



**Congratulations Graduates! What an Exciting Time!**

**It is also a time when our teenagers are vulnerable. Parents Please take time to have serious conversations about drugs and alcohol...**

**How to Hold Conversations with Your Teenager:**

Research shows that better skills can decrease conflict, increase influence, and produce more successful conversations with your teen around important issues like drug and alcohol use. And better conversations mean better outcomes. Below are tips that can be implemented when tackling the topic of drug and alcohol use with teenagers.

**Keep Your Best Motives in Mind.** Do not talk to your teens when you are angry or fearful, your motives change. Without realizing it, you begin to focus on punishing, being right, or keeping the peace rather than healthy problem solving. Ask yourself "What do I really want?" This can get your motives back in check.

**Confront with Facts, Not Judgments.** When you present the facts, you obligate your teen to respond to the information. When you use judgments or accusatory language, it appears you intend simply to humiliate or punish and your teen feels no obligation to engage in the conversation. Give your Teen room to disagree.

**Tips for Talking About Drugs with Your Teenager.**

- State what you do not intend and what you do intend.
- Be flexible about when you talk, but not about whether you talk.
- Respect your teen's timetable this shows respect for the teen but does not lesson you as a parent.
- Create a "safety reserve" by talking even when there are no problems. Communicating respect, praising small positive signs and showing an interest in your teenager's life.
- Discuss, agree on and stick with boundaries. If you talk about curfews, choice of friends and your expectations you will know where your teen is before he/she is tempted to make bad choices.

**Shielding Kids from Marketing gets Harder.** (by Liz Szabo, USA Today) Being a parent has never been an easy gig. From the terrible twos to the trying teenage years, parents spend much of their lives saying "No". No candy up the nose, No rings in the nose. Today however, parents trying to raise healthy kids say they feel as if they're doing battle with the culture, trying to shelter their kids from an onslaught of trash – from sugary sodas to violent videos. By turning kids into pint-size consumers,

**Parents Matter Sound Bites:**  
**Kids Safe Saturday** was held April 16, 2011. 152 Pin Wheels, Bird Feeders and books, "Look What I Can Do" and "Play Day In The Park" were distributed. Six parents signed up to receive the "Parents Matter Newsletter" and meeting notices.

**Please Visit Our Website. There is a Short Inspirational Video by Timothy Shoemaker** performed by students and added to the school friendly (non-youtube) link. It has been added to the Parents Matter website [www.parentsmatter.com](http://www.parentsmatter.com).

The next Parents Matter Coalition meeting is scheduled for Wednesday on May 11<sup>th</sup> at Noon in the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room of St. Mary's Hospital. Everyone is invited and asked to bring a friend. Lunch will be provided. Please reserve a place at the table: RSVP by e-mailing: [parentsmatter@pie.mido.net](mailto:parentsmatter@pie.mido.net) . Call: 224-3189 or 222-0638 Thank you.

marketers are turning them old before their time and too often, turning them against their parents, says Jean Kilbourne, co-author of "So Sexy, So Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do to Protect Their Kids." "It's a hard time to be raising children," says Susan Linn of the Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood. "No generation of parents in history has dealt with this \$17 billion (children's product) industry working day and night to bypass parents and target children with messages that undermine parental values." And just what are parents fighting? Try padded, push-up bikini tops from Abercrombie & Fitch for girls as young as 7 and 8. Or Walmart's new line of makeup for 8 to 12 year-old girls, which has generated an uproar even before its debut. "When we were growing up, parents only had television to worry about," Linn says. "What parents are dealing with today that's unprecedented is the convergence of ubiquitous screen media and unfettered, unregulated commercialism." Marketers know parents will resist buying many products. That's why they aim commercials at children, says James Steyer of Common Sense Media. And while children might not have much money, they can be incredibly effective at nagging. "Their goal is to get kids to force their parents to buy them stuff."

*"Behold, by friends, the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love!" **Sitting Bull***

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