

*The  
Parent's  
Guide to*

**DRUG**

**AND**

**ALCOHOL**

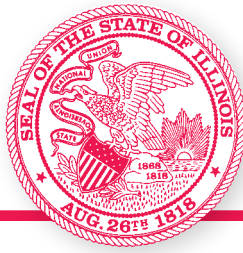
**ABUSE**



**AN INFORMATIONAL BROCHURE FROM**

**Senator Dan Rutherford**





One of the most serious threats to the health and well-being of children in America today is drug and alcohol use. Unfortunately, many parents find it difficult to speak to their children about the negative effects of abuse. As a result, they fail to establish or enforce the rules needed to keep their children safe from the harmful culture of alcohol and drugs.

In an age when children are experimenting with alcohol and drugs earlier and earlier, it has become vitally important to initiate this conversation at a young age. It may not be easy, but it is imperative. And, while it is better to address this sensitive topic when your child is young, it is never too late to talk about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

As a parent, you are in the best position to recognize the signs of drug and alcohol use in your child. It is necessary that parents are knowledgeable about the early symptoms of abuse, are able to respond to the problem and know where to access help for themselves and their child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Rutherford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" and "R".

**Dan Rutherford**  
State Senator



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# Prevention



Unfortunately, there are no guarantees that your child will not use drugs or alcohol—even the most stable and loving homes have been touched by these forms of abuse.

However, as a parent you can actively work to discourage your child from experimenting with drugs and alcohol. Some good suggestions include:

- **Personally avoiding the use or abuse of drugs and alcohol**
  - You are your child’s role model. Remember—actions speak louder than words.
- **Providing rules about not using drugs and alcohol**
  - Be crystal clear that drug and alcohol use is not tolerated, and spell out what will happen if these rules are broken. Be prepared to follow through!
- **Speaking regularly with your child about the dangers of drug and alcohol**
  - Don’t wait to have “the drug talk”—make this part of your daily conversation.
- **Spending time with your child and really listening to his or her questions and concerns**
  - Let your child know that you are there for him or her; and clear up any misinformation your child may have about drug and alcohol use.
- **Developing a trusting and positive relationship with your child**
  - You are your child’s biggest cheerleader—praise his or her efforts as well as successes.

- **Maintaining an open and honest dialogue with your child**
  - Encourage your child to communicate his or her questions and concerns about alcohol and drugs—resist the urge to lecture!
- **Discussing peer pressure, acceptance and the importance of individuality**
  - Real friends won't care if he or she does not use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs.
- **Encourage healthy, creative activities and well-intentioned acquaintances**
  - Hobbies, involvement in athletics and clubs, and other positive interests can provide your child with a constructive environment to thrive—the best way to stop a child from using drugs is to stop his or her friends from using them, too.
- **Developing a relationship with your child's friends and friends' parents**
  - When parents join together against drug use, they are much more effective than when they act alone.
- **Monitoring your child's whereabouts and supervising activities**
  - Know where your child is and what he or she is doing. If your child protests, remember you are a parent—not a friend.

Sources:

National Institute on Drug Abuse, January 29, 2008.

American Academy of Pediatrics

# Warning signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use



Far too often, substance abusers are often the last ones to recognize the signs of abuse, dependence and addiction. Frequently they try to downplay the problem and conceal symptoms even though they know they have a problem.

The key sign to look for is change. Significant changes in your child's physical appearance, personality, attitude or behavior can be indicators of drug and alcohol use.

## Physical Signs

- Loss of appetite, increase in appetite, changes in eating habits, unexplained weight loss or gain
- Slowed or staggering walk; poor physical coordination
- Inability to sleep, awake at unusual time, laziness, exhaustion
- Red, watery eyes; pupils larger or smaller than usual; blank stare
- Cold, sweaty palms; shaking hands
- Blackouts, flashbacks, delusions, paranoia
- Puffy face, blushing or paleness
- Smell of substance on breath, body or clothes
- Extreme hyperactivity and excessive talkativeness
- Runny nose; hacking cough
- Needle marks on lower arm, leg or bottom of feet
- Nausea, vomiting or excessive sweating
- Tremors or shakes of hands, feet or head
- Irregular heartbeat

## Behavioral Signs

- Angry outbursts, mood swings, irritability, manic behavior, or overall attitude change
- Talking incoherently or making inappropriate remarks

