



# WARNING SIGNS OF ADOLESCENT CHEMICAL USE

## Preoccupation with Chemicals

- Thoughts, words, conversations around chemicals
- Drawing, doodling, writing about chemicals - notebooks, school materials- pot leaves, alcohol, bottle names

## Lying about Chemical Use

- Saying "I'm holding it for a friend, it's not mine."
- Minimizing "Joe is worse than me! I only do it once in a while."
- Denial about magnitude of use ...consequences, frequency, amount of use

## Attempts to quit or control use

- Failed attempts, returns to using
- Use only on the weekends or after school

## Effects on physical health

- Poor hygiene or change in hygiene
- Chronic cough or weakened immune system
- Poor or disrupted sleep patterns
- Weight gain or loss
- Effects on lung capacity - unable to run or be as active in sports/activity

## Effects on social life

- Change in peer group
- Will not bring friends home to meet parents
- Frequent sleep-overs, not coming home

## Legal effects

- Criminal activity - theft
- Possession of drug paraphernalia - lighters, pipes, papers
- Runaway, curfew charges

## School

- Change in attitude towards school – "I don't care" attitude
- Truancy or attendance problems
- Disciplinary problems
- Chemical violations at school
- Decreased academic

## achievement Effects on mental health

- Mood swings - high highs and low lows
- Memory problems - especially short term memory
- Depression, anxiety symptoms
- Problems with attention, focus and concentration
- Increase irritability

## Effects on family

- Loss of trust
- Withdraws from family, isolates when at home
- Never home
- Disrespectful
- History of family addiction or chemical use issues

## Effects on moral/spiritual self

- Change in thoughts/beliefs/values
- Loss of self/identity- identity is associated with using chemicals
- Loss of spirit/energy

5125 County Road 101, Suite 300, Minnetonka, MN 55345

952-932-7277

relatemn.org