

Welcome

Parents **Helping** Parents

Top Ten Tools
for
Top Teen Parents

From:

Edmond, OK _____

To:

_____ School

Edmond, OK _____

Date: _____

Dear School Administration, Teachers, and Counselors,

In appreciation of your efforts serving our children, I am sending this letter as a pledge to be receptive to calls from you regarding my child, _____, and to be open to working with you in determining how to best respond to any situation. The goal is for my child to be best served for a positive future by responding as needed based on the actions and decisions my child is making now.

The challenges faced by our children, our schools, our families, and our communities require us to work together to truly impact our youth positively. I recognize that 95% of all children drink before graduating high school, and 53% use an illegal drug. It is normal and probable that my child will make bad decisions at some time, and I want to commit myself as a parent to acknowledging this in an effort to be ready to respond appropriately.

Please call me to talk any time – I pledge to be receptive, open, and pleasant, and to respond positively to your willingness to call with appropriate follow-through for my child.

Sincerely,

From:

Edmond, OK _____

To:

Edmond, OK _____

Date: _____

Dear Friend, Neighbor, and Concerned Adult,

In recognition of the challenges we all face raising children, and in understanding the valuable contribution you make to my family, I am sending this letter as a pledge to be receptive to calls from you regarding my child, _____, and to be open to working with you in determining how to best respond to any situation. The goal is for my child to be best served for a positive future by responding as needed based on the actions and decisions my child is making now.

The challenges faced by our children, our schools, our families, and our communities require us to work together to truly impact our youth positively. I recognize that 95% of all children drink before graduating high school, and 53% use an illegal drug. It is normal and probable that my child will make bad decisions at some time, and I want to commit myself as a parent to acknowledging this in an effort to be ready to respond appropriately.

Please call me to talk any time – I pledge to be receptive, open, and pleasant, and to respond positively to your willingness to call with appropriate follow-through for my child.

Sincerely,

Family Contract

The goal of this family contract is to create an environment wherein all family members develop positive relationships, accept responsibility for their actions, and look forward to a bright future. All family members agree to respect each other and hereby agree to act on that respect by following these family policies. All family members hereby agree to be honest in word and action.

1. All family members agree to be courteous and respectful when talking to others.
2. Each family member agrees to clean up after themselves in the kitchen, in common areas, and in shared bedrooms.
3. Each family member agrees to follow household rules.
4. Participation in social activities at home, school, or with friends is a privilege. All family members agree that children obtaining permission for activities, knowing others schedules, and planning family activities contribute to a smoother and happier home. Curfew is set by law in the community. Additional curfew restrictions may be imposed by the parents/adults as appropriate based on age and earned trust.
5. All family members recognize that the parents/adults are ultimately responsible for overseeing the children. All family members agree that parents/adults taking a positive, pro-active interest in the friends and activities of the children contributes to a healthier lifestyle for everyone.
6. Regular attendance at school is expected in all classes. All assignments will be completed and submitted on time. If there is any indication from test scores, grades, or teachers that there is a need for tutoring, it will be requested and accommodated immediately. Grades are an indicator of effort. Consistent effort is expected.
7. Each child may earn extra spending money through activities or a job approved by a parent/adult. Each child is **encouraged** to save twenty percent of their earnings, donate ten percent to charities, and plan their spending of the remaining seventy percent. Anyone wanting a car is expected to pay for the vehicle, including insurance, gas, and repairs. A vehicle may not be purchased until at least the full purchase price plus six months of insurance have been saved. Each child sixteen or older will be required to maintain part-time employment. Employment may not interfere with school or household obligations.
8. **Alcohol is never allowed for anyone under the age of 21, per state law. Cigarettes are never allowed for anyone under the age of 18 per state law. Drugs (illegal and/or misuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs) are not allowed for anyone at any time per state law.**

Consequences: Possible consequences include but may not be limited to the following. Duration of application of a consequence will be negotiated. Parents/guardians hereby acknowledge that failure to enforce consequences will impair their moral authority.

- A sincere apology for the language or behavior.
- Assignment of a special project or chore to be completed within one week unless otherwise arranged.
- Loss of television and stereo privileges.
- Loss of privilege to participate in an activity.
- Loss of social and telephone privileges.
- Loss of social, telephone, and any car privileges.
- Curfew time will be decreased.
- Loss of social and telephone privileges plus random drug testing as deemed appropriate by a parent/adult.
- Participation in an assessment and following of recommendations for counseling, treatment (inpatient or outpatient), plus random drug testing as deemed appropriate by a parent/adult, a counselor, or a treatment provider.

