



# Prevention - Smart Parents

**Ms. Anna Nabulya**  
**Deputy Executive Director**  
**Uganda Youth Development Link**  
**(UYDEL)**



# Aims of the guide

- **This guide aims to offer you, wherever you are, ways to prevent drug use (including Alcohol and Tobacco) by your children.**
- **Major focus is the use of clear, positive communication between you and your children**

# Chapter 1: You are not Alone

**This guide focuses on issues linked to youth drug use, including:**

- **Education about drugs and their dangers**
- **Understanding why some young people use drugs**
- **How to talk with your child or teen about drugs use**
- **Steps you can take if your child is already experimenting or using**
- **Strengthening your efforts to raise a healthy child by trying to help to prevent their involvement with drugs**

# Suggested Activity

- **What are the things that concern you most about your children's behavior - either now or as you face the future? Make a list**
- **Ask a trusted friend or relative or neighbor the same question and compare your lists.**
- **Are you alone? Or do all of us have real concerns about what our children do and the way they behave?**

**Remember : YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**



# Chapter 2: Why Do Teenagers act the way they do?

- It is important to note that Teenagers do not grow in isolation: they are influenced by all that happens around them and this begins at an early age.
- Among the most important influences are: Parents, caregivers and family
- Other influences include: Genetics, imitation or modeling of behaviours of adults, TV stars, celebrities; and others arising from their perception and experiences/ social environment

**“As search you need to be prevention-smart: Be the person you want your children to grow up to be.”**

# Chapter 3: What you need to know about Drugs

**This chapter provides an overview about drugs and their effects.**

**The word “drugs” means all street drugs, prescription drugs found in homes or that can be purchased illegally, non-prescription drugs, household products such as inhalants, drug substances, tobacco, and alcohol**

# Chapter 4: What you need to know about Alcohol and Tobacco

- In this chapter, we present facts about the two of the most commonly used drugs by young people – Alcohol and Tobacco
- This chapter stresses the influence of parents and caring adults as role models for youth in promoting healthy attitudes and behaviours about alcohol and tobacco which are legally available in most countries and potentially harmful substances.

# Fact Check

**Do you know the facts about alcohol and teenagers?**

- **One of the first drugs your teenager is most likely to try is alcohol**
- **Yes, alcohol is a drug – not just a harmless substance**
- **Your teenager will likely get his first alcohol from an adult**
- **If your adolescent is like most, the first use of alcohol is likely to happen between the ages of 12-15 years**
- **Teenagers (and adults) can die from alcohol poisoning, even if they are not addicted.**

**It important therefore for parents to role model responsible drinking: This means not getting drunk in front of children, and not appearing that you need to drink everyday**



# Chapter 5: What you need to know about Marijuana/ Cannabis

- Marijuana is a drug that many people use, some regularly with no apparent negative effects.
- However, it can trigger mental disorders, particularly for those who may be pre-disposed to have a mental illness.
- This chapter helps you learn how the use of marijuana can affect your child's memory, learning and performance of physical activities

# Chapter 6: Why do some young people use drugs? (Risk Factors)

**This chapter looks at some common factors that may lead a teenager to try drugs and why some continue use after he/she has started**

**Some of the reasons for use or trying include:**

- To escape from problems
- Relief from boredom
- Seeking the high – which they say is pleasurable
- To feel more confident in social situations
- To fit in or to be cool
- Curiosity

# Chapter 7: How do I protect my child from drugs? (Protective Factors)

- In this chapter we offer suggestions for how parents can decrease those “**Risk Factors**” that can influence young people to use drugs.
- We also focus on how you can encourage “**Protective Factors**” and help your child to make healthy choices and decisions to promote his or her safety and well-being

# Key Protective Assets that can help keep your child free from drugs

- **Prevention-Smart Families**
- **Prevention-Smart at School**
- **Prevention-Smart Communities**
- **Prevention-Smart Relationships**
- **Prevention-Smart Values**
- **Prevention-Smart Child Confidence**

# Chapter 8: Communication, Discipline and Support

- **This chapter helps you to strengthen communication skills, and refine how you discipline your child.**
- **It aims to help you learn how to discuss drug use with you child, and how to continue the discussion as he or she grows into young adulthood**

# Effective Communication

- Practice speaking with effective communication skills. Practice what you want to say. Use sentences that start with the words;  
“I think.....”, “I feel....”, or “I want....”, instead of  
“You should.....” or “you must.....”

For example: Instead of “ Stop hanging out with your friends who smoke!” Try: “I do not want you to smoke, and when you are with your friends who smoke, I worry that you are influenced by them to smoke too.”

# Chapter 9: Does Media make a difference?

- Advertisers spend a lot of money to influence youth.
- Children are exposed to media influences everyday
- Children can be influenced both negatively or positively by media they are exposed to.
- In some countries the media is used to educate people about the dangers of smoking

**This chapter looks at the ways media may influence your child, then suggests ways you can reduce its influence on your child's behavior**

# Chapter 10: What to do if my teenager is using drugs

- **Parents need to talk to children about their drug use**
- **Children who start using drugs at an early age are more likely to continue using, use more potent drugs, and to develop problems with their drug use**
- **Recognizing your own uncomfortable feelings about your child may actually help you understand some of what your child may be thinking when you have this conversation**
- **Remember that youth rely on parents or caregivers to keep them safe, even when their behavior suggests they don't need you for that anymore**

# Additional Resources

**This guide also provides you with additional resources that you can visit to learn more about Alcohol, drug and substance abuse and prevention and Parenting skills**



**Thank you for listening and many blessings as you utilize this guide to help parents communicate well with their children and become Prevention-Smart**

