



BRIGHT FUTURES HANDOUT ► PATIENT 15 THROUGH 17 YEAR VISITS

Here are some suggestions from Bright Futures experts that may be of value to you and your family.

✓ HOW YOU ARE DOING

- Enjoy spending time with your family. Look for ways you can help at home.
- Find ways to work with your family to solve problems. Follow your family's rules.
- Form healthy friendships and find fun, safe things to do with friends.
- Set high goals for yourself in school and activities and for your future.
- Try to be responsible for your schoolwork and for getting to school or work on time.
- Find ways to deal with stress. Talk with your parents or other trusted adults if you need help.
- Always talk through problems and never use violence.
- If you get angry with someone, walk away if you can.
- Call for help if you are in a situation that feels dangerous.
- Healthy dating relationships are built on respect, concern, and doing things both of you like to do.
- When you're dating or in a sexual situation, "No" means NO. NO is OK.
- Don't smoke, vape, use drugs, or drink alcohol. Talk with us if you are worried about alcohol or drug use in your family.

✓ YOUR DAILY LIFE

- Visit the dentist at least twice a year.
- Brush your teeth at least twice a day and floss once a day.
- Be a healthy eater. It helps you do well in school and sports.
 - Have vegetables, fruits, lean protein, and whole grains at meals and snacks.
 - Limit fatty, sugary, and salty foods that are low in nutrients, such as candy, chips, and ice cream.
 - Eat when you're hungry. Stop when you feel satisfied.
 - Eat with your family often.
 - Eat breakfast.
- Drink plenty of water. Choose water instead of soda or sports drinks.
- Make sure to get enough calcium every day.
- Have 3 or more servings of low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk and other low-fat dairy products, such as yogurt and cheese.
- Aim for at least 1 hour of physical activity every day.
- Wear your mouth guard when playing sports.
- Get enough sleep.

✓ YOUR FEELINGS

- Be proud of yourself when you do something good.
- Figure out healthy ways to deal with stress.
- Develop ways to solve problems and make good decisions.
- It's OK to feel up sometimes and down others, but if you feel sad most of the time, let us know so we can help you.
- It's important for you to have accurate information about sexuality, your physical development, and your sexual feelings toward the opposite or same sex. Please consider asking us if you have any questions.

✓ HEALTHY BEHAVIOR CHOICES

- Choose friends who support your decision to not use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. Support friends who choose not to use.
- Avoid situations with alcohol or drugs.
- Don't share your prescription medicines. Don't use other people's medicines.
- Not having sex is the safest way to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Plan how to avoid sex and risky situations.
- If you're sexually active, protect against pregnancy and STIs by correctly and consistently using birth control along with a condom.
- Protect your hearing at work, home, and concerts. Keep your earbud volume down.

15 THROUGH 17 YEAR VISITS—PATIENT

✓ STAYING SAFE

- ▶ Always be a safe and cautious driver.
 - ▶ Insist that everyone use a lap and shoulder seat belt.
 - ▶ Limit the number of friends in the car and avoid driving at night.
 - ▶ Avoid distractions. Never text or talk on the phone while you drive.
- ▶ Do not ride in a vehicle with someone who has been using drugs or alcohol.
 - ▶ If you feel unsafe driving or riding with someone, call someone you trust to drive you.
- ▶ Wear helmets and protective gear while playing sports. Wear a helmet when riding a bike, a motorcycle, or an ATV or when skiing or skateboarding. Wear a life jacket when you do water sports.
- ▶ Always use sunscreen and a hat when you're outside.
- ▶ Fighting and carrying weapons can be dangerous. Talk with your parents, teachers, or doctor about how to avoid these situations.

Consistent with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents*, 4th Edition

For more information, go to <https://brightfutures.aap.org>.