Signing below means each family member has read, understood, and agrees to the above.

Date

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Contract for Driving Privileges and Memorandum of Understanding

(The printing or use of this document is subject to the terms of the Disclaimer and Release appearing at its end).

This Contract for Driving Privileges and Memorandum of Understanding ("Agreement") is by and between _____ ("Teen") and _____

This Agreement sets forth the material terms and conditions related to Teen's use and operation of motorized transportation of any kind and proscribes the use of alcohol and illegal drugs. Teen and Parent/Guardian hereby covenant, agree and acknowledge the following:

- Teen's Initials _____
1. The Oklahoma Department of Public Safety reports that: On average, twenty-two (22) young people (ages 15-20) die each month in Oklahoma in alcohol/drug related traffic collisions or mishaps. Forty percent (40%) of all automobile collisions or mishaps involve alcohol and/or drugs. On average, 2,339 teenagers die in America each year due to alcohol/drug related automobile collisions or mishaps. On average, 17,448 people will die this year due to alcohol/drug related automobile collisions or mishaps.
- Teen's Initials _____
2. Teen agrees not to use alcohol, illegal drugs, or to operate motorized transportation of any kind under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Teen further agrees to otherwise comply with Parent /Guardian's instructions regarding the use and/or operation of motorized transportation of any kind, including but not limited to those involving curfews, safety, and compliance with insurance laws of the State of Oklahoma.
- Teen's Initials _____
3. Parent/Guardian loves Teen and is concerned about Teen's well being. Parent/Guardian's trust and confidence in Teen's maturity, judgment, and ability to accept responsibility will be severely impaired if Teen operates motorized transportation of any kind under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Teen's Initials _____
4. A. Teen acknowledges that, pursuant to Oklahoma Statute Title 47, § 754, any arrested person under the age of twenty-one (21) who has any measurable quantity of alcohol in that person's blood or breath is subject to having his/her drivers license confiscated—regardless of whether the arrest involves the operation of motorized transportation of any kind.
- Teen's Initials _____
5. Teen acknowledges that, pursuant to Oklahoma Statute Title 47, § 754, any arrested person under the age of twenty-one (21) who has any measurable quantity of alcohol in that person's blood or breath and who was operating or in actual physical control of motorized transportation of any kind under such influence is subject to having his driving privileges revoked by the Oklahoma Department of Public Safety.
- Teen's Initials _____
6. Teen acknowledges that, pursuant to Oklahoma Statute Title 47, §§ 6-103A and 6-103.1A, the issuance of a drivers license by the State of Oklahoma to Teen prior to him or her obtaining the age of eighteen (18) is a privilege that Parent/Guardian can cause to be revoked by the submission of an objection form prescribed by the Department of Public Safety. This objection will, by law, result in the cancellation of Teen's driving license for a minimum of three (3) months, or until Parent/Guardian's objection is withdrawn, whichever period is longer.
- Teen's Initials _____
7. Teen acknowledges that there may be other laws that relate to the use of alcohol and drugs in relation to the operation of motorized transportation of any kind and that this contract is not a complete summary of those laws. Furthermore, no portion of this agreement shall be construed to limit Parent/Guardian's right to otherwise monitor and control Teen's use of motorized transportation of any kind.
- Teen's Initials _____
8. Upon evidence of Teen's first offense of using alcohol or illegal drugs, regardless of whether motorized transportation of any kind is involved with that use, Teen will forfeit Teen's driving privileges for a period of _____ () days. This forfeiture shall apply to motorized transportation of any kind, including but not limited to the operation of automobiles or motorized transportation of any kind owned by persons other than Parent/Guardian. In Parent/Guardian's sole discretion, Teen may be allowed to earn "good time" restriction credits by completing such educational programs/classes, community service, or alcohol/drug awareness courses ("Restriction Credits") that Parent/Guardian may prescribe. Parent/Guardian acknowledges that, in the event of an offense by Teen, Parent/Guardian's failure to follow through with agreed upon sanctions will impair his or her moral authority with Teen. By their initials to this specific provision, both Teen and Parent /Guardian acknowledge specifically that the degree and severity of these sanctions have been carefully considered and that each of them is prepared to abide by the same. In the event of an offense, Teen will not seek a relaxation of these sanctions from Parent/Guardian, nor will Parent/Guardian fail to enforce them.
- Teen's Initials _____
- Parent or Guardian Initials _____
9. Upon evidence of Teen's second offense of using alcohol or illegal drugs, regardless of whether motorized transportation of any kind is involved with that use, Teen will forfeit Teen's driving privileges for a period of _____ () days. This forfeiture shall apply to motorized transportation of any kind, including but not limited to the operation of motorized vehicles owned by persons other than Parent/Guardian. No Restriction Credits will be allowed. Parent/Guardian acknowledges that, in the event of an offense by Teen, Parent/Guardian's failure to follow through with agreed upon sanctions will impair his or her moral authority with Teen. By their initials to this specific provision, both Teen and Parent/Guardian acknowledge specifically that the degree and severity of these sanctions have been carefully considered and that each of them is prepared to abide by the same. In the event of an offense, Teen will not seek a relaxation of these sanctions from Parent/Guardian, nor will Parent/Guardian fail to enforce them.
- Teen's Initials _____
- Parent or Guardian Initials _____
10. Upon evidence of Teen's third offense of using alcohol or illegal drugs, regardless of whether a motorized transportation of any kind is involved with that use, Teen will forfeit Teen's driving privileges for so long as Teen lives in Parent/Guardian's household. This forfeiture shall apply to all motorized transportation, including but not limited to the operation of motorized transportation of any kind owned by persons other than Parent /Guardian. No Restriction Credits will be allowed, nor will Parent/Guardian transport Teen to any place for an activity not attended by Parent /Guardian. Parent/Guardian acknowledges that, in the event of an offense by Teen, Parent/Guardian's failure to follow through with agreed upon sanctions will impair his or her moral authority with Teen. By their initials to this specific provision, both Teen and Parent/Guardian acknowledge specifically that the degree and severity of these sanctions have been carefully considered and that each of them is prepared to abide by the same. In the event of an offense, Teen will not seek a relaxation of these sanctions from Parent/Guardian, nor will Parent/Guardian fail to enforce them.
- Teen's Initials _____
- Parent or Guardian Initials _____
11. Teen will not ride as a passenger with any person who Teen knows, or should know, to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Under such circumstance, Parent/Guardian agrees to pick up Teen at any hour or place. If Parent/Guardian is unable to do so, Teen is authorized to hire a Taxi at Parent/Guardian's expense to secure such transport.
- Parent or Guardian Initials _____
- Agreed to this _____ day of _____, _____
- TEEN: _____
- PARENT/GUARDIAN(S): _____

