

## Community Relations Message to Parents & Care Givers

Drugs and kids. It's a reality every parent and care giver must face head-on. You can't deny it. You can't ignore it. But you can raise drug-free children. As parents or other concerned care givers, you are your children's greatest resource. The Greene County Sheriff's Office knows this and has taken an active role in assisting you in this very important endeavor.

We know that responsible, concerned parents can make a difference. You are the solution. You have the greatest power to shape your children's attitudes, values, and behaviors. Regardless of your social, economic, or educational level, you as a parent play the single most important role in determining whether your children will be snared or saved. Your child does not have to be a statistic. Your family does not need to suffer the horrendous pain of losing a child to drugs, gang intimidation, violence, or death.

### **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

There are many signs and symptoms that go along with substance use and abuse. The following list describes some of the changes you may see take place. In and of themselves, the symptoms may not mean a thing. However, if you see several of them, consider it a warning flag and seek further help.

#### ***Physical symptoms***

- Acting intoxicated
- Bloodshot or red eyes, droopy eyelids
- Imprecise eye movement
- Avoiding eye contact
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times
- Abnormally pale complexion
- Change in speech patterns and vocabulary patterns
- Repressed physical development
- Sudden appetite, especially for sweets
- Unexplained weight loss or loss of appetite
- Neglect of personal appearance, grooming

#### ***Behavioral Problems***

- Unexplained periods of moodiness, depression, anxiety or irritability
- Strongly inappropriate overreaction to mild criticism or simple requests
- Decreased interaction and communication with others
- Preoccupation with self, less concern for the feelings of others
- Loss of interest in previously important things, such as hobbies or sports
- Loss of motivation and enthusiasm
- Lethargy, lack of energy and vitality
- Loss of ability to assume responsibility
- Need for instant gratification
- Changes in values, ideas and beliefs
- Change in friends, unwillingness to introduce friends to family
- Curfew violations
- Large sums of money
- Lack of money you know they had

#### ***School Changes***

- Decline in academic performance, drop in grades
- Reduced short term memory, concentration and attention span
- Loss of motivation, interest, participation in school activities
- Frequent tardiness or absenteeism

Less interest in participation in classes and meetings  
Sleeping in classes or meetings  
Untidy appearance, dress, personal hygiene  
Slow to respond, forgetful, apathetic  
Increased discipline, behavioral problems  
Change in peer group  
Disappearance of money or items of value

***Physical Evidence***

Odor of marijuana (like burnt rope) in room or on clothing  
Incense or room deodorizers  
Eye drops, mouthwash  
Marijuana cigarettes (rolled and twisted at both ends)  
Powders, seeds, leaves, plants, mushrooms  
Capsules or tablets  
Cigarette rolling papers  
Pipes, pipe filters, screens, strainers  
"Roach" clips (metal clips to hold the butt of the marijuana joint)  
"Bongs", water pipes (usually glass or plastic)  
Small spoons, straws, razor blades, mirrors (for use with cocaine)  
Stash cans (soft drink, beer, deodorant and other cans that unscrew)  
Unfamiliar small containers or locked boxes (film canisters)  
Plastic baggies or small glass vials (usually brown glass)  
Drug-related books, magazines, comics

**It is important to stress that the above are possible but not conclusive signs of drug use!  
Use your best judgment. Showing genuine concern and awareness is the greatest support  
you could give your children.**