

Starting the Conversation About Not Smoking ...

Sometimes the most difficult part of any discussion about risky behaviors with your teen is deciding how to bring it up. Here are a few ideas to help you get started:

- Seeing a television public service announcement about not smoking provides an opportunity to talk about challenges your child may be facing, such as how to say no when a friend offers a cigarette.
- Noticing someone smoking provides an opportunity to express your views about not smoking and to ask your teen what he or she thinks.
- Reading together about statistics on youth smoking or drunk driving accidents can help you start talking about risky behaviors and their consequences.
- Driving by a billboard that highlights the dangers of smoking can lead to a discussion about the health risks associated with smoking cigarettes.
- Using news of reported risky behavior by a celebrity can help start a discussion about taking a stand and setting limits.
- Asking your teen if any of his or her friends smoke presents an opportunity to ask your teen's feelings about smoking and to let him or her know that you disapprove of it.

You may also want to be prepared for those "unexpected" times your teen wants to talk. It's important to be ready when they reach out.

For more useful tips on this topic visit <http://www2.pmus.com>