

In some cases young people find it difficult to discuss their use with parents or carers. Many parents just need to know their young person is talking to someone...

Norcas Youth Service offers young people:

- a confidential service
- working from the harm reduction approach will help young people to learn about the effects and risks of their use
- to help young people to identify and manage ways to reduce, or work towards, nonuse
- face to face or phone support for parents and carers.



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For more information,
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Information and advice for
parents and carers

who are concerned about young
people's drug and alcohol use

**DRUGS &
ALCOHOL**

SOME POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ALCOHOL OR DRUG MISUSE

- sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- loss of interest in school, hobbies or interests
- furtive behaviour or lying
- loss of appetite, restlessness, sleeplessness
- change in friends
- excessive spending or disappearance of possessions
- unexplained absences from school, college or work
- unfamiliar smells or stains on skin, clothing or in bedroom
- tinfoil, plastic bags, tablets, cardboard rolls or other unusual items.

REMEMBER THAT SOME OF THESE MAY JUST BE SIGNS OF GROWING UP!



DON'T PANIC!

- try and remain calm
- take things one step at a time
- don't jump to conclusions, be sure of your facts first
- don't accuse or blame
- talk to someone, e.g. partner, school or close friend
- pick the right time to talk calmly to your child about your concerns – not when they are intoxicated
- listen to what your child is saying.

If they are using drugs or alcohol don't over-react – find out what, why and how often they are using. This will help you decide on the extent of the problem.

- be supportive and positive, it is the behaviour not the person you are unhappy about
- don't be afraid to challenge what you feel is wrong
- agree rules on parties, drinking and smoking
- know where they are and what they are up to
- make sure your child has a safe way to get home
- know their friends.



WHAT TEENAGERS DON'T NEED IS...

- to be lectured
- constant criticism
- to be overprotected
- bullying
- to be 'put down'
- to be preached at
- to be ignored.

REMEMBER WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO BE ON THE RECEIVING END WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG?

Check the facts about drugs/alcohol – being well informed helps when you talk to your teenager and gives what you say more credibility.

- not all drugs are the same – some are more dangerous than others
- very few people die from taking drugs, there are many more deaths from alcohol related incidents per year
- dependence takes time to develop, it doesn't happen with one or even a few tries
- occasional or even regular use may not lead to problems, it depends on the drug and how it is used
- it isn't your fault if they start using drugs.

