



El Dorado County Sheriff Crime Analysis Unit – Public Awareness

Date: January 25, 2006

IS YOUR CHILD EXHIBITING SIGNS OF DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE

With teens in your house it may be hard to tell if changes in mood, attitude, sleeping habits, hobbies or their new style of fashion is due to drug use or just their quest for independence. So what should you look for beyond these normal behaviors? Signs of depression, withdrawal, lack of grooming or hostility. If your child is suddenly not doing well in school, having trouble getting along with others, or taking part in activities, check out this Watch List for Parents.

Signs of Drug/Alcohol Watch List

- ✧ Changes in friends
- ✧ Negative changes in schoolwork, missing school, or declining grades
- ✧ Increased secrecy about possessions or activities
- ✧ Use of incense, room deodorant, or perfume to hide smoke or chemical odors
- ✧ Subtle changes in conversations with friends, e.g. more secretive, using “coded” language
- ✧ Change in clothing choices: new fascination with clothes that highlight drug use
- ✧ Increase in borrowing money
- ✧ Evidence of drug paraphernalia such as pipes, rolling papers, etc.
- ✧ Evidence of use of inhalant products (such as hairspray, nail polish, correction fluid, common household products); Rags and paper bags are sometimes used as accessories
- ✧ Bottles of eye drops, which may be used to mask bloodshot eyes or dilated pupils
- ✧ New use of mouthwash or breath mints to cover up the smell of alcohol
- ✧ Missing prescription drugs—especially narcotics and mood stabilizers

These changes may signal something is going on, be on the watch, talk to your child and take action. For further information regarding detailed signs visit; http://www.theantidrug.com/ei/detailed_signs.asp. The Anti-Drug website has many resources for children and parents.