

Cub Scout Pack 27 March Pack Meeting Substances, Rules and Choice

I –Introduction-A. The Boy Scouts of America is one of the nations largest and most prominent values-based youth development organizations. BSA provides a program for young people that builds character, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and develops personal fitness-ultimately leading to a more conscientious, responsible and productive society.

B. Values-based: Values are the ideals, customs, or institutions(habits) of a society toward which people of the group have an affective regard.

A value implies intrinsic excellence or desirability

All the things in the scout law are values: Positive things that are good for their own sake-we all agree that they are beneficial for everyone

II-Definition-A.The Boy Scouts of America prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances at encampments of activities on property owned and/or operated by the BSA, or at any activity involving participation of youth members.

Adult leaders should support the attitude that young adults are better off without tobacco and may not allow the use of tobacco products at any BSA activity involving youth participants.

B. Drug and Alcohol Abuse –

What are drugs? Marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine, LSD, Heroin and prescription medication-these are substances that are considered controlled-either by a doctors prescription and very carefully monitored –like some of the medications used to treat certain problems, or for most of these listed not allowed to be used at all.

The definition of drug abuse includes more than the mere use of a substance it includes inability to simple stop- using it even when the use results in problems. Most often any use of such substances does and should cause concern.

C. Why is this all of concern?

- 1.In general there is no adaptive /functional use of such substances.
- 2.People generally get into trouble when they use these substances for a variety of reasons instead of doing something else.
- 3.Substances are often used to escape from thinking about or dealing with something.
4. Use or abuse of Alcohol or substances generally occurs when there is stress or difficulties and the individuals lack of skills or know-how to solve the dilemma.

D. Why are we concerned about the use of alcohol and drugs?

- 1.Use of these things does not solve the problem, leaving problems unsolved
- 2.Abuse of substances frequently leaves individuals intoxicated or with impaired judgement-leading to dangerous situation as and accidents
- 3.Use of substances keeps people from learning the skills to address the problems as well as causing physical damage . And most often and concerning is it leads to emotional distress, for the abuser, their family and frequently more wide reaching.

E. The GOOD NEWS-The Scouting programs are road maps to help youth develop necessary understanding and skills to be able to identify and solve their problems, the support and structure to achieve necessary milestones in abilities, self understanding and relational skills to become valued and contributing members to their pack, their troop and the community and the world at large. Thus avoiding the poor direction offered by substances.

III Risk factors:-Substance and Alcohol use has been studied extensively.

- A. Family history of substance use. There seems to be a genetic vulnerability to use/abuse of substances. The details are far from clear but some people seem to have a vulnerability. From my reading of the literature it seems that for individuals that have a relatively high tolerance for the intoxicating effects of alcohol are more likely to develop trouble with the use of alcohol.
- B. Children who have other behavioral problems, depression, self-esteem problems or who feel like they do not fit into the mainstream. –This again is often an example of impaired problem solving strategies. –This again not uncommonly runs in families, where weak skills can be the product of difficulties with information processing that might go unrecognized

Tobacco-nearly 3million teenagers smoke.

Approximately 3000 teens start smoking every day. 1/3 of them will die prematurely of smoking related disease-according to the American Cancer Society.

We know that high school students who smoke cigarettes are more likely to use other substances. In addition they are also more likely to take risks such as ignoring seat belts, getting into physical fights, carrying weapons and having sex at an earlier age.

So there is a pattern for individuals of following the rules or not.

IV Prevention: Get information, know the facts, be aware.

1. The average age at 1st Marijuana use is 14, and it is not uncommon to find Alcohol use begin as early as age 12. Though the most common time for cigarette smoking to begin is ages 15-19, a significant percentage of 1st smoking occurs as young as age 10.
2. Tobacco is often considered a “Gateway drug”
Longterm studies of HS students and their patterns of drug use show that very few young people use other illegal drugs without 1st trying marijuana.
3. Be a good role model-kids follow what you do more than just what you say.
4. Take a stand, educate your kids and provide clear expectations and follow up, know what your kids are doing and who they are doing it with.
5. Talk to your kids, get to know their concerns and struggles and seek help when necessary.

VTreatment-Pay attention, stay in touch with your kids and notice any red flags.

A. Red Flags:

1. Physical-fatigue, repeated health complaints, red and glazed eyes, and a lasting cough
2. Emotional-personality change, sudden mood changes, irritability, irresponsible behavior, low self-esteem, poor judgment, depression, and a general lack of interest
3. Family-starting arguments, breaking rules, or withdrawing from the family
4. School-decreased interest, negative attitude, drop in grades, many absences, truancy, and discipline problems
5. Social problems-new friends who are less interested in standard home and school activities, problems with the law, changes in conventional style of dress and music.

VI other

- A. Simplify-The bottom line of all the research that has addressed anything related to emotions and behavior is that the most important thing for humans is loving relationships.
- B. Allocate time for you family to be together and enjoy each other. This also entails finding some individual time to focus on your relationship with each child. Can be as simple as regular 10min contact , or a weekly activity.
- C. Focus on the positive-Accept what is, focus on the good , forgive all the rest.
- D. It is important for children to experience themselves as a valued part of the group; family cub scout pack, community , nation. If they feel like a valued part of the group they will not want to disappoint the others in the group by breaking the rules.
- E. Age appropriate responsibilities are essential-The scouting program is one of the best youth development programs around to do just that.

Fatalities, accidental and intentional, that are associated with drug and Alcohol use in the adolescent population represent one of the leading causes of preventable death for the 15-24yo population.

Alcohol and drug use in the adolescent population carries a higher risk for school underachievement, delinquency, teenage pregnancy and depression.

Inadvertant passive drug exposure in infants and toddlers has resulted in multiple medical complications including respiratory illness, seizures, altered mental status and death

It has been demonstrated that behavioral, emotional, and environmental factors tht place children at risk for the development of substance abuse may be remediated through prevention and intervention programs that use research-based , comprehensive, culturally relevant, social resistance skills training and normative education in an active school-based learning format.

Children at the greatest risk of engaging in substance abuse or delinquent acts in adolescence are those who exhibit oppositional defiant disorder(ODD) and conduct disorder at a young age

The risk of later problems is further increased if in addition to the 1. early development of conduct problems, the child has any of the following risk factors.:

- 2.The child associates with deviant peers
- 3.The child's parents are harsh and inconsistent in their discipline and have difficulty monitoring their child's activities
- 4.The child has not bonded well at school and is experiencing academic failure.

These are all good examples of things that can occur when a child has regulation difficulties that have not been appreciated and adequately addressed leading to inappropriate expectations of that child.