

Action to promote drug-free choices *(Taken from Hope UK's Parents' Action Plan)*

Be there for your children.

Always **be ready to listen** to your children, so they can talk about their thoughts, feelings and emotions. **Become informed**, so you can help them work through issues without reacting unhelpfully. Collect relevant leaflets (see Useful Links for helpful web links).

Do things together

Try to **do things as a family** that your children will enjoy. As far as possible, **keep your promises**. Plan things as a family and try to ensure they happen.

Take time to enjoy yourselves without alcohol

Do your children see you socialising, celebrating or relaxing an alcohol-free drink? Do you drink these as a family? **What do you role model for your children?**

Help your children develop decision-making skills

Find ways to help your children **develop the art of choosing** for themselves. Encourage them to learn from mistakes and help them develop the ability to know their own mind.

Build up self worth in your children

Encourage and help them develop their own interests and hobbies. Give them positive encouragement and praise. Try to avoid negative language.

Supervision is important

Establish rules and boundaries that are consistent (independent of your mood). It helps your children if you try to stick to routines and regular meals. Give children a restful start to the day and let them end the day in a positive way together with you. Give children peace and quiet for homework and help them when needed.

Don't forget you are not alone

You are in a partnership with other people such as school teachers and youth leaders. Ask about what is being taught in school. Find out if your children's, youth or faith group programmes cover alcohol and drugs.

What works best?

There are many different ways you can look at drug issues; not all will work for you and your children. Find out what works and use it. Don't give up or exaggerate the dangers. Scare tactics do not work in the long term.