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40 Developmental Assets® for Adolescents (ages 12-18)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as **Developmental Assets®**—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



External Assets

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Support | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. |
| Empowerment | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. |
| Boundaries & Expectations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. |
| Constructive Use of Time | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at home—Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week. |

Internal Assets

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Commitment to Learning | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week. |
| Positive Values | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty—Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs. |
| Social Competencies | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| Positive Identity | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future. |



ADVICE

Teaching Teens to Respect Diversity

Respecting diversity involves understanding and valuing the perspectives, behaviors and needs of people from all backgrounds.

Respecting diversity involves understanding and valuing the perspectives, behaviors and needs of people from all backgrounds. The world is a great tapestry of different cultures, abilities, beliefs, genders and preferences, and the ability to respect others sets the tone for the way a person approaches their interactions and relationships. As society becomes more diverse, your adolescent will most likely be exposed to people from various backgrounds, and it is good to teach her about the value of respecting differences.

Expose your middle-schooler to different cultures and backgrounds. You are a great influence in your child's life, and by having diverse friendships and being respectful of people's views and backgrounds, you will be providing her with a valuable lesson in tolerance. You can also help build your child's ability to respect differences by encouraging her to participate in activities that promote diversity and nurture tolerance. Find local cultural events, like parades or celebrations, and bring the whole family to enjoy the festivities. These types of events can be a fun way to introduce your adolescent to new cultures and help her gain awareness of the diverse history of our country. You may also want to sign her up for summer camp, an art workshop or a peer program that includes people from all backgrounds and abilities. For example, there are many programs out there that allow children to mentor or become "buddies" with children with special needs. You can contact your local children's hospital to learn more about which programs exist in your community as well.

Teach your adolescent about the need to be open-minded. People all have different experiences, backgrounds, customs, opinions, points of view, genders and preferences, and it's good to talk to your child regularly about the importance of being accepting of others. Neurologist Judy Willis says that helping your adolescent become open-minded about differences can build her mental flexibility, problem-solving abilities and sense of tolerance. Willis suggests that you talk to your middle-schooler about the beliefs of those involved in social problems and ask her to consider what historical figures would think about these current issues.

Talk about bullying. Bullying is a growing concern for children at this age, and by teaching your child about respecting and honoring differences, you are also helping to prepare her to respond to bullying in an assertive way. Bullying is often linked to prejudice, as the targets of bullies are often people who are considered “different” by their peers. Name-calling, physical harassment, hurtful comments online and being left out of cliques are some of the most common ways middle-school students are exposed to bullying. Education consultant Jennifer Miller recommends that you prepare your adolescent with responses to bullying behavior. Often young people are caught off-guard and don’t know how to respond to bullying. Miller suggests that you work together on what your child can say to stop the harassment and allow her to remain respectful of herself and others. Sometimes, it’s as simple as saying, “Stop, you know you’re wrong,” with some assertion. Or she can say, “You know you are out of line,” if the bully is harassing another person, and then she can leave the area and tell an adult who can help the victim. By reminding your adolescent that others’ opinions and feelings are valid even when they are different from her own, you are helping to raise an open-minded child who has the courage and skills needed to stand up against bullying.



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CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

Parent-Teen Driving Agreement

I, _____, will drive carefully and cautiously and will be courteous to other drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians at all times.

I Promise:

I promise that I will obey all the rules of the road.

- Always wear a seat belt and make all my passengers buckle up.
- Obey all traffic lights, stop signs, other street signs, and road markings.
- Stay within the speed limit and drive safely.
- Never use the car to race or to try to impress others.
- Never give rides to hitchhikers.

I promise that I will make sure I can stay focused on driving.

- Never text while driving (writing, reading or sending messages)
- Never talk on the cell phone---including handsfree devices or speakerphone---while driving.
- Drive with both hands on the wheel.
- Never eat or drink while driving.
- Drive only when I am alert and in emotional control.
- Call my parents for a ride home if I am impaired in any way that interferes with my ability to drive safely, or if my driver is impaired in any way.
- Never use headphones or earbuds to listen to music while I drive.

I promise that I will respect laws about drugs and alcohol.

