

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF DRUG ABUSE

PHYSICAL SIGNS

The following may be signs of drug use. However, they can also be signs of some other illness, or poor general health.

- *Reddened or watery eyes
- *Dilated or pin-point eye pupils
- *Sudden loss of weight
- *Occasional memory loss
- *Slurred and slow speech
- *Lack of energy
- *Disturbed sleep patterns
- *Chronic coughing
- *Poor coordination-staggering or stumbling movements
- *Loss of appetite but a craving for sweets, called the "munchies"

BEHAVIOR SIGNS

The following signs are not proof of drug abuse but they may be indicators. Some of these signs can be simply a part of growing up.

- *Loss of enthusiasm and involvement
- *Withdrawal from hobbies and sports
- *Reluctance to introduce new friends
- *Staying away from home and/or school for unexplained periods
- *Irritability and over-reaction to criticism
- *Loss of interest and deterioration in quality of school work
- *Unusual request for money
- *Sudden changes in mood or behavior
- *Devious and manipulative behavior
- *Lack of pride in personal appearance
- *Frequent unexplained phone calls
- *Loss of concentration

OBVIOUS SIGNS

- *Cigarette rolling papers
- *Small spoons
- *Capsules
- *Bottles and beer cans
- *Unusual odors

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT DRUG USE

- *Don't panic or over-react
- *Try to find out all you can without showing too much anxiety
- *Establish the facts and stick to them
- *Discuss the facts with your son or daughter
- *Don't moralise or preach
- *Support your son or daughter by showing understanding or concern
- *Contact I.A.R.C.

IF DRUG USE IS CONFIRMED

- *Identify positive ways of correcting the situation
- *Make them responsible for their own drug use
- *Do not bale them out of trouble with the law
- *Do not give financial help
- *Do not let the behavior of the drug abuser affect other family members
- *Make them keep reasonable rules of living in the house.

IF YOU NEED HELP

There are no firm rules to be followed as each case depends on the circumstances. Some situations may be handled without assistance. However, help should be sought if you are unable to see clearly what course of action to take.

HELP IS AVAILABLE FROM VARIOUS SOURCES INCLUDING:

- *I.A.R.C.
- *Genesee County Health Department
- *Your family doctor

I.A.R.C. (810)235-9555