

START TALKING! BUILDING A DRUG-FREE FUTURE ***Ohio's Youth Drug Abuse Prevention Initiative***

Who should lead the Start Talking Sports Camp discussion?

- An older athlete who will be working with kids throughout the camp.
- A college “celebrity athlete” that the kids will recognize and look up to.
- A camp coach who has a great rapport with kids.
- Be sure that whoever leads the Start Talking discussion is someone who has a commitment to being drug-free and having a healthy lifestyle. That commitment may come from wanting to have a healthy body and mind to play the game, it may come from personal or religious values that guide the choices the person makes, it may come from having personal experience with a friend or family member who struggled with addiction. In any case, the commitment should be strong and lasting. Remember, you may be the only person who can communicate this important message to these kids.

Talking Points for Camp Leaders

Introduction

- **Explain what you are going to do and why it is important.**
 - You are here to improve your skills and learn how to be better at (talk about your sport)
 - Today, I want to take some time to encourage you to make good healthy choices and use your leadership status to set a positive example for all your peers.
 - Using drugs and alcohol is an issue that almost everyone will face at one time or another – have a plan. I’m here to help you understand the “play book” about both staying safe yourself and making sure your team mates are healthy and able to play because without a healthy body and brain, you lose not only the game, but lots of things that life has to offer! My goal today is to support you in making good decisions about not doing drugs or using alcohol and to be an inspiring leader for your peers.

Engagement

- **Facilitate a conversation.**
 - What does the drug problem look like in your school/community?
 - Do you have friends that are using or abusing drugs?
 - Have you been offered drugs?
 - What are good ways to refuse alcohol and drugs if offered to you?

Learn

- **Here are some facts:**
 - 1 in 5 teens abuse prescription medications not prescribed to them.
 - Drug overdoses have now surpassed car crashes as the leading cause of accidental deaths in the U.S.

- Annually, 2,500 Ohioans ages 12 to 20 are admitted for alcohol treatment.
- The use of opiate pills and heroin is on the rise:
 1. In 2010, troopers seized 28,000 opiate pills and nearly 18 pounds of heroin.
 2. In 2013, that number rose to more than 53,000 opiate pills and 92 pounds of heroin.
- **We are not *just talking about illegal drugs but legal prescription drugs.*** Even though prescription drugs are legal and are prescribed by doctors, when they are not taken as prescribed or by the person for whom they are prescribed, people are putting themselves at great risk.
 - *They can have a very similar chemical structure as street drugs* so when abused they can seriously harm one's health and/or become addictive.
 - Some of these prescription drugs and heroin are so addictive that it only takes a few times for one to become addicted.
 - Often when the pill supply runs out or becomes too expensive, users turn to the next closest thing – heroin. Heroin is a dangerous drug that can quickly overtake one's life creating devastating consequences.

Consequences

- **Today's decisions can impact your future.**
When I look around this room, I see so many career possibilities such as law enforcement officers, doctors, lawyers, scientists, architects, and teachers! It is important to think about how your decisions will impact the rest of your life. Using drugs today can end tomorrow's plans.
- **Immediate consequences** such as:
 - Your eligibility for playing during the current season and future seasons
 - Loss of prom or graduation privileges
 - Loss of driving privileges
 - Drop in grades – not being able to get into college of your choice
 - Other?

Leadership Commitment

- Believe it or not, you are a leader that your peers look up to
- **The truth is – 73% of all youth are NOT using any drugs at all**
- **Be a part of the MAJORITY!**
- We are asking you to "Do the "hard right"-- not the "easy wrong"
- When you see peers making poor choices, you need to speak up as you truly hold the power to influence your friends and peers to make safe decisions
- Your commitment to keeping yourself and others safe will contribute to a Safer Ohio
- **Make the commitment to be a leader in your school and take this pledge to set an example:**
 - I will promote and engaged in healthy life choices free of all types of substances
 - I will only use prescription medications that are prescribed to me and the quantities and dosages determined by my doctor
 - I will be the only person to use medications prescribed to me
 - I will promptly and properly dispose of any prescription medications that I no longer need
 - I will support my friends is a drug free life style

Take-away / Get involved

- Using drugs and alcohol are huge obstacles to achieving your dreams and successes. Get involved in youth programs that promote drug-free lifestyles.
- Encourage kids to take out their cell phones and go to Facebook to like the Start Talking! page: <https://www.facebook.com/StartTalkingOhio> or type Start Talking in the Facebook search box.
- Visit the Start Talking web site:

<http://StartTalking.Ohio.Gov>

After the Talk:

Post a comment on the Start Talking Facebook about where your talk was held, how many people were present, and the very best thing that happened at the event. Who knows? You may get a Start Talking T-Shirt for your efforts but the real "win" is helping kids you can influence.