

MEDIA RELEASE

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Talking to youth about drugs

Talking to young people about drugs can seem difficult. What do you say? When is the right time? Where can you get correct information? Youth will hear about drugs from friends, media, online, or even other adults, and some of this information may not be right. It is important that adults talk about drugs regularly before there is an urgent need to do so. Many short conversations are better than a few long lectures. Your local Municipal Drug Strategies have put together some tip and facts for adult who want to have these important conversations with youth.

Tips on how to start the conversation:

- ✓ Offer them control of the situation. Let them pick the time and place.
- ✓ Look for opportunities, like when you discuss school or current events.
- ✓ Listen to them and respect their opinions. Give them room to participate and ask questions and avoid being judgemental.
- ✓ Focus on facts rather than emotions.
- ✓ Respect their independence. Communicate that your main concern is their well-being.
- ✓ Visit healthunit.org for additional tips...

Facts about marijuana and prescription drugs that you can share with youth:

- ✓ Today's marijuana is much stronger.
- ✓ Marijuana contains substances that can affect the proper functioning of the brain and body.
- ✓ Marijuana smoke contains many of the same cancer-causing chemicals as tobacco smoke.
- ✓ It is estimated that 1 in 9 marijuana users will develop an addiction to marijuana.
- ✓ Prescription drugs are sometimes used to get high.
- ✓ Prescription medications are the third most commonly-abused substances among Canadian youth.
- ✓ There are many dangerous and unpredictable effects associated with abusing prescription drugs.
- ✓ Visit healthunit.org for additional facts...

How to Prevent Young People from Taking Drugs

- ✓ Educate youth about the risks.
- ✓ Praise positive behaviours when you see them from a young person.
- ✓ Encourage involvement in supervised activities.
- ✓ Set rules at home
- ✓ You are a young person's most important role model and their best defense against drug use.
- ✓ Start talking early!

For more information, visit www.healthunit.org, call 1-800-660-5853, or connect with LGLHealthUnit on Facebook or Twitter.

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Contact: Kelly Munroe, Public Health Nurse, 613-283-2740
Or Susan Healey, Communications Co-ordinator 613-802-0550