

The Counselor's Clipboard

During the month of October, we will be celebrating “Red Ribbon Week”. During this nationally recognized week, as well as other times through out the year, we will be educating your child about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.

Many parents are unaware of the fact that they need to be discussing the issue of drugs and alcohol with children as young as Kindergarten. Often, we mistakenly think that if we do not talk about substance abuse, then our children will not be exposed to this dangerous element of our society. This is simply not the case. We no longer consider alcohol and drug abuse to be a ‘teen problem’, rather a problem that can begin as early as elementary school. In school, your children learn about the dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse. But it is just as important for their parent or care-giver to give them information as well! What type of information is appropriate to share with an elementary aged child? Even young children need to know that abuse of drugs and alcohol can lead to poor decision making, endangered health and safety, as well as the destruction of families and relationships. Clarifying your family’s rules about illegal and unhealthy drug choices, as well as acknowledging that you are available to talk and listen are vital. Not sure where to begin? Try the book Ten Talks Parents Must Have With Their Children About Drugs and Choices by Dominic Capello and Xenia Becher. There are also resources on the internet, like www.drugfree.org/parent and www.drugabuse.gov/pdf/prevention/RedBook.pdf. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about talking with your child about this important issue!

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