- Risky behavior, such as driving under the influence of drugs, starting a fight, or unprotected sex
- Secretive or suspicious behavior
- Deterioration of physical appearance and grooming
- Frequent absences from work or school, and a drop-off in quality of work or grades
- Disinterest in family and neglect of family responsibilities
- Stealing, frequent borrowing, or selling possessions
- Legal or frequent discipline problems

### **Social Symptoms**

- Abandoning or spending less time on activities such as hobbies, sports and socializing
- Inability to have fun or relax without doing drugs or drinking
- Association with known drug users
- Estrangement from friends and loved ones who don't use drugs or alcohol
- Talking about drugs and alcohol frequently, and encouraging others to use

Remember that while there are signs of drug and alcohol abuse, just because your child shows some symptoms commonly associated with this type of behavior it does not necessarily mean that he or she is using drugs or alcohol.

# Drug Information

## **MARIJUANA**

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*Marijuana is also commonly known as pot, grass, weed, herb, Mary Jane, hemp, skunkweed, or joints.*

Marijuana is the most common illegal drug in the United States, abused more than any other controlled substance.

It is created by grinding up leaves, stems, flowers, and seeds of the *Cannabis sativa* plant, and is typically brown, green, or grayish in color, and has an unmistakable sweet and sour odor. Marijuana is usually smoked, either in a cigarette (known as a joint or blunt) or in a pipe (known as a bong) and occasionally ingested.

Health risks of marijuana include cognitive problems with memory and learning, as well as difficulty with thinking. Health professionals have found that marijuana smoke contains 50 to 70 percent more carcinogens than regular tobacco smoke, which can lead to an accelerated heart rate, increased risk of pneumonia, coughing, breathing problems, increased risk of colds and infections, and an increased risk of cancer of the respiratory tract and lungs.

Although marijuana is not considered by health professionals to be physically addictive, it can be habit forming. Marijuana use can diminish energy and ambition, making users less likely to be successful in their lives and, like alcohol, marijuana use affects the judgment of a person and slows reflexes.

## **CLUB DRUGS**

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In the 1990s, with the increased popularity of raves and clubs among teenagers and college students, a new genre of drugs increased in popularity, including Ecstasy (MDMA), GHB, and Ketamine. Unfortunately, over the last several years the use of these drugs has spread far beyond nightclubs and raves.

### **ECSTASY**

*Ecstasy is also known as X, E, XTC, M, Roll, Adam and Bean*

Ecstasy typically takes pill or tablet form, usually with a design or logo stamped into it. The drug reportedly produces intensely pleasurable effects including enhanced self-confidence, energy, peacefulness, acceptance and empathy.

Some serious short-term health risks of ecstasy use include depression, anxiety, sleep problems, increased heart rate and blood pressure, brain damage, muscle breakdown, liver damage, kidney failure, heart failure, and psychological problems. The stimulant effects of the drug can also lead to dehydration, hyperthermia, and heart or kidney failure.

Over time, the repeated use of ecstasy has been found to damage the cells that produce serotonin, which has an important role in the regulation of mood, appetite, pain, learning and memory. Research suggests that ecstasy use can disrupt or interfere with memory.

### **GHB**

*Also known as G, liquid ecstasy, scoop, somatomax, Georgia Home Boy, Grievous Bodily Harm*

GHB can be produced as a clear liquid, white powder, tablet

or capsule, and is both colorless and odorless. Often it is made in home laboratories and is diluted in liquids and is virtually undetectable.

A depressant of the central nervous system, GHB is supposed to provide a calming effect. However, when combined with other drugs, nausea and difficulty breathing can result. Additionally, withdrawal symptoms can occur including insomnia, anxiety, tremors and sweating.

A serious problem with liquid GHB is that it is difficult to determine how strong the dose of the drug is. Overdoses have led to seizures, loss of consciousness, coma and death. Additionally, because of the sedative effects of the drug and the fact that it is odorless and tasteless, GHB has reportedly been used as a way to induce loss of consciousness, leading to reports of rape and assault.

## **ROHYPNOL**

*Also known as roofies, rib, roach, R2, rope, the forget pill*

Rohypnol comes in the form of a small white tablet that is odorless and tasteless when dissolved into a drink. It can also be taken as a pill or snorted into the nose. The drug creates a sleepy, relaxed, and drunk feeling that lasts several hours, and is often used to enhance a high or ease the experience of “coming down” from another drug.

