

November 2010

PREVENTION STARTS WITH YOU



What do you think a family dinner has to do with keeping your child off drugs? Well the answer is, a lot! A simple family meal 3-5 times a week can reduce the chances of your child using marijuana, alcohol or prescription medications by almost 1.5 times. Almost 75% of surveyed youth stated that these same family dinners were "important" to them. Why is that?

When you sit down with your child to share a meal and ask about their day, you show interest in your child's life and create stronger family ties. Ask questions, and then just listen. Kids are more likely to talk to their parents about what is going on if they have already established a pattern of sharing and know they are being heard.

It's helpful to know that positive relationships with parents have the potential to be the single most

protective factor influencing your child's choices regarding substance use or other risky behaviour.

Sometimes actions speak louder than words - "Prevention starts with you". Think about your own relationship with alcohol or other substances. What are you demonstrating to your child? Clarify your own beliefs and know where you stand on underage drinking or giving your child alcohol in the home. Be proactive, so that when the discussion comes up, you can be confident in sharing your values and beliefs with your child.

Strengthening family ties and demonstrating clear healthy boundaries around drugs and alcohol is a recipe for successful prevention. Take action and make it part of your daily life.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

HELPFUL LINKS

<http://www.gordonneufeld.com/home>,
<http://www.theantidrug.com/>



Family – Frequent, relaxed conversations with my child are important

- How can I create more opportunities to connect with my child?
- What do I need to do to make sure my child feels comfortable approaching me if there is a problem?



Role Modeling – Positive role modeling is a powerful influence in my child's life

- Do I drink in front of my child routinely?
- Is alcohol openly displayed in my home?



Values – My child benefits from knowing where I stand on important issues

- How do I let my child know what my beliefs and rules are on this issue?
- How do I follow-up with my child when those rules are broken?

For more information please call the On-Call Nurse for the Child & Youth Team at 604-983-6714.

"SILENCE ISN'T GOLDEN, IT'S PERMISSION"