

## Talking Points

Use these talking points to prepare for interviews.

Consider sharing the talking points with the prospective interviewer to provide a framework for the discussion.

### Underage Drinking, and Academic Performance

- The 1985 kidnapping, torture, and murder of DEA Special Agent Enrique Camarena was the impetus for Red Ribbon Week when students in his hometown began wearing red ribbons in his memory.
- In 1988, Red Ribbon Week Celebrations went nationwide – with the message to take a stand against the loss of life and energy to drug abuse.
- Each year, the last week in October is Red Ribbon Week.

### Youth Alcohol and Drug Use

- Young people who use alcohol and drugs are more likely to be victims or perpetrators of violence, engage in unplanned and unprotected sex, experience school failure, or be seriously injured from driving or engaging in other risky behavior while impaired.
- Youths who use alcohol or illegal drugs are more likely to be at risk for suicide.
- Kids say that losing their parents' respect and pride is one of the main reasons they don't use alcohol and drugs.

- Continued -

## Talking Points (cont.)

### How Parents and Other Caring Adults Can Help Keep Youth Drug Free

- **Communicate with your child every day.**

The more you know about your child, the easier it will be to guide them toward more positive, skill-building activities and friendships.

As a result, your child will be less likely to experiment with illegal substances. Practice active listening by paraphrasing what your child tells you.

- **Get involved in your child's life.**

Spend at least 15 minutes a day in an activity that your child would like to do. Play a game together. Do something special together once a week. Praise your child for activities you ordinarily take for granted, such as helping set the table for meals or doing homework without being told.

- **Make clear, consistent, enforceable rules for your children.**

If your child hears you say "no," it might be easier for that child to do the same when substances are offered to them.

- **"Walk the walk" — lead by example.**

If you want honesty, courage, discipline, and kindness from your children, you must show these qualities in your own life.

- **Teach your child how to resist peer pressure.**

Peers have a powerful influence on even the youngest children. Peer acceptance is a major influence regarding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Your child may make friends out of a need to fit in, overcome anxiety, or bolster their courage. You can help your child by making it clear that you are clearly against their use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

- **Keep track of your child's activities.**

Get to know your child's friends and their parents. Know where your child is going, whom they will be with, and what they will be doing. Establishing relationships with your child's friends will put you in closer touch with his or her daily life.

#### For Additional Guidance ...

Contact the Region 3 Prevention Resource Center to request free publications designed to help parents connect with their children to discourage substance abuse. Call 1-866-242-4111 or visit [www.prc3.org](http://www.prc3.org) for more information.