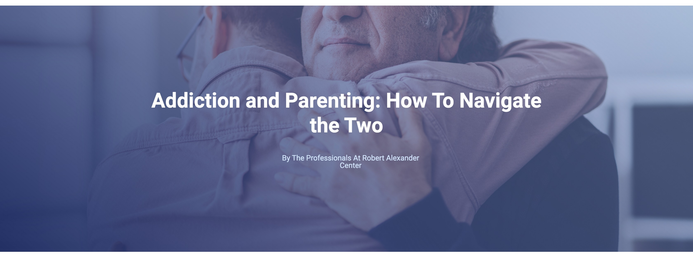

# Addiction and Parenting: How To Navigate the Two

By The Professionals At Robert Alexander Center

Watching your child struggle with an addiction may be one of the most challenging things a parent can experience, especially if you're not sure what is causing the problem.

If you are worried that your child may be struggling with drug use or another mental health concern that is leading to unsafe medication or drug use, contact the Robert Alexander Center today. Our comprehensive treatment plans are designed to support individuals through rehabilitation and mental health treatment.

## Signs Your Child May Be Battling an Addiction

As parents, you may be getting the feeling that something is wrong, but you're not sure what.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, there may be several signs to keep an eye out for that could indicate an addiction problem.

- **Changes in behavior with no clear reasoning**
- **Withdrawing from family/friends/favored activities**
- **Frequently tired or depressed**
- **Aggressive attitude or behavior that wasn't previously present**
- **Changes in peer group**
- **Carelessness with grooming**
- **A decline in academic performance/attendance**
- **Loss of interest in favorite activities**
- **Changes in eating or sleeping habits**
- **Deteriorating relationships with friends and family**

If you suspect something, say something. Many times, parents will downplay their child's drug use or try to pass it off as teenage hormones. But 10% of all alcohol consumed yearly is by people aged 12-20. And by the end of high school statistics show that over half have tried marijuana and 6/10 have tried alcohol.

## Tips on How To Navigate Addiction and Parenting

Addiction and parenting are individually challenging things, but together it can seem almost impossible. There are several tips and suggestions for how to navigate addiction and parenting that can helpful for just starting out.

Communicate with your teen about substance abuse – Talk with your child about drug abuse. While this is a challenging conversation, but talking with them about it will open up opportunities for sharing about experimentation or use you may not have been aware of.

When you talk with your teen consider including the following: Make a plan, talk about the facts and statistics of drug use, listen to and answer their concerns and questions, set expectations and boundaries, and recognize roadblocks. By being open with your child about substance abuse, they can become aware of the impact it has on the lives of individuals around them.

Finally, to ensure your child's continued safety, there are some actions you can take to monitor their behavior.

- **Ask questions: Who, what, when, where, why, and how questions are all applicable for your teen going out or even staying in alone or with friends.**
- **Make your position about drugs and alcohol clear. Explicitly tell them your expectations, don't just assume your child knows what they are.**
- **Make your house rules clear and your teen aware of them. It can even help to have them posted in a central location to act as a reminder.**
- **Monitor internet/phone use**

The most challenging, yet supportive thing you can do when talking to your teen about drug and alcohol use or abuse is to listen and remain non-judgmental. When children feel that they will be listened to and not judged they are more open. Maintaining non-critical communication might even get them the help they need sooner.

## How To Get Your Loved One Help With an Addiction Today

At Robert Alexander Center, we work with individuals and families when it comes to addiction because we know that drug use doesn't just impact the user. With individual counseling and group family therapy sessions, individuals can work to rebuild and strengthen the bonds that connect them.

Through treatment at the Robert Alexander Center, individuals who are struggling with addiction work through individualized addiction treatment plans designed to meet their specific addiction needs. While individuals are here, they can work with their counselor to determine the root cause of their addiction and learn positive and safe coping skills.

Get expert treatment for lasting recovery today at the Robert Alexander Center in Kentucky.

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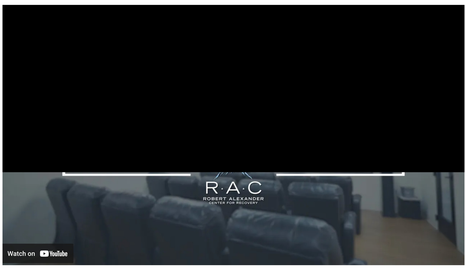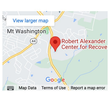
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