

For parents, this is a pivotal time in helping kids make positive choices when faced with drugs and alcohol. The average age kids try drugs for the first time is 13. Experts say if your child is 13, you should assume that he or she has been offered drugs or alcohol. But you can help your teen stay healthy and drug-free — and beat the negative statistics about drug use among teens. Kids who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50 percent less likely to use (2011 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study). Young teens may say they don't need your guidance, but they're much more open to it than they let on. Make sure you talk to them about their choices of friends — drug use in teens starts as a social behavior.

### CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. While there is no single reason teens try alcohol and drugs, there are some common issues and influences behind teenage drug and alcohol use. It is important as a parent to understand these reasons and talk to your kids about the dangers of drinking and using drugs along with helping them find healthier alternatives and options. Some top reasons include: peers, family, media, escape, self-medicating, stress, boredom, low self-esteem, instant gratification, and misinformation.
  - You could start the conversation by saying, “I know that the teen years are stressful, what ways do you cope with your stress?” The response can lead to a discussion on good coping skills you can discuss.
  - Ask your child why they feel kids use drugs and/or alcohol.
2. Giving some scenario questions will allow you and your teen an opportunity to explore how to handle difficult situations where drugs and alcohol are involved.
  - Ask your teen, “What would you do if you were in a car and realized the driver has taken drugs or alcohol?”
  - Follow up with, “What if the driver is an adult?”
  - Give them time to come up with solutions on their own and then go over together.
3. Social media most likely plays a role in your teen’s life. Sharing videos, images and memes creates the opportunity for an instantaneous positive feedback loop that can perpetuate poor decision making. It can lead to false beliefs like most teens use drugs, when in fact, most teens don’t use drugs.
  - Ask your teen if they know anyone who has posted a picture of themselves under the influence of drugs or alcohol on social media. If their response is yes, ask them what happened when others saw it, especially if it was a classmate.
  - Try to get your teen to think about their future and what their boundaries are around substance.



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[www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/drugcontrol](http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/drugcontrol)

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## CONVERSATION STARTERS (CONTINUED)

4. Ask your teen if they know anyone who has gone to the hospital or had an accident because they were high or drunk.
  - This will give you and your teen an opportunity to talk about the short term consequences of drugs and alcohol which can lead into the long term effects.
  - Discuss the negative effects of drugs and alcohol. Clearly communicate that you do not want your teen using drugs. Talk about the short and long-term effects drugs and alcohol can have on his or her mental and physical health, safety and ability to make good decisions. Explain to your teen that experimenting with drugs or alcohol during this time is risky to their still developing brain.
5. Ensure that you and your teen are familiar with the Good Samaritan Law. An overview is below:

The Maryland Good Samaritan Law effective October 1, 2015, provides protection from arrest as well as prosecution for certain specific crimes and expands the charges from which people assisting in an emergency overdose situation are immune. If someone calls 911 in an effort to help during an overdose crisis, or they are experiencing an overdose, their parole and probation status will not be affected, and they will now not be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for:

- Possession of a controlled dangerous substance
- Possession or use of drug paraphernalia
- Providing alcohol to minors

## ACTIVITIES:

1. Make a plan of what your teen would do in various situations which should include: what they would do and say, who they will call for help and how they will leave a bad situation in a hurry.
2. Play a game
  - On-line games can be found at <https://www.teens.drugabuse.gov/games>
  - Conversation Exchange Game at <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7788>
3. Have your teen make a list of common stressors among adolescents. Ask them to share ways that teens may deal with each of those stressors. Then group the stressors into helpful and hurtful coping strategies. Discuss how drug use can be a harmful coping strategy and how it can be a stressor itself.
4. Ask your teen to develop a list of ways to “get high” without using drugs. Some ideas are; playing sports, laughing with friends, listening to music, watching TV or movies, doing volunteer work, dancing, singing, acting... following a passion.



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# TIPS

## High School

### FACTS:

- The average age kids try drugs for the first time is 13.
- According to the 2015 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 8.1% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, 14.5% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, 21% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 32.9% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders in Harford County reported regularly participating in binge drinking.
- 4 out of 5 heroin addictions begin with the misuse of prescription pain killers.
- According to the 2015 Maryland Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 8.9% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, 12.4% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders, 18.1% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders, and 20.5% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported taking a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription one or more times during the past 30 days of the survey.
- 9 out of 10 people with substance problems started using by age 18.
- Teen abuse of prescription (Rx) pain medicine, also known as opioids, usually starts in two ways. Some teens start abusing it at a party or with friends because they're curious or think it will make them feel good. Others start taking it legitimately when prescribed by a doctor after an injury or dental procedure. In some cases, legitimate use turns to dependence, abuse, addiction and then heroin use.
- Substances in your teen's world can include: Tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs such as pain killers, depressants, and stimulants, inhalants and illicit drugs such as marijuana, synthetic drugs, heroin, LSD, mushrooms, cocaine/crack, GHB, rohypnol and ketamine.
- The CASA Columbia 2011 survey found that 40% of all teens surveyed have seen pictures on Facebook, MySpace, or other social networking sites of kids getting drunk, passed out, or using drugs. Half of teens who have seen pictures of kids drunk, passed out, or using drugs on Facebook and other social networking sites first saw such pictures when they were 13 years of age or younger; more than 90% first saw such pictures when they were 15 or younger.

