

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

In Texas, alcohol remains the most commonly-used substance among students. In 2014, 50.5 percent of students reported that they had used alcohol at some point in their lives. In 2016, the number was 52.7 percent. Past-month alcohol use also increased from 21.2 percent in 2014 to 28.6 percent in 2016.

Tobacco use among students increased as well. Lifetime use of any tobacco product increased from 22.4 percent in 2014 to 30.4 percent in 2016. Past-month use of tobacco was 8.4 percent in 2014 and 14.5 percent in 2016.

Marijuana remains the most widely-used illicit drug among Texas youth. However, lifetime marijuana use decreased from about 23.2 percent of students in 2014 to 20.8 percent of students in 2016. In 2014 past-month use of marijuana was reported by 9.1 percent of students, as compared to 12.2 percent of students in 2016.

*Source: Texas Department of State Health Services, Drug Facts among Texas Youth 2016*



### LEWISVILLE ISD GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

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# SUBSTANCE ABUSE



## WARNING SIGNS

Alcohol and drug users often try to conceal their symptoms and downplay their problem.

If you're worried that a family member might be abusing drugs, look for the following warning signs:

### Psychological

- Unexplained change in personality or attitude
- Sudden mood swings, irritability or angry outbursts
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness
- Lack of motivation; appears lethargic or "spaced out"
- Appears fearful, anxious, or paranoid with no reason

### Behavioral

- Drop in attendance and performance at school
- Unexplained need for money; may borrow or steal to get it
- Engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviors
- Sudden change in friends, favorite hangouts, and hobbies
- Frequently getting into trouble (fights, accidents, illegal activities)

### Physical

- Bloodshot eyes, pupils larger/smaller than usual
- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain
- Deterioration of physical appearance, personal grooming habits
- Unusual smells on breath, body or clothing
- Tremors, slurred speech or impaired coordination

## WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- Talk and listen to your child about dangers of drug use and start early. Even a child in elementary is able to engage in conversations about staying healthy. Share your love by keeping your child safe.

- Learn the facts about the harmful effects of drugs. Discuss the effects on the brain and body and correct any wrong beliefs your child may have, such as "Everybody is doing it." Discuss legal issues, too.

- Provide guidance and clear rules about not using drugs.

- Get involved in your child's life and encourage participation in family, school, and volunteer activities. Time together helps your child feel valued, safe and connected.

- Monitor your own substance use. A parent's actions truly speak louder than words.

- Know your child's friends and their families. Remind your child that true friends support each other's values.

- Know your child's location at all times.

- Help your child learn different ways to resist negative peer pressure, such as saying, "No thanks, my parents would get really mad at me."

- Trust your gut. If you suspect drug or alcohol use, talk with your child about your concerns. Contact a substance abuse specialist or your child's school counselor. This will remain confidential.

## RESOURCES

### **Above the Influence:**

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

### **National Institute on Drug Abuse:**

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

### **Partnership for Drug-Free Kids:**

[drugfree.org](http://drugfree.org), [medicineabuseproject.org](http://medicineabuseproject.org)

### **Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration:**

[samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)

### **U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration:**

[dea.gov](http://dea.gov)

### **The Phoenix House of Dallas:**

[phoenixhouse.org/locations/texas](http://phoenixhouse.org/locations/texas)

### **Nexus Recovery Center of Dallas:**

[nexusrecovery.org](http://nexusrecovery.org)

