Summary

Alcohol
Parents can influence their children’s habits by having open communication, providing social support, setting clear expectations about alcohol abuse and monitoring behavior.

Tobacco
Everyday thousands of kids are exposed to tobacco for the first time. They do it to fit in and be cool. Many become addicted and will eventually die from tobacco related diseases. We as parents need to make our children aware of the dangers tobacco use presents.

Marijuana
Marijuana is the most widely used drug in the U.S. Parents need to use good parenting techniques in order to decrease the chances of their kids getting involved with this very dangerous drug.

In General
Communication is the key! Talk to your kid. Know who his or her friends are and be involved in your life. Kids who have good relationships with their parents are much less likely to become involved in alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana.

Online Resources for Parents

Tobacco
www.cdc.gov/tobacco/edumat.htm
www.quitsmoking.com

Drugs and Alcohol
www.drugfreeamerica.org
www.talkingwithmykids.org
www.changetheclimate.org
www.notalone.org
www.notmykid.org

Works Cited


3 Most Commonly Abused Substances Among 11th and 12th Graders:

**Alcohol**

**Why do students use alcohol?**
- Have a good time with friends
- Pleasurable effects
- Taste
- Social Acceptance
- Curiosity

**Why is this issue important?**
- Heavy drinking has increased among 11th and 12th grade students\(^1\)
- Alcohol abuse causes interpersonal problems, physical and psychological problems, and drunk driving
  - 2/3 of 12th graders who have drank more than 10 times experienced at least one of these problems\(^3\)
- Students who start drinking while in high school are much more likely to become alcohol dependent\(^2\)

**What can parents do?**
- Parents can have a large influence on their high school student’s drinking habits.
  - Parents can:
    - Provide social support
    - Set clear expectations about alcohol use/abuse
    - Monitor and supervise activities
    - Encourage your child to make healthy decisions about drinking, and especially about drinking and driving
    - Communicate your personal beliefs alcohol abuse to your child.
    - If you discover your child has violated your rules about alcohol, avoid inconsistent or excessive punishment

**Tobacco**

**Why do students use tobacco?**
- To look cool or to impress someone
- To relieve stress
- Addiction

**Why is this issue important?**
- Each day in the United States, approximately 4,400 youths use tobacco for the first time.\(^3\)
  - An estimated 1/3 of these youths will die from a tobacco-related disease.
- Although tobacco use has decreased among high school students in recent years, usage rates remain high.
  - 22% report current use (used tobacco on more than one of the previous 30 days)\(^3\)
  - Also, 7% of high school students use smokeless tobacco (10% of all males).
  - Along with the many side-effects caused by smokeless tobacco, adolescents who use smokeless tobacco are more likely than nonusers to become cigarette smokers.\(^3\)

**What can parents do?**
- Talk directly to your kids about the dangers of using tobacco products.
- Let them know about family illnesses caused by tobacco abuse.
- If you use tobacco, of course your best option to prevent your kids from using it, is to quit yourself. However, not using it in their presence can also go a long way, and don’t leave it anywhere which they can get it.

**Marijuana**

**Why do students use marijuana?**
- It is the most widely used illicit drug in America
  - Of the 20 million current illicit drug users in this country, 14.6 million are using marijuana.\(^4\)
- Marijuana affects your brain and nervous system
  - Affects the nerve cells in the memory-forming parts of the brain\(^5\)
  - Can seriously affect your coordination and spatial relations which can make it very dangerous to operate a vehicle
  - In 2002, nearly 120,000 people were admitted to the emergency room suffering from marijuana-related problems\(^6\)
    - This is an increase of more than 139% since 1995.

**What can parents do?**
- Parents can prevent or significantly reduce the chances of their child’s use of marijuana by:\(^4\):
  - Setting clear rules and expectations
  - Staying active in their child’s life
  - Talking to kids about the dangers of using marijuana
  - Be a good listener and maintain open dialogue with your child
  - Get to know your child’s friends and their parents