- Drive only when I am alcohol and drug free.
- Never allow any alcohol or illegal drugs in the car.

Our Safe Driving Agreement



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Be a passenger only with drivers who are alcohol and drug free.

I promise that I will be a responsible driver.

Drive only when I have permission to use the car and I will not let anyone else drive the car unless I have permission.

Drive someone else's car only if I have parental permission.

Pay for all traffic citations or parking tickets.

Complete my family responsibilities and maintain good grades at school as listed here:

Contribute to the costs of gasoline, maintenance, and insurance as listed here:

Restrictions:

I agree to the following restrictions, but understand that these restrictions will be modified by my parents as I get more driving experience and demonstrate that I am a responsible driver.

For the next ____ months, I will not drive after _____ pm.

For the next ____ months, I will not transport more than ____ teen passengers (unless I am supervised by a responsible adult).

For the next ____ months, I won't adjust the stereo, electronic devices, or air conditioning/heater while the car is moving.

For the next ____ months, I will not drive in bad weather.

I understand that I am not permitted to drive to off-limit locations or on roads and highways as listed here:

Additional restrictions:

Penalties for Agreement Violations:

Drove while texting (composed, read or sent message or email with phone).


◦ NO DRIVING FOR ____ MONTHS

Drove while talking on the cell phone (including handsfree or speakerphone).


◦ NO DRIVING FOR ____ MONTHS

Drove after drinking alcohol or using drugs.


◦ NO DRIVING FOR ____ MONTHS

 Got ticket for speeding or moving violation.


◦ NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

 Drove after night driving curfew.


◦ NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

 Drove too many passengers.

◦ NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

 Broke promise about seat belts (self and others).

◦ NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

 Drove on a road or to an area that is off limits.

◦ NO DRIVING FOR _____ MONTHS

Signatures:

Driver Pledge

I agree to follow all the rules and restrictions in this agreement. I understand that my parents will impose penalties, including removal of my driving privileges, if I violate the agreement. I also understand that my parents will allow me greater driving privileges as I become more experienced and as I demonstrate that I am always a safe and responsible driver.

Driver:

Date:

Parent Promise

I also agree to drive safely and to be an excellent role model.

Parent (or guardian):

Date:

Parent (or guardian):

Date:



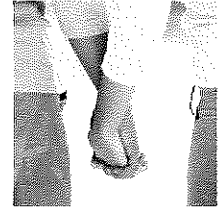
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CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

For Teens: How to Make Healthy Decisions About Sex

Before you decide to have sex or if you are already having sex, you need to know how to stay healthy. Even if you think you know everything you need to know about sex, take a few minutes and read on. Your doctor wants to make sure you know the facts.



Important Reminders:

- No one should ever be forced to have sex (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Date-Rape.aspx>)! If you are ever forced to have sex, it's important to never blame yourself and to tell an adult you trust as soon as possible.
- Not using alcohol and drugs (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Talking-to-Teens-About-Drugs-and-Alcohol.aspx>) will help you make clearer choices about sex. Too many young people have sex without meaning to when they drink alcohol or use drugs.

Are You Ready for Sex?

Sex can change your life and relationships. Having sex may affect the way you feel about yourself or how others feel about you.

Many teens believe waiting until they are ready to have sex (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Deciding%20to%20Wait.aspx>) is important. The right time is different for each teen. For example, some teens may want to wait until they are older (adults); other teens may want to wait until they feel their relationship is ready.

You may feel that your relationship is ready when:

- You can be completely honest and trust the other person, and the other person can trust you.
- You can talk with the person about difficult topics, such as feelings, other relationships, and if the person has had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/sexually-transmitted/Pages/Types-of-Sexually-Transmitted-Infections.aspx>).
- You can be responsible, protecting yourself and your partner against STIs and pregnancy with condoms (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/No-Condom-No-Sex.aspx>) and birth control (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Birth-Control-for-Sexually-Active-Teens.aspx>).
- You can respect the other person's decisions about not having sex and about using protection.

