

Get the Conversation Going

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Starting a conversation about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs with your kids is never easy – but it’s also not as difficult as you may think.

Take advantage of everyday “teachable moments” and, in no time at all, you’ll have developed an ongoing dialogue with your child. Teachable moments refer to using every day events in your life to point out things you’d like your child to know about.

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Use the following “teachable moments” as a starting point, but develop others based on your own life:

- **Point out** alcohol-, tobacco-, and drug-related situations going on in your own neighborhood. If you and your child are at the park and see a group of kids drinking or smoking, use the moment to talk about the negative effects of alcohol and tobacco.



- **Use newspaper headlines** or TV

news stories as a conversation starter. The daily news is filled with stories that detail the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse. Talk to your child about the mother who used drugs and was arrested. Who will take care of her baby now? Did she make a good decision when she used drugs?



- **Watch TV with your kids**, and ask them what they think. Do the shows and advertising make drug use look acceptable and routine? Or do they show its downside? How did that program make your child feel about drugs? Write a letter with your child to companies or TV networks about the messages they put out about drugs. Also remember that anti-drug advertising – such as that from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America – is a great kickoff to discussion.

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**Vermont
Department
of Health**

**Division of Alcohol
& Drug Abuse Programs**

108 Cherry Street PO Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402-0070
(802) 651-1550 Fax (802) 651-1573
www.state.vt.us/adap