



Created for Parents by Parents

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# The Parent Corps

## Latest “Flavor Enhancements” Removed from Shelf

Article submitted by Kimberly High School (WI) Parent Corps Leader Ginny Wassink

Anheuser-Busch has agreed to stop production and shipment of “Spykes.”

The company created this flavored malt beverage in 2006. The product came in 1.7 oz. glass, or 2 oz. plastic, containers with a choice of four flavors: Spicy Lime, Spicy Mango, Hot Melons, and Hot Chocolate.

Spykes could be added to a beer or other favorite beverage. It could also be drunk as a chilled shooter. Spykes contained 12 percent alcohol, plus caffeine, ginseng, and guarana.

The print was so small on the small bottles that it was hard to read what Spykes contained, and the different color liquids made Spykes look like a nonalcoholic product, easily overlooked by parents, school administrators, and police.



Anheuser-Busch said Spykes’ target was young men and women ages 21 to 27, but the packaging and flavor choices seemed geared to teens.

Parents and other advocates of underage drinking prevention started a letter campaign to the U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, citing the product’s appeal to children. TTB administrator, John J. Manfreda, agreed that the product was out of compliance with TTB’s alcohol-labeling requirements. The company pulled the product. [1]

## Strawberry-Flavored Meth

Article submitted by Turner High School (KS) Parent Corps Leader, Cricket Sparks

Law enforcement officials have discovered a new kind of methamphetamine (meth) that they fear can be more attractive to young people — bright pink, strawberry-flavored meth, street-named “strawberry quick.”

Flavored meth is the new-

est form of this dangerous drug made from ephedrine and toxic chemicals such as lye and battery acid.

Officials are concerned that this version will be more attractive to young people and may surface in schools. Parents and teachers need to be aware that this ver-

sion of meth is making its way into our culture. [2]



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### Special points of interest:

- Alcohol is involved in nearly half of all traffic crashes.
- Although 16 to 24 year olds comprise only 15 percent of licensed drivers, they are involved in more than 25 percent of all fatal alcohol-related crashes.
- Nearly one-fourth of fatally injured teenage drivers were drinking prior to their crashes, with nearly two-thirds of these at legally intoxicated levels.

# Parents Need to Set Boundaries for Kids

Article submitted by Osborne High School (GA) Parent Corps Leader John Williams

In a survey released by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, almost 60 percent of parents admit they have a hard time talking to their children about difficult topics like drug use.

## The findings:

- More than half of parents surveyed believe their teens go to parties where alcohol or other drugs are available.
- Nearly half believe their teens have friends who use drugs. Despite those findings, few parents are doing anything about it.
- Fewer than one in ten parents say they are checking up on teens.
- Only two in ten are asking questions to find out what's going on when it

comes to alcohol or other drugs.

- Nearly eight in ten parents have difficulty getting their teens to respond and are not sure their teens listen.

Parents are afraid of sounding mean. Parents are trying to be buddies with their kids. They want their kids to think of them as a friend, says psychologist Dr. Nancy McGarrah. She follows by saying parents need to say no, set boundaries, and be a parent—even if your child gets upset, screams, and yells.

## Tips for parents:

Start at an early age talking to kids about drug use.

Try not to make it a lecture, and be sure to engage your child in dialogue. Ask your child what they would hope to gain from using alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

Share practical advice and role play situations with your child.

Let your child know drugs are not an accepted choice in your family.

Sometimes parents will have to make unpopular decisions.



Refusing to let their child go to a party where they suspect there will be alcohol or drugs will only help keep your child from getting into a situation they might not be ready to handle. This may be difficult in the short term, because the child will likely argue. However, in the long run, setting boundaries will help the teen learn to make good decisions. [3]

# Do You Know Internet Lingo?

Article submitted by Robinson Middle School (KS) Parent Corps Leader Michelle Durkes

As adults we are familiar with the acronyms of TGIF, RSVP, or even ASAP. Computers have transformed communications into a new dialect called: Internet lingo. Acronyms or character symbols called Emoticons (mixing symbols to express emotions or moods) enable computer users and especially teens to communicate with others in a few keystrokes. Many teens use these acronyms and symbols to warn their friends when parents might be present and even to discuss drug use in code that parents can't decipher.



