

Discussing topics like drugs, alcohol and depression can be difficult, even in the best of families.

AEIC has produced three CDs that allows you the opportunity to discuss these topics with your children without direct confrontation.



Project X

Our first CD "**Project X**", discusses these important issues at the beginning of each song with a one minute dialogue between teenagers and adults. Listening to this dialogue and original music written by teenagers in your area provides you with an opportunity for valuable discussion.



35 Days In May

Our second CD, "**Lauri**", is the music of the co founder and co president of our high school program, "Project X". Lauri Greene is a senior at South Lakes High School. We feel her comments about teens and what they face can stimulate dialogue for you and your teenager.



Lauri Greene

The third CD is "**Tales & Destinations**" by "**35 Days in May**". This is the music staff of AEIC, and is our way of conveying support to our youth to remain drug free and non-violent.

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Here are some suggestions to initiate this type of dialogue:

- Listen to the CD separately. In a casual setting, (at dinner or riding in the car) tell each other what you thought in general about the dialogue and music, or comments made in the insert of the CD.
- Listen to a song together when you or your child find a song that you like. Listening to music together is an experience that allows each participant to express their opinion without judgment. It can be the beginning to an open dialogue. When your child feels safe with their opinions, they will be more willing to discuss more sensitive topics.
- Play music you were listening to as a teenager, for your child. Let them know the fears and joys you were facing when you were young. How did you cope with drug and violence issues?
- To initiate conversation about an issue, we suggest asking how they felt about the responses given on the CD. What are their thoughts – do they agree or disagree?

Some other suggested questions:

What questions should have been asked?
What do they think the main issues teens are facing today?
How is that similar/different from what you (the adult) faced as a teen?

A natural stumbling block to open discussion is if your child thinks their answer will implicate themselves or their friends (for example in drug use). If this is the case, they may be hesitant to answer or be honest. With this situation, our suggestion is to focus on the main issue - to be able to talk about the problem and together find a solution. You may want to establish a “**no consequence zone**” during this open dialogue period. However, consequences should be imposed if drug use, lying, etc., is continued in the future.

The key is to keep communication open, while solutions are being explored. To expect that everything is going to be fine after one dialogue is unrealistic. Especially if the problem, (drugs, tobacco, lying etc.) has been going on for a while. This is where the parent needs to be persistent and might want to educate himself on learning how to communicate in a different, more creative and effective way. Remember that you want to solve the cause (why are they doing drugs? why are they depressed?), as well as dealing with the effect (experiencing depression etc.).

If you run up against “**I don’t know**,” in any attempt at discussion, suggest that your child write their thoughts down in a letter. You might want to start by writing a letter yourself and letting your child respond. In any case, DO NOT keep asking and pounding away at your child if they say “I don’t know”.

As many experts on communication will tell you, it’s looking at an issue together, which enables dialogue to take place. Defending a position is exactly that, defending – not open dialogue.

Our teens see the world very differently than when we were teens. It is a new world. Trying to see the world as they see it will allow new and creative ways to deal with issues they are facing.

We welcome your experiences that have allowed you to communicate with your teenager.

Please forward your ideas so we may include them in our brochure.