However, if you are in love or really like someone, you may ignore the signs of an unhealthy relationship.

The following signs mean your relationship is **not** ready for sex:

- Your partner is jealous or possessive. For example, your partner prevents you from spending time with your family or other friends, texts or instant messages you constantly, or checks your cell phone to see who you are talking with.

- Your partner pressures you to have sex and refuses to see your point of view.
- Your partner manipulates you by either bullying you or threatening to hurt himself if you end the relationship.

Why Wait?

There's nothing wrong if you decide to wait. Not everyone is having sex. Half of all teens in the United States have never had sex. If you decide to wait, stick with your decision. Plan ahead how you are going to say no so you are clearly understood. Stay away from situations that can lead to sex.

Here are reasons why waiting to have sex makes sense:

- **Sex can lead to pregnancy** (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Teenage-Pregnancy.aspx>). Are you ready to be pregnant or become a teenaged parent? It's a huge responsibility. Are you able to provide food, clothing, and a safe home for your baby?
- **Sex has health risks.** A lot of infections can be spread during sex. Sexually transmitted infections (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/sexually-transmitted/Pages/Types-of-Sexually-Transmitted-Infections.aspx>) include chlamydia, gonorrhea, hepatitis B, herpes, HIV (the virus that causes AIDS), human papillomavirus (HPV), or syphilis.
- **Sex can lead to emotional pain and distractions.** You may feel sad or angry if you let someone pressure you into having sex when you're not really ready. You also may feel sad or angry if you choose to have sex but your partner leaves you. Your partner may even tell other people that you had sex with her.

How Can You Prevent Getting an STI?

Nothing works perfectly to prevent STIs except abstinence (no sex). However, if you're going to have sex, using condoms is the best way to reduce the risk for getting STIs. You can also get a vaccine to protect against HPV (<http://www.healthychildren.org/english/safety-prevention/immunizations/pages/Human-Papillomavirus-HPV-Vaccine-What-You-Need-to-Know.aspx>).

Remember to use a latex condom every time you have sex—no matter what other type of birth control (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Birth-Control-for-Sexually-Active-Teens.aspx>) you and your partner might also use. To protect against getting an infection from having oral sex, use a condom, dental dam, or non-microwavable plastic wrap. Your doctor can explain all these things to you.

To make sure you stay healthy, get regular medical checkups. If you have had sex in the past or are having sex, your doctor may recommend testing for STIs.

What Do You Need To Know About Condoms?

- Condoms work best when used correctly.
- Most teens use male latex condoms. Buy the type with a reservoir (nipple) at the tip to catch semen, if available. Female condoms are another option. Never use a male and female condom at the same time; they might tear.
- Follow the instructions on the package to make sure you are using them the right way.
- Check the expiration date on the package. Don't buy or use expired condoms.
- You can carry condoms with you at all times, but do not store them where they will get hot (such as in the glove compartment of a car). Heat can damage a condom.
- The following additional tips about using male condoms are from the "Condom Fact Sheet In Brief" published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
 - Use a new condom for every act of vaginal, anal, and oral sex throughout the entire sexual act (from start to finish). Before any genital contact, put the condom on the tip of the erect penis with the rolled side out.
 - If the condom does not have a reservoir tip, pinch the tip enough to leave a half-inch space for semen to collect. Holding the tip, unroll the condom all the way to the base of the erect penis.
 - After ejaculation and before the penis gets soft, grip the rim of the condom and carefully withdraw. Then gently pull the condom off the penis, making sure that semen doesn't spill out.

- Wrap the condom in a tissue and throw it in the trash where others won't handle it.
- If you feel the condom break at any point during sexual activity, stop immediately, withdraw, remove the broken condom, and put on a new condom.
- Ensure that adequate lubrication is used during vaginal and anal sex, which might require water-based lubricants. Oil-based lubricants (ie, petroleum jelly, shortening, mineral oil, massage oils, body lotions, and cooking oil) should not be used because they can weaken latex, causing breakage.