Instant messages, blog entries, and text messages often look Greek to parents, but monitoring digital communication is an important skill that should not be overlooked. Here is a quick guide to help you translate what teens are saying online and in their cell phone text messages. Keep in mind that, as with street names for drugs, these symbols and acronyms are subject to frequent changes, particularly when those who use them suspect that others have figured out what they mean.

## Emoticons:

;)	Winking
:(	Crying
#-)	Wiped out
%*}	Inebriated
%\	Hangover
8-#	Death
:-d~	Heavy smoker
:-><	Puckered up to kiss
:/I	No smoking

## Lingo to warn of parental monitoring

POS	Parent Over Shoulder
PIR	Parent In Room
P911	Parent Alert
PAW	Parents Are Watching
PAL	Parents Are Listening
KPC	Keeping Parents Clueless

## Lingo of social/sexual nature:

WYCM	Will You Call Me?
ASL	Age/Sex/Location
MorF	Male or Female
KFY	Kiss For You
MOOS	Member(s) Of Opposite Sex

ADR	Address
LMIRL	Let's Meet In Real Life
HAK	Hugs and Kisses
ILU or ILY	I Love You
KOTL	Kiss On The Lips
SMIM	Send Me an Instant Message
SMEM	Send Me an E-Mail
WUF	Where Are You From?
WYRN	What's Your Real Name?

## Prescription drug lingo:

Pharming	Raiding medicine cabinets to trade and consume prescription drugs to get high
Robo-tripping	Drinking cough medicine to get high (comes from the brand name Robitussin)
Lean	Drinking prescription cough syrup mixed with painkillers and soda
O	OxyContin
Tweaking	High on amphetamines
Blue Boogers	Snorting Adderall or Ritalin [4]

## Bullying and Cyberbullying

Article submitted by Topsail Middle School (NC) Parent Corps Leader Debra Bell

In the U.S., bullying among children and teenagers has often been dismissed as a normal part of growing up. We pay little attention to the devastating effects of bullying, or to the connection between bullying and other forms of violence. Ninety percent of middle-school students have had their feelings hurt online. In recent years, students and adults have begun to make a commitment to stop bullying in their schools and communities.

**What is bullying?** Bullying includes a wide range of behaviors, but all involve a person or group repeatedly trying to harm someone who is weaker or more vulnerable. It can involve direct attacks (such as hitting, threatening or intimidating, maliciously teasing and taunting, name-calling, making sexual remarks and stealing or damaging belongings) or more subtle, indirect attacks (such as spreading

rumors or encouraging others to reject or exclude someone). Forty percent of middle-school students have had their passwords stolen or changed by a bully.



**What is cyberbullying?** Cyberbullying is willful and repeated harm inflicted through the medium of electronic text. Sometimes it is easier for electronic bullies because they can remain “virtually” anonymous. Seventy-five percent of middle-school students have visited a Website bashing another student.

**How does it affect teens?** Bullying can

make teenagers feel tense, anxious, and afraid. It can affect their concentration in school or make them avoid school altogether. It can lead students to carry weapons to school for protection, to seek violent revenge, or, in desperation, to even consider suicide. Research has shown that years later, long after the bullying has stopped, adults who were bullied as teens have higher levels of depression and poorer self-esteem than other adults.

**What can parents do?** Talk regularly with your children about their feelings, school friends, and relationships. Stay informed about school policies and procedures. Alert administrators if bullying is taking place. Work with your child’s school to encourage positive behavior that values differences and promotes sensitivity to others. Provide good role models for your children and stay involved. [5]

## Five Basic Tips for Parenting Teens

Article submitted by Suzanne Middle School (CA) Parent Corps Leader Susan Fan

**1. Love and Connect** - Watch for moments to express genuine affection, respect, and appreciation for your teen. Spend time just listening to your teen’s thoughts and feelings. Expect increased criticism and debate, and strengthen your skills for discussing disagreements.

**2. Monitor and Observe** - Keep track of your teen’s whereabouts. Involve yourself in school events and keep in touch with other adults, especially parents of your teen’s friends. Learn and watch for warning signs of poor physical or mental health, signs of abuse or neglect.

**3. Guide and Limit** - Maintain family rules with some nonnegotiable rules for safety and values, while leaving room to negotiate about rules concerning tasks and schedules. Communicate expectations that are high, but realistic. Use discipline as a tool for teaching, not revenge.