Rohypnol can produce disinhibition and amnesia, and can cause blackouts, loss of memory, dizziness and disorientation, nausea, and difficulty moving and speaking. Because rohypnol can make users unaware of their surroundings, use of the drug increases the likelihood that users will be taken advantage of.

In the long term, rohypnol can produce physical and psychological dependence, and it is potentially fatal when mixed with alcohol or other drugs.

## **KETAMINE**

*Also known as K, Ket, vitamin K, special K, kit kat, keller, Kelly's day, cat valium, super acid, super c*

Ketamine usually comes in tablet form, and can be swallowed, snorted, injected, or sprinkled on tobacco or marijuana and smoked. Both odorless and tasteless, ketamine can cause dream-like states and hallucinations. The effects of the drug can last up to six hours, but it can be one or two days before the user feels normal.

Ketamine induces amnesia, and is sometimes given to unsuspecting victims to be used in the commission of sexual assaults. Use can lead to vomiting, convulsions, or even death. Ketamine is so powerful that it is possible to lose control of muscles even before one has finished injecting it into their body, and because it dulls pain people can injure themselves without knowing it.

Using ketamine can also lead to flashbacks, which occur when the drug's effects come back suddenly, even long after using the drug. Low-dose intoxication from ketamine results in impaired attention, learning ability, and memory. In high doses, ketamine can cause delirium, amnesia, impaired motor function, high blood pressure, depression, and potentially fatal respiratory problems.

## **INHALANTS**

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Most inhalants were never meant to be used as drugs but inhalants are just as dangerous as other types of drugs. Some people use these inhalants to get a quick “high” or feel like their mind has been altered. Many young people abuse inhalants because they are cheap and easier to obtain than other types of drugs.

There are three different categories of inhalants: **solvents**, **gases**, and **nitrites**.

- **Solvents** are art and office products like “White Out,” glue, and magic markers, as well as household or commercial products like paint thinners, glue, gasoline, and dry cleaning chemicals.
- **Gases** include butane and propane, in addition to gases found in aerosol cans. Medical gasses such as nitrous oxide, chloroform, and halothane are also commonly abused.
- **Nitrites** include cyclohexyl nitrate (available to the public), amyl nitrate (available by prescription), and butyl nitrate (an illegal substance).

Even though the “high” from inhalants only lasts a few minutes, people try to make it last longer by using the inhalant again and again; this can cause users to lose control and possibly lose consciousness.

Serious risks to users’ health include permanent hearing loss, damage to the nervous system, brain damage, depletion of blood oxygen, liver damage, kidney damage, heart failure, suffocation, and death. In addition, sniffing these inhalants can cause immediate heart failure and death within minutes, which is referred to as “sudden sniffing death.”

## **METHAMPHETAMINES**

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*Also known as meth, speed, crank, croak, crypto, crystal, chalk, glass, white cross, ice*

Methamphetamine is a dangerously powerful drug that can be swallowed, snorted, smoked, or injected with a needle. It is created in illegal laboratories from various chemicals—some incredibly harmful and toxic—and comes in powder form, either yellow or white in color.

Methamphetamine is extremely addictive; users are addicted almost immediately and develop an extremely high tolerance, eventually needing more and more of the drug to stay high. Users of methamphetamine sometimes go on binges that can last for several days to more than a week without sleeping.

Some immediate effects of methamphetamine include increased wakefulness and insomnia, decreased appetite, irritability/aggression, anxiety, nervousness, convulsions and heart attack.

Chronic use can lead to increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, breathing problems, extreme weight loss, brain damage similar to that caused by strokes or Alzheimer's disease, heart failure, coma, or death.

Typically, methamphetamine addicts have foul breath and rotting teeth, and can experience paranoia, hallucinations, and compulsive behavior (including delusions of parasites or insects crawling under the skin). Long-term use, in combination with high dosages, can bring about toxic psychosis, which is often presented as violent, unpredictable behavior.

## **HALLUCINOGENS**

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Hallucinogens affect the brain in a way that alters the user's perception. For instance, sights, sounds, feelings, and judgment of time become different and unrealistic. Hallucinogens can also cause changes with emotions, memory, and judgment.

### **LSD**

*Also known as acid, doses, trips, tabs, hits, sunshine, window pane, sugar cubes, microdot.*

LSD is typically found on pieces of thin paper which are sprayed with the drug and then ingested. LSD can also be found in liquid or gelatin form.