What Types of Birth Control Are Effective?

Talk with your doctor about birth control (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Birth-Control-for-Sexually-Active-Teens.aspx>). Your doctor can answer questions about safe and effective methods, side effects, and costs. Here are some forms of birth control (all types for females; condoms for males) from most effective to least effective at preventing pregnancy.

- **Intrauterine devices (IUDs):** IUDs are small T-shaped devices placed inside the uterus by a doctor. They are highly effective at preventing pregnancy and may also be prescribed to help decrease menstrual bleeding and pain. The copper IUD contains a small amount of natural copper and prevents pregnancies for up to 10 years. There are 2 levonorgestrel IUDs, both of which contain a hormone and prevent pregnancy for 3 to 5 years depending on which one is used. Intrauterine devices when used as prescribed are about 99% effective in preventing pregnancy.
- **Contraceptive implant:** A contraceptive implant is a tiny flexible rod that a doctor puts under your skin in your upper arm. It slowly releases a hormone that prevents pregnancy for 3 years. A contraceptive implant when used as prescribed is about 99% effective in preventing pregnancy.
- **Contraceptive injection:** Depo-Provera is a shot given every 3 months. It's effective, and you don't have to remember to take a daily pill. The contraceptive injection when used as prescribed is 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. However, when used typically (eg, women may occasionally forget to get a shot exactly on time), it is 94% effective in preventing pregnancy.
- **Birth control pills, patch, and ring:** "The pill," the birth control patch, and the ring all contain 2 hormones, an estrogen and a progestin.
 - **Birth control pill:** You take one pill each day. Birth control pills when used as prescribed are about 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. However, when used typically (eg, women may occasionally forget to take a pill), they are 91% effective in preventing pregnancy.
 - **Birth control patch:** The birth control patch is an adhesive patch that is placed on the skin. You wear the patch 3 weeks, remove the patch for 1 week, put on a new patch at the end of the fourth week, and repeat these steps. The birth control patch when used as prescribed is about 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. However, when used typically (eg, women may occasionally forget to replace the patch on time), it is 91% effective in preventing pregnancy.
 - **Birth control ring:** You insert the birth control ring in your vagina, it stays in for 3 weeks, you remove it for 1 week, and you put in a new one at the end of the week. The birth control ring when used as prescribed is about 99% effective in preventing pregnancy. However, when used typically (eg, women may occasionally forget to put in a new birth control ring on time), it is 91% effective in preventing pregnancy.
- **Condoms:** Male condoms used the right way have about a 98% chance of preventing pregnancy, and female condoms have a 95% chance, but they must be used each time you have sex and used correctly. When they are not used correctly, male condoms may only have an 82% chance of preventing pregnancy, while female condoms may only be effective 79% of the time.

What Are Other Types of Birth Control?

The following types of birth control are less common and not as effective at preventing pregnancy:

- **Withdrawal:** The male "pulls out" before he ejaculates or "cums." It does not prevent pregnancy or STIs. Even a small amount of sperm can lead to pregnancy or an STI.
- **The "rhythm method:"** You avoid having sex during certain times of your monthly cycle. Because teens tend to have more irregular periods, this method is less effective at preventing pregnancy.

- **Spermicides:** These are creams and foams used during sex to kill sperm. They may add protection to other methods but are not effective when used alone.

What Is Emergency Contraception?

Emergency contraception (EC) (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Emergency-Contraception.aspx>) is a form of birth control that you use **after** you have unprotected sex. Unprotected sex includes not using birth control, condoms breaking during sex, or forgetting to take birth control pills.

- Emergency contraception can be taken up to 5 days after sex but is most effective when taken as soon as possible after sex.
- You can buy EC pills over the counter and no longer need to show proof of age. The types of EC pills available over the counter are levonorgestrel at 1.5 mg (eg, Plan B One-Step or Next Choice One Dose).
- Another type of EC pill is ulipristal acetate 30 mg (eg, Ella), which you can only get with a prescription.
- A doctor can also put in a copper IUD that will provide both EC and regular birth control.

