



## ***Kitchen Conversations Prevent Youth Drug Use***



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Influence the Choice joins Seattle-King County Public Health in encouraging residents to start “kitchen table conversations” with family, friends and loved ones as a proven method of preventing drug misuse, addiction, and death. Last year in King County, over 1,000 people died from opioid overdoses. Some 60% of those deaths were related to intentional or accidental fentanyl use. In King County a teen dies of overdose about every two weeks. Fentanyl is a highly addictive drug that is flooding our region through numerous means.

***Influence the Choice*** tips on how to initiate, navigate and continue kitchen table conversations about substance abuse:

General Tips:

- Initiate a brief dialogue.
- Keep it short (so it doesn’t become a lecture).
- Listen and learn; let others know you are paying attention to their perspectives.



- You don't have to have all the answers.
- Keep the conversation age-appropriate.
- A bunch of little conversations are better than "the big conversation."
- It's never too early or too late to talk with your loved ones about drugs.

Some words to use as conversation starters:

- If you have observed worrisome behavior, say: "I've noticed that . . . ."
- Tying the conversation to something happening in the community, to something happening in the news or on social media, say "Have you heard about . . ."
- To keep the conversation more general, say "Have your friends ever talked about . . ." or "What do the kids at school say about . . ."
- If the person is heading for a party, event or just hanging out, say "Before you go . . ."
- And the all-purpose, "Did you know. . ."

Some information resources:

- King County Public Health Overdose Prevention Dashboard: <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/overdose-prevention/data.aspx>
- Issaquah School District Healthy Youth Survey 2021: <https://www.isd411.org/about-us/reports-and-surveys/hys>
- "Talk, They Hear You" campaign videos, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): <https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you>
- SAMHSA has a mobile app for talking with your kids about substance use, complete with conversation starters: [Mobile Application | SAMHSA](#)
- Drug Enforcement Agency "One Pill Can Kill" social media campaign: <https://www.dea.gov/dea-one-pill-can-kill-social-media-campaign>

End the conversation with expressions of expectation and caring. "***don't want you to use or abuse drugs*** because . . ."

- I love you.
- I want you to stay alive.
- I want you to be healthy.
- I don't want you to become dependent on alcohol or drugs.
- I want you to be happy, just the way you are.