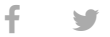


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Why talk with your child about alcohol, other drugs

May 3, 2022 John Peters II Opinion 1

By Charlotte Reeves Guest Columnist



Editor's Note: Community Comment is a periodic column in The Mount Airy News featuring commentary from community leaders in Mount Airy and Surry County. This particular column is part of a monthly series on drug abuse prevention and treatment.

Parents have a significant influence in their children's decisions to experiment with alcohol and other drugs. One of the most influential factors during a child's adolescence is maintaining a strong, open relationship with a parent. When parents create supportive and nurturing environments, children make better decisions. Though it may not always seem like it, children really hear their parents' concerns, which is why it's important that parents discuss the risks of using alcohol and other drugs.

It's better to talk before children are exposed to alcohol and other drugs. If you talk to your kids directly and honestly, they are more likely to respect your rules and advice about alcohol and drug use. When parents talk with their children early and often about alcohol and other drugs, they can protect their children from many of the high-risk behaviors associated with using these drugs.

WEATHER

Mount Airy, NC 27030				
Weather	Wind	Rain	Sun	Moo
81 °F				
Slight Chance Thunderstorms				
53 °F		85 °F		
59 79 THU		56 FRI		
2:44 PM Wed				



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Some children may try alcohol or other drugs at a very young age, so it is never too early to talk to your children about this. Children as young as 9 years old already start viewing alcohol in a more positive way, and approximately 3,300 kids, as young as 12 years old, try marijuana each day. Additionally, about five in 10 kids as young as 12 obtain prescription pain relievers for nonmedical purposes. The earlier you start talking, the better.

The older kids get, the more likely they'll try alcohol or drugs. About 10% of 12-year-olds say they have tried alcohol, but by age 15, that number jumps to 50%. Additionally, by the time they are seniors, almost 70% of high school students will have tried alcohol, half will have taken an illegal drug, and more than 20% will have used a prescription drug for a nonmedical purpose. The sooner you talk to your children about alcohol and other drugs, the greater chance you have of influencing their decisions about drinking and substance use.

Not talking about alcohol and other drugs still sends kids a message. Kids don't always have all the facts when it comes to alcohol and other drugs. If parents don't talk about the risks of underage drinking and substance use, their kids might not see any harm in trying alcohol and other substances. Having a conversation allows parents to set clear rules about what they expect from their kids when it comes to alcohol and other drugs.

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from learning more about "Talk. They Hear You," start by contacting Charlotte Reeves, Surry County Office of Substance Abuse Recovery Community Outreach Coordinator, at reevesc@co.surry.nc.us. Visit the website at surrycountycare.com for more information about substance use disorder and the many resources in Surry County.

Charlotte Reeves is the Community Outreach Coordinator for Surry County Substance Abuse Recovery Office. She may be reached at 336-401-8218 or reevesc@co.surry.nc.us.



NASCAR Schedule		
Date	Race/Location	Winner
May.01	DuraMAX Drydene 400 presented by RelaDyne / Dover Motor Speedway	Chase Elliott
May.08	Goodyear 400 / Darlington Raceway	FS1
May.15	AdventHealth 400 / Kansas Speedway	FS1
May.22	NASCAR All-Star Open / Texas Motor Speedway	
	NASCAR ALL-	

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