Remember:

If you decide to have sex, it's important that you know the facts about birth control, infections, and emotions. Decisions of when to become sexually active, how to protect yourself from STIs, and how to prevent pregnancy are yours. These are important decisions and are worth talking about with adults who care about you, including your doctor.

Additional Resources:

- Effective Birth Control for Sexually Active Teens (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Birth-Control-for-Sexually-Active-Teens.aspx>)
- Expect Respect: Healthy Relationships (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Expect-Respect-Healthy-Relationships.aspx>)
- Sexually Transmitted Infections Prevention (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/sexually-transmitted/Pages/Sexually-Transmitted-Infections-Prevention.aspx>)
- Emergency Contraception (<http://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/dating-sex/Pages/Emergency-Contraception.aspx>)
- Center for Young Women's Health (<http://www.youngwomenshealth.org/>)
- The Emergency Contraception Web Site (<http://www.not-2-late.com/>)
- National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy (<http://www.stayteen.org/>)
- Sex, Etc. (<http://sexetc.org/>) (Rutgers University)
- Young Men's Health (<http://www.youngmenshealthsite.org/>)

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Back to Top

WATCH FOR SIGNS – Stop Youth Suicide

“If a young person you know seems depressed or gloomy and has been spending a lot of time questioning why life is worth the bother, it’s time to pay attention.” Anonymous Parent (son lost to suicide)



THE FACTS:

- ❖ Between 2003 and 2007, 539 Washington State youths completed suicide – an average of two youth suicides each week.
- ❖ Youth suicides outnumber youth homicides in Washington State.
- ❖ Between 2003 and 2007, 4,269 Washington State youths were admitted to the hospital for non-fatal suicidal behavior – an average of 16 admissions per week.
- ❖ Boys and young men are significantly more likely to complete suicide – this is partly a result of using more lethal means – while girls and young women are more likely to make suicide attempts that result in hospitalization.
- ❖ 30% of Washington State 10th graders reported feeling so sad or hopeless in the past year that they stopped doing their usual activities.
- ❖ 26% of all 10th graders indicated that it was unlikely that they would seek adult help if they were feeling depressed or suicidal. More than 30% indicated that they did not have adults they could turn to if they were feeling sad or depressed.

Youth suicide is a significant problem in our state. There are warning signs you can watch for – and specific actions you can take – to help prevent young people from taking their own lives.

Learn how to recognize these warning signs, the “clues” that a young person might be considering suicide, and how to let them know you care.

Youth of all races, creeds, incomes, and educational levels attempt or complete suicide. There is no typical suicide victim. About 80% of the time people who kill themselves have given definite signals or talked about suicide. The key to prevention is knowing what the warning signs are, and what to do to help.

WARNING SIGNS:

Most suicidal young people don’t really want to die – they just want their pain to end. There are several signs to watch for that may indicate someone is thinking about suicide. The more signs, the greater the risk.

- A previous suicide attempt.
- Current talk of suicide, or making a plan.
- Strong wish to die, preoccupation with death, giving away prized possessions.
- Signs of serious depression, such as moodiness, hopelessness, withdrawal.
- Increased alcohol and/or other drug use.
- Recent suicide attempted by a friend or family member.

There are other key “risk factors” to keep in mind that increase the likelihood of suicide attempts by young people. Again, the more signs observed, the greater the risk.

- Readily accessible firearms.
- Impulsiveness and taking unnecessary risks.
- Lack of connection to family and friends (no one to talk to).

PREVENTION STEPS:

If you’re worried about a young person and suicide has crossed your mind as a concern, trust your judgment. Do something now! Here’s what you might say to a young person who is thinking about suicide:

1) SHOW YOU CARE: Let the person know you really care. Talk about your feelings and ask about his or hers. Listen carefully to what they have to say.