### SOURCES/RESOURCES

[www.drugfree.org/](http://www.drugfree.org/)

[www.teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts](http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts)

[www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment/what-to-do-if-your-teen-or-young-adult-has-problem-drugs](http://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/treatment/what-to-do-if-your-teen-or-young-adult-has-problem-drugs)

[www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts.html](http://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts.html)

[www.bha.health.maryland.gov/OVERDOSE PREVENTION/Pages/Good-Samaritan-Law.aspx](http://www.bha.health.maryland.gov/OVERDOSE_PREVENTION/Pages/Good-Samaritan-Law.aspx)



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# RESOURCES

## OUTREACH & PREVENTION RESOURCES

### Above the Influence

[www.abovetheinfluence.com](http://www.abovetheinfluence.com)

### Addiction Center

[www.addictioncenter.com](http://www.addictioncenter.com)

### Drugs and Young People

[www.medlineplus.gov/drugsandyoungpeople.html](http://www.medlineplus.gov/drugsandyoungpeople.html)

### Harford Mental Health

[www.harfordmentalhealth.org](http://www.harfordmentalhealth.org)

### Harford County

#### Office of Drug Control Policy

[www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/drugcontrol](http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/drugcontrol)

#### The National Institute of Health's National Institute on Drug Abuse

[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)

#### The National Institute of Health's U.S. National Library of Medicine

[www.medlineplus.gov/drugsandyoungpeople.html](http://www.medlineplus.gov/drugsandyoungpeople.html)

### Not My Kid

[www.notmykid.org](http://www.notmykid.org)

### Partnership for Drug Free Kids

[www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)

### Just Think Twice

[www.justthinktwice.com/](http://www.justthinktwice.com/)

### Students Against Drunk Driving

[www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org)

### Too Small To Start

[www.toosmalltostart.samhsa.gov/Start.aspx](http://www.toosmalltostart.samhsa.gov/Start.aspx)

## TREATMENT LOCATIONS IN HARFORD COUNTY

### ARS of Aberdeen

24 W. Bel Air Avenue  
Aberdeen, MD 21001  
410-272-0230

### Assisted Recovery Centers of America/Mid Atlantic

2021 Emmorton Road  
Bel Air, MD 21015  
443-619-0083

### Ashley Addiction Treatment

800 Tydings Lane  
Havre de Grace, MD 21078  
800-799-4673  
410-273-6600

### Outpatient

UM Upper Chesapeake Medical  
Center Klein Ambulatory Care  
Center  
520 Upper Chesapeake Drive  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-273-6600

### Bergand Group

**Harford County**  
1803 Harford Road  
Fallston, MD 21047  
443-299-6766

### Changing Turn Community Healthcare Services

500 Edgewood Road  
Edgewood, MD 21040  
443-402-0172

### Char Hope Foundation

Emory House  
P.O. Box 181  
Street, MD 21154  
443-424-0033

### Emmorton

**Treatment Services**  
3105 Emmorton Road  
Abingdon, MD 21009  
410-569-5900

### Harford Counseling, LLC

1201 Agora Drive  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-836-7332

### Harbor of Grace

437 Girard Street  
Havre de Grace, MD 21078  
443-502-8606

### Harford County Health Dept. Be- havioral Health

120 S. Hays Street  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-838-1500

### Homecoming Project, Inc.

502 S. Tollgate Road  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-399-2904

### Joppa Health Services, Inc.

623 Pulaski Hwy.  
Joppa, MD 21085  
410-538-5809

### Key Point Health Services

135 N. Parke St.  
Aberdeen, MD 21001  
443-625-1600

### Mann House, Inc.

14 Williams St.  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-879-7619

### Maryland IOP Partners

21 W. Courtland St.  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-844-4755

### Matt Program

1361 Brass Mill Rd.  
Belcamp, MD 21017  
410-273-9700

### MedMark Treatment Centers

1361 Brass Mill Road  
Belcamp, MD 21017  
410-273-9700

### Mosaic Community Services

4 North Avenue  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-420-7292

### Phoenix Recovery Center

107 Edgewood Rd.  
Edgewood, MD 21040  
410-671-7374

### Serenity Health Aberdeen

780 W. Bel Air Ave.  
Aberdeen, MD 21001  
410-273-1030

### Therapeutic Living for Families

1837 Pulaski Hwy.  
Edgewood, MD 21040  
443-372-5273

### TRW Associates

210 N. Tollgate Rd.  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-879-4532

### 200 N. Philadelphia Blvd.

Aberdeen, MD 21001  
410-838-8800

### Turning Corners, Inc.

260 Gateway Dr.  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-893-3896

### UM Harford Memorial Hospital Behavioral Health

501 S. Union Ave.  
Havre De Grace, MD 21078  
443-843-8054

### Upper Bay Counseling & Support Services

626 Revolution St.  
Havre De Grace, MD 21078  
410-939-8744

### Villa Maria Harford County

1301 Continental Dr.  
Abingdon, MD 21009  
410-676-4002



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