

## How Can You Tell if Your Child is Using Alcohol and/or Other Drugs?

Well, understanding teenagers is a tricky business. Because they are already going through so much, it's common for teens to experience changes in moods & attitudes, unusual temper outbursts, changes in sleeping habits, or changes in hobbies or other interests. So, how do you know if these changes are alcohol or drug related?

### Look for:

- Declining grades, increased absences, or skipping classes.
- Secrecy about where he got that jacket . . . or iPod . . . or any other possession; and/or secrecy about where she's going or where she's been.
- Subtle changes in phone conversations with friends . . . whispering or using a coded language.
- Developing new friends that he doesn't want you to meet.
- An increased need for money . . . borrowing from friends or family.
- Evidence of drug images and paraphernalia such as pipes or rolling papers.
- Using eye drops . . . carrying them in the car or back pack . . . which can be used to mask bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils.
- Evidence of missing prescription drugs such as pain killers or tranquilizers; OR missing over-the-counter drugs such as cold medicines.
- Gotten caught or into trouble while using alcohol or other drugs.

**If any of this is happening in your family – with your child, it could be reason for concern. Try asking your teen some of the following questions:**

- “Have you ever driven a car or ridden in a car driven by someone else who was ‘high’ on drugs or alcohol?”
- “Do you ever use drugs or alcohol to relax; to feel better about yourself; to forget your problems; or to fit in at school?”
- “Do you ever use drugs or alcohol when you are alone?”
- “Have you ever forgotten the things that you did while under the influence of drugs or alcohol?”
- “Do family, friends or other people who care about you, ever tell you that you should cut down on your drug use or drinking?”

**If you suspect your child is using alcohol or other drugs there is help at school and in the community. Call one or more of the resources listed below.**

### Walla Walla High School:

**Student Assistance Specialist:** Casey Cramer, 526-8618, [ccramer@wwps.org](mailto:ccramer@wwps.org)

### **Counselors:**

- Jeanne Ruecker, 526-8663, [jruecker@wwps.org](mailto:jruecker@wwps.org)
- Eva Hanson, 526-8693, [ehanson@wwps.org](mailto:ehanson@wwps.org)
- Carol Franklin, 526-8664, [cfranklin@wwps.org](mailto:cfranklin@wwps.org)
- Harvey Wellington, 526-8665, [hwellington@wwps.org](mailto:hwellington@wwps.org)

### Community:

- Northwest Counseling Solutions, 30 W. Main, #304, Walla Walla, 525-8844
- Serenity Point Counseling, 705 W. Rose, Suite 1, Walla Walla, 529-6036
- Blue Mountain Counseling, 221 E. Washington St., Dayton, 382-1164 (all services free under age 18)