

Caring For Your Child:

Mental Health Promotion and Well-Being Information for Parents and Caregivers

Age	Key Message	Taking Action
10-14	Substances can impact young people from “all walks of life.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take the time to find current and reliable information (see resources). • Increase your knowledge about the different reasons why people use substances. • Teach your child to critically analyze the facts about substances. • Learn how to recognize the signs of substance use. • Avoid judgment. Substance use can impact anyone.
	Young people need to feel heard and involved in conversations about substances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for natural opportunities to talk about substances. • Engage your child in open conversation. Stay curious, ask questions, and avoid lecturing. • Resist the urge to know everything. Explore the facts with your child. • Talk about risks, reasons, and alternatives for substance use.
	Building resiliency and coping skills helps to reduce reliance on substances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model healthy coping strategies in your home. • Encourage your child to make mistakes, and join them in the problem solving process. • Help build emotional intelligence and literacy by talking about emotions. • Give your child the message that you believe in them. • Encourage your child to participate in activities where they experience success, mastery and a sense of belonging.
	Connection equals protection. “Youth who were most highly connected to their families were more likely to delay alcohol or marijuana use” (McCreary Centre Society, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities to stay connected to your child (i.e., family dinners, weekly outings). • Encourage participation in positive activities with positive peers. • Foster connection to schools, teachers, clubs, team sports. • Support participation in culture, language traditions, and heritage.
	Realistic and consistent boundaries help young people feel safe and protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be on the same page as your partner/co-parent regarding how you approach substance use. Set rules and boundaries that you can follow through with consistently. • Expect to be challenged, and pick your battles wisely. • Be respectful and prepared to negotiate, but stay firm with expectations and consequences for substance use. • Monitor your child’s behaviour.

Resources

- Anxiety BC: anxietybc.com
- Cannabis Use and Youth - A Parent's Guide: <http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/workbook/cannabis-use-and-youth-a-parents-guide>
- Here to Help BC: heretohelp.bc.ca
- Kelty Mental Health: keltymentalhealth.ca
- Kids and Drugs - A Parent's Guide to Prevention: drugfreekidscanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/kids-enfants-enf-kid-eng.pdf
- Youth in BC: youthinbc.com

Cultural Awareness and Aboriginal Health

It is important to recognize and honour Aboriginal cultural differences in order to foster a sense of belonging, pride and well-being amongst Aboriginal children and youth. Aboriginal families can make connections to culture, language, and traditions, by linking with any of the following programs and services:

- **Westbank First Nation Community Services** 1900 Quail Lane, West Kelowna 250-768-0227
- **Ki'Low'Na Friendship Society** 442 Leon Avenue, Kelowna 250-763-4905
- **Metis Community Services Society of BC** 2949 Pandosy Street, Kelowna 250-868-0351
- **BC Aboriginal Child Care Society** <http://www.acc-society.bc.ca>

Foundry Kelowna, an integrated youth clinic (ages 12-24), is coming soon! For more information, visit: www.cmhkelowna.com/foundrykelowna

Concerned about
your child's mental
health? Contact Child
& Youth Mental
Health Services:

(250) 861-7301

For the full range of
community services,
supports, and events,
see KCR – Community
Resources:

www.kcr.ca