shows that many girls experience a sharp decline in their self-esteem and self-confidence during early adolescence. Parents can help their daughter develop a healthy sense of worth.

- Provide meaningful roles for your daughter in the family. Treat your daughter as a unique individual, distinct from siblings or stereotypes.
- Encourage your daughter to develop an identity based on her talents and interests; downplay appearance and weight, and tell her a beautiful body is a healthy and strong one.
- Promote healthy activities, such as exercising or doing community service. Teenagers enjoy giving to others, but they need your support.

**MONITOR your daughter's activities and behavior with love and limits.**

Show your unconditional love, but don't be afraid of setting rules. Parental disapproval of drug use plays a strong role in keeping teens drug-free. Parental monitoring has been shown to be effective in reducing risky behaviors among teens.

- Praise your daughter as often as possible. Show love, warmth and interest in your teen; but set clear "no-drug" rules, limit time spent watching TV and using the internet.
- Always know where your daughter is, whom she is with and what she is doing. Know her friends and the parents of those friends. Have regular check-in times.
- Attend your daughter's school events and recreational activities. It will make your teen feel loved, help her maintain good grades and increase her enjoyment of school.

*For more information on marijuana and keeping your teen drug-free, visit [www.TheAntiDrug.com](http://www.TheAntiDrug.com). The site offers a free brochure called, "Keeping Your Teens Drug-Free: A Family Guide." The brochure can also be ordered by calling 1-800-788-2800.*