

# talk about it



## Conversation Goals

The primary goal of conversations at this age is to maintain open lines of communication and to reinforce your teen's healthy coping strategies. Other goals include: discussing the consequences of drug use (e.g., addiction, legal trouble, damaged relationships, etc.), establishing a clear connection between opioids and heroin, expressing your disapproval of their drug and alcohol use, and setting and reinforcing consequences.

## Conversation Starters



- What do you think about people your age who use alcohol and other drugs?
- How will you handle it if people are using alcohol and other drugs at a party?
- What would be a fair consequence if you were caught using alcohol or other drugs?
- What reasons do you think teens have for using alcohol and other drugs?
- How do you think alcohol or other drugs can affect your life?

## Talking Tips

- 1 Avoid asking yes or no questions (they are likely to be met with shrugs, grunts, eye-rolls, and non-answers).
- 2 Encourage healthy, positive activities. Pursuing hobbies or activities (e.g., school events, sports, clubs, etc.) helps prevent teens from experimenting with drugs or alcohol substances out of boredom, curiosity, or as a way to fit-in.
- 3 Take an active interest in who their friends are and what's going on in your teen's life. FACT: teens are less likely to use alcohol and other drugs when they feel their parents are involved in their lives.
- 4 Explain what addiction is and how drugs like opioids can affect their lives.
- 5 Build relationships with your teen's friends' parents. These relationships can help you make sure that other parents are maintaining similar expectations and rules with their teen and that they'll maintain your expectations with your teen.
- 6 Help your teen establish goals and identify steps to reach them.
- 7 Model healthy relationships with substances, including alcohol. Do not feel pressured to disclose your own history of substance use.