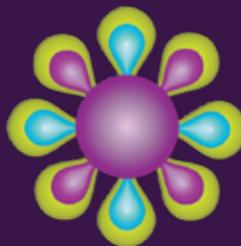




Speaking with your children about drugs and suicide does **not** have to be a difficult conversation.

TALK

respond like a parent



Mental Health &
Recovery Services
Board of
Allen, Auglaize, and
Hardin Counties

Go to www.wecarepeople.org
and click on "Let's Talk" for more information,
conversation prompts, and videos on how to talk with
your children about their strengths, drugs, and suicide.

LET'S

Listen like a friend,

STRENGTHS

Children whose parents help them to discover their strengths acquire the emotional health that will help them succeed in life — and prevent them from using substances.

How can I help my children discover their strengths?

- Watch your child at play to learn preferences and socialization skills.
- Keep a 'Strengths Journal' to take note of things your child does well, and anything that strikes you about his/her behavior.
- Resist the urge to evaluate and overstate expectations. The more children are free to explore and try new things, the easier it will be to discover their real strengths.
- Leave them words of encouragement on the bathroom mirror, in their lunch box, or even in a text message.
- **Build them up now so they will be strong when it counts**



SUICIDE

When you suspect something serious may be wrong with your child, it can be hard to know where to begin. When you suspect suicidal thoughts, it is even harder.

Warning signs from your child

- Constant irritability, sadness, or anger
- Feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or just “wrong” in some way
- Too much or not enough sleep
- Crying all of the time
- Weight loss or gain without trying
- Loss of concentration
- Seclusion or isolation
- Social media posts with hopeless messages

What can I do?

Be blunt.

Ask your child if he/she has ever thought about suicide. Don't be afraid to use the word “suicide.”

Gauge intent.

Ask your child if he/she has ever thought about how they would complete suicide.

Get help.

Call the Hopeline together at 1-800-567-HOPE(4673) and speak with a mental health professional 24/7. If there is a serious concern, the Hopeline staff will guide you to the Crisis Center or any local hospital emergency room.



For more tips, visit
www.wecarepeople.org



DRUGS

Keep the lines of communication open with your child. Remember to listen like a friend, but respond like a parent.

■ Ages 3-5

Children at this age still seek your approval. Teach them about good nutrition, proper hygiene, and a healthy lifestyle, as well as dangerous substances like bleach, cleansers, and tobacco.

■ Ages 5-8

Children enter school and become influenced by media and the world around them. Have factual discussions with your child about the dangers of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.

■ Ages 8-12

When it comes to drug use, this is one of the most important times for a discussion. Keep conversations in the present tense and explain how using drugs and alcohol will spoil the fun of school and friends. Practice what they will say when a friend offers drugs.

■ Teens

Let them know they can talk to you no matter what.

If you are worried your child is drinking alcohol or using drugs:

- Show concern and love
- Intervene and be direct
- Visit wecarepeople.org to learn how