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<http://www.ParentsHelpingParents.info> and David L. Nunn, P.C., Attorneys at Law, 17 East First Street, Edmond, Oklahoma 73034, (405) 330-4053

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Recognizing Signs of Alcohol or Drug Use

Top Five Early Warning Signs of Substance Abuse by Adolescents

Change of Friends

Drop in Grades

Change in Social Activities

Dishonesty

Smoking

If you see signs, suspect drugs or alcohol.

If the child changes friends and his/her grades drop -- suspect drugs.

If you get calls from the school regarding attendance -- suspect drugs.

A change in the type of music the child listens to (heavy metal indicates they are using meth, LSD, ecstasy or cocaine. If they are listening to Rap, suspect crack and/or marijuana)

Dressing differently, their hairstyle and/or color of their hair suddenly changes in a manner that surprises you.

A spoon that is bent, one that doesn't sit flat with discoloration from the drug residue

If your child starts smoking -- suspect drugs (rarely does a child start smoking and isn't using drugs).

If your child kid goes into the bathroom too frequently or takes an unusually long time, suspect drugs.

A fixation on death, skulls etc.

If you walk in your child's room and he/she is on their hands and knees on the floor trying to "pick" up something check their eyes and see if they are dilated, if they are -- suspect drugs. For some reason crack users always think they have dropped some of their drugs on the floor.