- “I’m concerned about you ... about how you feel.”
- “Tell me about your pain.”
- “You mean a lot to me and I want to help.”
- “I care about you, about how you’re holding up.”
- “I don’t want you to kill yourself.”
- “I’m on your side ... we’ll get through this.”

2) ASK THE QUESTION: Don’t hesitate to raise the subject. Talking with young people about suicide won’t put the idea in their heads. Chances are, if you’ve observed any of the warning signs, they are already thinking about it. Be direct in a caring, non-confrontational way. Get the conversation started.

- “Are you thinking about suicide?”
- “Are you thinking about harming yourself, ending your life?”
- “What thoughts or plans do you have?”
- “How long have you been thinking about suicide?”
- “Have you thought about how you would do it?”
- “Do you have _____?” (insert the lethal means they have mentioned)
- “Do you really want to die? Or do you want the pain to go away?”

3) CALL FOR HELP: The first steps toward instilling a sense of hope are: showing your concern, raising the issue, and listening to and understanding the young person’s feelings. Keep moving forward, together. Call for help.

- “Together I know we can figure something out to make you feel better.”
- “I know where we can get some help.”
- “Let’s talk to someone who can help... let’s call the crisis line, now.”
- “I can go with you to where we can get help.”
- “You’re not alone. Let me help you.”

If the young person has expressed an immediate plan, or has access to a gun or other potentially deadly means, do not leave him or her alone: GET HELP IMMEDIATELY!

Please call your local CRISIS LINE at 360-425-6064 or 1-800-273-TALK
TEEN TALK: call 360-397-2428 or text 360-984-0936



Marijuana

Know the Facts

Marijuana is not harmless.

Marijuana impairs coordination and perception, affects learning and memory, and can increase anxiety, panic and paranoia. Research shows one in eight youth who use marijuana by age 14 become dependent.

Some of the risks of smoking marijuana vs. consuming marijuana-infused foods are different.

Inhaling any kind of smoke harms your lungs. Consuming marijuana-infused foods can also be dangerous because it takes longer to feel the effects. It's easier to have too much because the effects are delayed.

Recreational marijuana use has age restrictions.

Only those 21 and older can possess marijuana, with a limit of 1 ounce of useable marijuana, 16 ounces in solid form, 72 ounces in liquid form, and 7 grams of concentrate.

Where you can use marijuana is limited.

Marijuana cannot be used in view of the public. It is also not allowed on federal and most tribal lands.

The penalties for marijuana use for those under 21 can be severe.

If you are under 21, you can be charged with Minor in Possession. If you have more than 40 grams, it is a Class "C" felony (\$10,000 fine and/or 10 years in jail).

It's not okay for parents to share marijuana with their kids.

It is a felony to provide marijuana to any minor.



Marijuana

What Parents Should Know

Most youth choose not to use marijuana. However, some will try it, and some will continue to use it.

Brain development continues through age 25. The use of any drug, including marijuana, can impair brain development.

Marijuana use increases risk of academic problems. Marijuana's effect on learning, memory, and motivation can lead to difficulties in school.

Talk Early. Talk Often.

- You are the number one influence in your child's life.
- Talk early and talk often about making the right choices.
- Set expectations.
- Discuss rules and enforce consequences.

For more information about marijuana:

www.LearnAboutMarijuanaWA.org
or www.StartTalkingNow.org



To contact the WSLCB email:
prevention@lcb.wa.gov

If someone you know is struggling with substance use, call:

Washington Recovery Helpline at 1.866.789.1511.

To obtain this publication in an alternative format, contact the agency ADA coordinator at (360) 664-1783.



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Avoid Becoming a Victim of Human Trafficking!

