

## Substance Abuse Signs & Treatment Options

Substance use disorders affect millions of Americans, many of whom are under 21 years old. These disorders include dependence on and abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs, including the non-medical use of prescription-type drugs. Adolescence and young adulthood is a time of growth and experimentation, and many young people experience curiosity or pressure to use alcohol and/or drugs. Here are tips on recognizing signs of substance abuse, and resources to help your family overcome substance abuse, *and* the stigma that often goes hand in hand.

### Signs of Substance Abuse:

- Change in behavior/dress/hygiene, change in friends (you may not know who your kids are spending time with anymore),
- Change in school performance, loss of interest in normal extracurricular activities (no longer wants to play baseball but has not replaced it with an identifiable activity),
- If your child comes home intoxicated/under the influence, do not ignore it, discuss it and remain alert.
- Be even more alert if there is a family history of substance dependence including alcoholism.
- Although many normal changes of adolescence may be reflected above, do not ignore what seems unusual for your child.

### Seek Help:

If you are concerned about the possibility of drug use, contact Loudoun County Public School Student Services, which offers a variety of substance abuse prevention programs, and/or your school counselor who can connect you with Loudoun County Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services, which provides substance abuse and/or mental health assessments at the school through Student Assistance Services.

### Get Informed: Substance abuse can happen in any family!

- Join Together – [www.jointogether.org](http://www.jointogether.org) (alcohol and drug policy, prevention, and treatment)
- SA Recovery Month – [www.recoverymonth.gov/2006/default.aspx](http://www.recoverymonth.gov/2006/default.aspx)
- National Institute on Drug Abuse - [www.nida.org](http://www.nida.org)
- National Institute of Health – [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)
- Drug Enforcement Agency – [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov)

### Treatment & Community Support:

**Loudoun County Public Schools Substance Abuse Prevention Program** - 571-252-1014

**Loudoun County Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services** - 703-771-5100

[www.loudoun.gov/mhmr](http://www.loudoun.gov/mhmr)

**Substance Abuse Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA)** -703-777-5390

**Narcotics Anonymous** – [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)

**Alcoholics Anonymous** – [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

**Al-Anon** – [www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org)

(for family members/friends of people who have a problem with alcohol or drugs)

**Al-Alteen** – [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org) or 703-431-4081

(for teens with family members/friends of people who have problems with alcohol or drugs)