

# NEVER be the last to KNOW

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The period which your teenager makes the transition from childhood into teenhood is an exciting one but it can also be full of problems if not properly managed. This is the time when your teen starts getting exposed to many new influences - both healthy and dangerous - and this is where you, as a parent, come in.

We know you are concerned about what your teen might be doing with his or her friends. You have met some of them and they look like the sensible kids who know better than to get involved in vice activities but what about the other friends you have not met? We know that questions like 'What's my teen up to when he comes home way past midnight?' or 'Is there something she's hiding from me?' plague your mind. So we have prepared a list for you to keep in mind. Consider the following preventive measures when it comes to keeping your teen safe from drugs:

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**ALWAYS BE IN THE KNOW.** Pay attention to the places where your teen goes to and who he or she goes with. Find out what positive activities your teen is interested in (e.g. sports, music, photography) and actively support his or her involvement.



**MANAGE EXPECTATIONS.** Make it clear to your teen that you will not tolerate any kind of involvement in drugs. Agree with your teen beforehand on what might happen if he or she breaks the rules and enforce them consistently.



**WHO'S IN THE VICINITY?** Always be aware of who his or her friends are. If your teen is part of a social circle where people abuse drugs, he or she might eventually feel pressured to experiment. Get to know your teen's friends and if possible, their parents as well.



**THE THREAT FROM WITHIN.** Without a doctor's prescription, consuming excessive common prescription drugs like painkillers, cough mixtures and cold tablets is a form of drug abuse. Explain to your teen that these over-the-counter medications should never be taken without a doctor's prescription, and keep an eye on any supplies you might keep at home.



**REWARD GOOD BEHAVIOUR.** Always offer praise and encouragement when your teen does well, whether in school or at home. A simple word of encouragement can boost his or her self-confidence and show that you care about him or her. This helps to nurture a strong bond between you and your teen and makes communication easier.



**BE A SHINING EXAMPLE.** Always be a great role model for your teen to follow, be it at home or in a social situation. Remember, your teen looks up to you, so practice what you preach and be mindful of your actions in front of him or her.