By *Robin Rossmanith* | Submitted On August 11, 2010



No one wants to be a victim of human trafficking. Human trafficking is when a person is forced, coerced, or tricked into doing work against their will. There are many forms of human trafficking, also known as modern day slavery, which exist in the world today. Two main categories are forced labor, as in the making of goods or working in agriculture fields against your will or because of indebtedness to the employer, and sex trafficking, or forced prostitution and pornography. No one wants to be a slave, yet there are 27 million people enslaved in the 21st century.

Unlike the transatlantic slave trade, modern slavery is not the backbone of western civilization or in something easily recognized. But those who hold others captive and force them to work against their will are making profits off this crime. In fact, human trafficking is estimated to be a 32 billion dollar industry.

Some schemes that may seem legitimate, but are used to lure people into captivity include seasonal farm workers, hotel and restaurant work, domestic servants, nannies, and student travel programs. There are many reputable organizations that provide these types of employment and educational programs. However, traffickers routinely use the lure of paying jobs and an education to separate their victims from their money (for travel visas and recruiting fees) and family. Once separated a trafficker may sell the individual to another or force them to work off "travel debt" such as transportation, food, and housing. This debt is at astronomical interests rates, which accumulate daily, and can never be paid off.

Victims of human trafficking come from all walks of life and all financial status. But there are some factors that make a person more vulnerable to the false lies of a human trafficker. Some factors of vulnerability are:

- Being a female
- Being a child
- Coming from a marginalized population
- Poverty
- Growing up in an abusive home
- Running away from home
- Little or no education.

Protect yourself from becoming a victim of human trafficking.

Although changing the above vulnerability factors is difficult, there are some things to do to avoid becoming a human trafficking victim. Be aware of how traffickers recruit people. Traffickers make false promises of a better life. They paint unrealistic pictures of what life could be like with lots of money. They quickly befriend a person showering them with gifts and displays of affection, particularly recruiters who will later force a girl into prostitution.

Do not make decisions under the influence of substances and do not be the company of people you do not fully know and trust while intoxicated. Traffickers, looking to put someone into prostitution, will take advantage unconscious people or someone who cannot fight being transported elsewhere. Traffickers will also attempt to take advantage of those with addictions or attempt to create drug dependency.

If someone, whether stranger or acquaintance, promises something that seems too good in return for sex or free work, wait. Listen to the intuitive voice inside your head, check with family and friends for advice. Do internet searches or background checks on the person wanting you to go with them. Say no and see how they react. Look for signs of abusive or possessive behaviors. Is the person trying to isolate or turn you against family and friends? If so, avoid that person.

Runaways are at particular risk for being forced into prostitution. If leaving home because of abuse try to find a safe place; Forsaken Generation has resources to locate shelters. Or call the runaway switchboard at 1800-Runaway for help. If you are already on the streets try to find a safe place like Children of The Night.

If coming from a life of poverty the lure of a better income or education is hard to resist. Check and double check if the agency or recruiters are reputable. Do they have references from people living where they want to send you? Make sure all contracts signed are in your native language, to understand all the details. Ask lots of questions. Find out, from another source, what a reasonable travel and recruiting expense would be. Ask for pictures of housing and names of people, companies, or schools that can be contacted. Human traffickers will typically avoid those who are asking too much, they want easy targets. Someone looking for a legitimate employee or student will honor the questions, knowing that you would be a valuable employee or student.

Protect your children from becoming victims of human trafficking.

Be aware of your child's online friends. Sex traffickers have been documented using social media like Facebook and MySpace, in addition to others. Love your children unconditionally. Sometimes awful problems exist between parents and kids; seek help through counseling, mentor programs, and rehab if necessary. Traffickers prey on runaways and throwaways. Do not make your child one. Life on the streets is extremely dangerous.

None of the above suggestions are foolproof. However, if these suggestions are implemented then fewer people would become victims of human trafficking. Evil exists in the world. Protect yourself and family.

Robin Rossmanith created the website, [<http://www.ShopToStopSlavery.com>] to empower consumers to fight human trafficking. She operates Shop To Stop Slavery and is also the co-chair of the Northeast Florida Human Trafficking Task Force.

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