

DISCUSSION STARTERS

You may want to have a discussion with your child about this important issue but aren't quite sure where to start. Keep the lines of communication open by engaging in regular conversations. One-on-one conversations may not always yield the results you would like. Be patient and keep initiating conversations.

Here are some possible conversation starters:

There's a lot in the news lately about teens who are misusing prescription drugs. How much do you know about this? Do you know if kids at your school are taking prescription drugs like OxyContin® and Percocet® that were not prescribed for them?

- Sometimes teens will try to opt out of this conversation because they don't want to share specific information about friends or peers. In this case, you can be ready with a story about your own teenage years and someone you knew or something that happened pertaining to drug use during that time. Talk about how you felt, and then ask what they would have thought had they experienced something similar. This is also an opportunity to talk about why this behavior is so dangerous.

I just heard a report about drug use by teenagers, and I wanted to talk to you about what it said...

- Briefly summarize the report and talk honestly about how it makes you feel. Your child may be reluctant to talk about specific people they know, so make it clear that you are not fishing for information to get someone in trouble.



There is so much on the news today about people misusing prescription drugs. Are you aware of what can happen when people misuse medicine prescribed by doctors?

- If your child is not presently taking any medication, they may question the need to discuss this issue. Explain that people who misuse prescription drugs often don't have a prescription. Friends and family can supply the drugs—intentionally or inadvertently, when people leave old prescriptions in their medicine cabinets.

I see that your school has been taking part in a drug prevention program. There is so much in the news right now, and I am not sure I understand all of it. What have you learned from this program?

- This approach can be useful for children who are reluctant to talk about their personal feelings or relationships. Get the conversation started by asking your child to explain factual or scientific knowledge—for example, how opioids relieve pain and cause addiction—and listen for opportunities to ask follow-up questions.