



A Parents' Guide to Teenagers & Substance Use warning signs

Physical Items/Materials

- Missing rolls of aluminum foil
- Aluminum foil with burn marks/trails
- Small baggies or jars with residual powder, wax, or plant material
- Pipes/bongs/rolling papers/blunts/rigs
- Loose brown tobacco ("blunt guts")
- Hollowed out books (hiding place)
- Empty pen/marker tubes
- Missing sink screens/finding sink screens unattached to sink spigot
- Lighters with black residue on bottom corners
- Sharp objects (knife, razor, x-acto) with residue
- Small wax paper squares with powder residue
- Blister packs for pills or capsules, empty capsules
- Extra (unexplained) cash or missing money/credit cards/checks
- Missing jewelry/other expensive items
- "Evidence" on phone/social media – texts/pictures
- Butane torch
- Bent and/or burnt spoons
- Syringe
- Random items used as "tie-offs" (cords, belts, etc.)
- Vape pens (can be used for smoking cannabis oil)
- Bedroom/living environment/car is either very messy or very clean (unusually)
- Missing alcohol or watered-down bottles
- Missing prescribed medication

Appearance or Behavior*

*Out of the ordinary, keeping in mind there may be mental health symptoms as well.

- Reddish or florescent tint to whites of eyes
- Dilated or restricted/pinned pupils
- Unusually fast or slow speech
- Appears very tired/fatigued/nodding off
- Routine self-care is being ignored or is suffering
- Weight loss
- Bloating
- Changes to skin appearance (coloring, acne)
- Sores on face/skin
- Always asking for money
- Erratic behavior
- Secretive behavior, isolating
- Lying
- Moodiness
- Anger outbursts that seem irrational
- Highly emotional/random and/or frequent bouts of crying/sadness
- Manic-like behavior/not making sense
- Slurred speech
- Unusual sleep patterns (too little, too much, or scattered)
- Use of "code" words
- Discontinued normal activities, change in friends
- Difficulty in school/at work
- Superficially "overly" accommodating/obedient