



Talk Early And Often About Alcohol, Tobacco
And Other Drugs. Even When It Gets Tough

Parent Tip

Know! To Beware of Summer Boredom

For most kids, the idea of summer break is thrilling; less stress, more free time. But the so-called enjoyable lazy-days of summer can quickly turn into tween boredom. Youth may find themselves spending too much time on their electronics (internet surfing, TV, texting, video games, etc.) and parents may be hearing, "I'm bored."

While some amount of boredom is a common complaint, tweens who claim to be bored *all the time* are at an increased risk of smoking, drinking, getting drunk and using other drugs to fill their time. Combine boredom with the fact that youth are already at increased risk for experimenting with substances during the summer months and the potential for danger is evident.

For parents, supervision is key and must be a part of the equation. As research shows, unsupervised youth are three times more likely to use alcohol or other drugs. If you cannot physically be present at home, call on a neighbor or friend to stop by or hire a part-time "buddy-sitter" to be there with your tween (and randomly call or text to check in with your child).

While downtime is important, it is also a good idea to help your child establish some structure to their summer schedule.

Consider These Boredom Busters:

- Help your child find a job like babysitting, dog-walking, washing cars or mowing lawns.
- Look for volunteer opportunities through local churches, soup kitchens, senior centers or animal shelters.
- Help your tween discover a new interest like photography, writing, drama or art.
- Enroll your child in a summer clinic or camp (sports clinics, dance camps, wilderness camps, etc. take place all summer long).
- Encourage outdoor exercise like swimming, running, riding bikes and park-hopping with friends.
- Coordinate with other parents to organize a group outing to a water park, amusement park, sporting event, concert, museum or library.

One way or another, tweens will find a way to alleviate summer boredom. It is in their best interest (and yours) to help them find their way.

Source: CASA National Survey of American Attitudes on Substance Abuse VIII: Teens and Parents, 2003. Parents.The Anti-Drug. 2007.

Talking regularly with kids reduces their risk of using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Know! urges you to encourage other parents to join Know! by taking the [Parent and Caregiver Pledge](#). For more information log on to www.HelpThemKnow.com or call 1-866-999-KNOW.

Know! is a program of:



Drug-Free Action Alliance
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