People who use LSD may experience changes in personality and mood, hallucinations, delusions, intense fear, confused senses, like "seeing sounds" and "hearing colors," dilated pupils, increased body temperature, sweating, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, dry mouth, and tremors.

Serious health risks include increased heart rate and blood pressure, as well as long lasting mental problems, like schizophrenia or depression. Use of LSD is especially problematic because the hallucinations can make people panic, occasionally driving them into dangerous situations.

LSD "flashbacks" are also very common, wherein the drug's effects return without warning. This can happen at any time, from a few days after using to up to a year later. Finally, users develop a tolerance to LSD and eventually need greater amounts of the drug to produce the same effect.

## **PCP**

*Also known as angel dust, wack, rocket fuel, supergrass, embalming fluid, killer weed*

PCP is a white crystalline powder that is normally smoked, snorted or eaten.

In low to moderate doses PCP can create effects similar to those associated with alcohol intoxication. Other effects can include shallow breathing, flushing, profuse sweating, numbness of the extremities and poor coordination.

PCP users can experience increased aggression, confusion and panic, as well as symptoms of schizophrenia, such as delusions, paranoia, disordered thinking, and garbled speech. Other effects include nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, drooling, loss of balance and dizziness. In high doses, PCP can cause seizures, coma and death, although more often death results from accidental injury or suicide.

While the drug is not physically addictive, the users can become mentally hooked on the drug and begin to crave it.

## **COCAINE AND CRACK**

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*Also known as snow, blow, Big C, flake, marching powder, nose candy, freebase, rock*

**Cocaine** is a white powder that is snorted through the nose, smoked, or injected with a needle. **Crack** is cocaine that has been processed until it looks like little chunks of crystal or ice, and it is usually smoked. Cocaine and crack are very powerful brain stimulants and are highly addictive.

Use of cocaine and crack can lead to nosebleeds and damage to the nose tissue, increased temperature, heart rate and blood pressure, cardiac arrest, seizures, and respiratory arrest.

Both of these drugs are extremely addictive, which makes them difficult to quit. Consistent use develops a tolerance, which means that eventually users will need more and more of the drug to obtain the same kind of high. A cocaine or crack high is extremely short, followed by a “crash” which leaves the user tired, irritable, and depressed.

## **HEROIN**

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*Also known as horse, dope, H, Big H, brown sugar, black tar, smack, skag, mud, Mexican brown, China white*

Heroin is a brown or white powder that is sometimes snorted or smoked. It can also be turned into a liquid and injected with a needle.

Heroin is one of the most physically addictive drugs, and breaking the addiction can be quite hard. Users develop a tolerance, and require more of the drug to obtain a high.

Effects of heroin include slowed and slurred speech, a slow gait, constricted pupils, droopy eyelids, impaired night vision, vomiting and constipation.

Chronic users face serious health risks including collapsed veins, heart infections, pneumonia, abscesses, cellulites, liver disease or death from overdose. In addition to the serious risks from using heroin, sharing needles can lead to infectious diseases like hepatitis and AIDS.

Heroin is physically addicting and quitting the habit can lead to severe withdrawal symptoms, including pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cold flashes, and an incredible desire to return to the use of the drug; going “cold turkey” can actually lead to death in long-term addicts who are in poor health.

## **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

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Prescription medication, when used appropriately, can greatly improve the quality of life for a person in need. However, prescription medications have become increasingly abused, primarily due to the fact that they are easier to obtain than illegal drugs.

### **OPIOIDS**

Some of the common opioids include morphine, codeine, “OxyContin”, “Darvon”, and Vicodin. Although these drugs are useful pain relievers they can have problematic effects when used incorrectly.

Serious health risks include breathing problems or death if used in large doses. Opioids may also interact negatively with other medications and are only safe to use with other drugs when supervised by a doctor.

As users develop tolerance, they eventually need more and more of the drug to obtain the same effect. Stopping the use of these drugs can lead to withdrawal, symptoms which include restlessness, muscle and bone pain, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, cold flashes with goose bumps, and involuntary leg movements.

### **RITALIN**

Ritalin is a medication for individuals (typically children) who have attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADD or ADHD). Ritalin is a pill that results in a calming effect on patients who take it as medication. However, drug abusers crush it up and snort the powder or inject the liquid. When abused, Ritalin acts as a stimulant (similar to methamphetamine or cocaine).

