

Keeping Your Family Safe and Happy

Bonding, boundaries, and monitoring help keep kids safe and healthy



Below are bonding, boundaries, and monitoring strategies that help protect kids from alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and risky behavior. Put an “X” by the ones you already do; circle the ones you’d like to work on. Make a plan and start out small. Add new ones as the old ones become a habit.

BONDING: Creating Warm, Loving Relationships

- We tell our children we love them and make a point to look for and compliment the good in each family member. We avoid harsh criticism.
- We spend 10-15 minutes of one-on-one “My Time” with each child almost every day.
- We eat a meal together as a family at least three times a week, and make our time together pleasant.
- We hold a weekly family meeting.
- We spend time together as a family laughing and doing fun things.
- We talk often to our children about their dreams and goals, and ask how we can be supportive.
- We have positive family customs and traditions.
- We try to go to school activities such as games and performances as a family.

BOUNDARIES: Setting Clear, Firm Rules

- We have clear, firm family rules that are fair and consistently enforced.
- We talk about our rules on no alcohol, tobacco, or drug use; if alcohol or drugs show up at a party, kids are to call us and come home.
- We encourage and support school work; and we have set times for kids to do homework.
- We divide household chores among family members.
- We have rules (curfew) for each kid about what time to be home.
- We encourage our kids to participate in activities that promote a positive sense of self.
- We help our children develop skills in goal-setting, communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution.

MONITORING: Knowing where your kids are, who they are with, and what they are doing

- We find out where our children are going, who they’ll be with, what they’ll be doing, and when they’ll be home before they leave.
- We get to know our kids’ friends’ parents and share our rules about no alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.
- We see that our kids stay in an alcohol- and drug-free social environment.
- We make sure our children don’t have access to our alcohol, tobacco, or prescription drugs.
- We promote fun, positive alternative activities to teen alcohol and drug use.