**4. Model and Consult** - Set a good example when it comes to risk taking, health habits, and emotional control. Express personal opinions about social, political, moral, and spiritual issues. Answer teens’ questions in ways that are truthful, while taking into account their

level of maturity. Help teens get information about education, employment, and lifestyle choices.

**5. Provide and Advocate** - Network within the community, schools, and social services for resources that can provide positive adult and peer relationships, guidance, training, and activities for your teen. Make informed decisions for schools and educational programs, taking into account such issues as safety, social climate, opportunities for peer relationships, and mentoring. [6]

## Preventing Inhalant Use

Article submitted by Menasha High School (WI) Parent Corps Leader Donna Daniels



Prevention is not difficult. As with alcohol and other drugs, prevention can save a life. First, know the facts. Inhalant abuse is deadly, but inhalants are not restricted by law. Be able to communicate the facts clearly. Talk to your youth. Treat them like they do have knowledge. They face issues today that we did not have to face when we were their age. Our young people are growing up in a completely different culture from the one we

lived in. Explain that inhalants are not drugs; they are deadly chemicals and poisons. It is important to be honest about inhalant use. Remember the facts will prevent curiosity and the temptation to experiment.

Inhalant prevention is a community task. Involve media by providing locally produced public-service announcements. Involve retailers by helping them set up policies that will prevent young people from purchasing anything containing chemicals that can be used as inhalants. Involve

schools by informing district boards at board meetings. Inform teachers at PTO/PTA meetings. Involve churches by informing pastors and youth pastors about inhalant abuse. Involve elected officials by requesting legislation to restrict purchases of inhalant chemicals by youth under age 18. Involve law enforcement by contacting liaison officers and soliciting their support in educating students about inhalant dangers. [7]





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NFIA also co-sponsors the Addiction Studies Program for Journalists and the Addiction Studies Program for the States with Wake Forest University School of Medicine. NFIA has been providing scientifically accurate information about alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug abuse and addiction since it was founded in 1977.

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# The 411 on Rx Drugs

Article submitted by Walton High School (GA) Parent Corps Leader Pat Giuliani

Prescription drugs when prescribed by a doctor and taken properly can have tremendous benefits. Unfortunately, some people become addicted to these prescribed drugs because they are taking them without medical permission. A new and disturbing teen trend increasing throughout the U.S. is the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs for an intentional high, similar to the high from using illegal street drugs.

**Depressants or downers**, also referred to as sedatives and tranquilizers, slow normal brain function. Depressants are prescribed to treat a variety of health conditions including anxiety and panic attacks, tension, severe stress reactions, and sleep disorders. Examples of depressants are alcohol, Valium, Xanax, and over-the-counter drugs.



The health risks of abusing depressants

includes loss of coordination, respiratory depression, dizziness due to lowered blood pressure, slurred speech, poor concentration, feelings of confusion, and in extreme cases, coma and possible death.

**Stimulants or uppers** are used to treat conditions such as asthma, respiratory problems, obesity, sleep disorders such as narcolepsy, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). These drugs can counteract sluggish feelings and produce euphoric effects. Commonly used stimulants: cocaine, methamphetamine, methylphenidate, and amphetamines.



Health risks related to stimulant abuse are: increased heart and respiratory rates, excessive sweating, vomiting, tremors, anxiety, hostility and aggression, and in severe

abuse suicidal/homicidal tendencies, convulsions, and cardiovascular collapse.

**Painkillers** are only legally available by prescription. These medications are usually prescribed after medical surgery to help regulate pain management or pain relief. OxyContin and Vicodin are most commonly abused by teenagers.



Other forms are codeine, fentanyl, morphine, opium, and hydrocodone bitartrate.

The health risks of abusing painkillers include lack of energy, inability to concentrate, nausea and vomiting, and apathy. Significant doses of painkillers can cause respiratory depression and death.

Prescription drug abuse treatment admissions increased 9 percent from 2004 to 2005.[8]

### The Parent Corps®

The Parent Corps® helps parents prevent high-risk behaviors among adolescents that can harm young people. It involves parents whose children attend the same school. They work to prevent situations where children will be exposed to alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs – in homes, at school, or at social events. Parents help each other set family rules, set consequences for breaking those rules, tell children what the rules and consequences are, and follow through when rules are broken. Parent Corps brings parents together to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children so that children can reach their full potential in life.