Serious health risks include changes in heart rate and blood pressure, digestive problems, malnutrition, muscle twitches and tremors, fevers, convulsions, and irregular heartbeat and breathing.

## **STEROIDS**

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*Also known as juice or rhoids.*

Anabolic steroids are powerful compounds that most closely resemble the male hormone testosterone and are found in tablet or liquid form. While steroids are used legally to treat certain kinds of anemia, it is most commonly athletes who illegally use these drugs to improve their physical performance.

Use of anabolic steroids produces increased lean muscle mass, strength, and ability to train longer and harder. Many of the short-term health hazards are reversible. Major effects of steroid use include liver tumors, jaundice, fluid retention, and high blood pressure.

Additional side effects for men include shrinking of the testicles, reduced sperm count, infertility, baldness, and development of breasts. Women may experience growth of facial hair, changes in/cessation of the menstrual cycle, deeper voice, and teens could see halted growth or acceleration in puberty. In addition, users may suffer from paranoid jealousy, extreme irritability, delusions, and impaired judgment stemming from feelings of invincibility.

## **ALCOHOL**

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Alcohol is the number one drug of choice for young people, and despite the serious health risks of abusing alcohol, teens are abusing it now more than ever. As teenagers struggle with their desire to “fit in,” peer pressure often leads to underage drinking and experimentation with alcohol.

Unfortunately, underage drinking can have serious repercussions on a young person’s life and health. Drinking at this age can interrupt key processes of brain development, and teens who drink are more likely to have a car crash, get into fights, have unprotected sex, and experience problems in school.

The effects of alcohol depend on a number of factors including size, weight, age and sex. Moderate consumption results in dizziness and talkativeness, and even in small doses it impairs judgment and inhibits motor skills. Heavy use can result in slurred speech, disturbed sleep, nausea and vomiting.

There are a number of long-term risks associated with alcohol consumption including liver damage, pancreatitis, certain cancers and brain shrinkage. Consuming large quantities of alcohol over a long period of time can lead to serious, permanent damage of vital organs.

## Sources for information



If you would like more information on substance abuse, or if you are seeking help for drug or alcohol abuse, please contact any of the following prevention and awareness groups.

### **NATIONAL**

#### **National Institute on Drug Abuse**

National Institutes of Health  
6001 Executive Boulevard, Room 5213  
Bethesda, MD 20892-9561  
301-443-1124 English  
240-221-4007 Español  
information@nida.nih.gov  
www.nida.nih.gov/NIDAHome.html

#### **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism**

5635 Fishers Lane, MSC 9304  
Bethesda, MD 20892-9304  
Communications/Public Info: 301-443-3860  
(niaaaweb-r@exchange.nih.gov)  
<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/>

#### **Partnership for a Drug-Free America**

405 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1601  
New York, New York 10174  
212-922-1560 • <http://www.drugfree.org/>

### **ILLINOIS**

#### **Illinois Department of Human Services Springfield Office**

100 South Grand Avenue East  
Springfield, Illinois 62762  
(217) 557-1601  
(217) 557-2134 TTY

**Chicago Office**

401 S. Clinton Street  
Chicago, IL 60607  
(800) 843-6154  
(312) 793-2354 TTY  
[www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us)

**Prevention First, Inc.**

2800 Montvale Drive  
Springfield, Illinois 62704  
Phone 217.793.7353  
Toll-free in Illinois 800.252.8951  
TDD 217.793.7355  
Business hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.  
[ask@prevention.org](mailto:ask@prevention.org)  
<http://www.prevention.org/>

**Illinois Drug Education Alliance**

2800 Montvale Drive  
Springfield, IL 62704  
Phone: (800) 252-8951  
[IDEAoffice@verizon.net](mailto:IDEAoffice@verizon.net)  
<http://www.bestofidea.com/>

**Illinois Teenage Institute  
Operation Snowball**

937 South Second Street  
Springfield, IL 62704  
Tel: 217.528.7335  
[iadda@iadda.org](mailto:iadda@iadda.org)  
<http://www.os-iti.org/#>

**Illinois D.A.R.E. Officers Association**

Clarendon Hills PD - IDOA President Rick Talerico  
448 Park Avenue Clarendon Hills, IL 60514  
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