Hiding the Drugs:

- Things for using dope--water, spoon or a soda can.
- Things for using Crack Cocaine - brillo pads and some kind of glass tube to smoke the crack with. Look for a glass tube with dark residue inside it along with a brillo pad (the brillo pad is used as a filtering device), a piece of wire (similar to the pipe cleaner types), possibly with a loop on the end of it (this is used to pack the brillo pad with).
- A great place to hide a syringe is in the bathroom. Look inside the cylinder that the toilet paper fits on. Also, look under the toilet bowl tank and see if it is taped underneath the tank or see if there is a sandwich bag all taped up and fitted on the bottom of the tank.
- Check out the wall plate on the light switches, take the plate off and look inside.
- Look for tape -- look in light fixtures and underneath dressers, or wherever he/she might tape drugs.
- In heating or air vents.
- In the throw pillows.
- Under the bed in the center of the box springs, many users call this the "safe."
- In the pockets of infrequently used clothes hanging in the closet or folded in a drawer.
- Hiding places for the crack pipe: is there a can on a desk with a bunch of pens? Look there, if you don't find a glass pipe then investigate the pen cylinders.
- You might check out the back yard as this is a common place for your child and his/her friends to smoke marijuana. Look for a secluded area and then look for small cigarette looking rolled paper without filters.
- Another favorite hiding place is behind the dryer in the vent that takes the lint outside.
- Look in TV's, radio's and any electronic device that has batteries. The battery compartment is a common hiding place for drugs.
- Any device or furniture that has a possible hollow portion is an ideal hiding spot. For example, take a lamp or desk fan with a hollow neck that can be unscrewed. For example, in a top cabinet there is about an inch space on either the right or left side, look there.
- The store called Spencer's at the mall sells all kinds of products that kid's buy to hide drugs. For example, they sell very real looking soda, soap, shaving creme cans, etc., in which the bottom comes off and inside is a hollow bottom to hide the drugs. All these cans are "real," they actually have soda in the soda cans and shaving creme in the shaving can, so don't be fooled.

Incident Tracking

Informal Journal and Intervention Agreement

Incident:

Date(s) Occurred:

- Grades Drop below a _____ Grade Point Average..... _____
- Unexcused Absence at School..... _____
- Suspended from School..... _____
- Smoking..... _____
- Picked-up or Arrested by Police..... _____
- Found in Possession of Alcohol or other Drugs..... _____
- Found in Possession of Drug Paraphernalia..... _____
- Any Physical Violent Act..... _____
- Other: _____

It is agreed by all members of the family that if _____ or more of these incidents/situations occur with any member of the family this member agrees to be taken to a licensed, certified professional alcohol & drug counselor for an assessment and all members of the family agree to abide by the recommendations of said counselor.

_____ Date

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Agreement of Understanding Regarding Consequences

It is understood and agreed by all parties that should any member of the family be arrested or put in jail due to the direct or indirect use of alcohol or other drugs the following rules are in effect:

1. No family member is permitted to bail another family member out of jail. A minor child will be picked-up by a parent/guardian if required.
2. No family member may give money either directly or indirectly to secure the release of a family member from jail.
3. No family member will hire an attorney on behalf of a family member who has been arrested and/or is in jail.
4. No family member is permitted to accept collect calls from any jail or prison.
5. No family member is allowed to provide and/or secure transportation from a jail or prison for another family member unless it is a parent required to pick-up a minor child.

Date

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Signed

Personal Boundaries and Communication

Each of us has not only the right but an obligation to set our personal boundaries.

What is setting personal boundaries?

It is deciding what types of communication are appropriate, i.e. language, tone of voice, and volume, and refusing to participate in inappropriate communication by leaving if necessary.

It is deciding that we will care for and help one another, but understanding we should not and can not enable one another to continue with poor decision-making, either by providing the means (financially or otherwise), or by not allowing or enforcing consequences.

It is taking care of ourselves emotionally as well as physically and knowing this is the right thing for everyone.

Communication Techniques:

1. Stating your feelings and the impact of something, as compared to blaming, opens the door to communication rather than closing the door by putting someone on the defensive.

How? With the “I” message:

1. “I feel...” Start with an “I feel” statement that describes how their behavior affects you. If you need more than a word or two to describe the feeling, it might be a variation of joy, sorrow, anger, or fear.
2. “When...” A “when” statement describes the scenario or behavior without judgment, exaggeration, labeling, or motives.
3. “Because I...” State the consequence – why you are affected that way. Describe the connection between the facts you observed and the feelings they prompt in you.

2. Reflective Listening: listening in a way that lets others know we recognize the feelings behind what they are saying and what they are not saying; grasping what others feel and mean so they feel understood and accepted. It gives feedback. Respond to non-verbal messages – not only to what is said but also to the behavior.

“I’m really disappointed with _____. Now _____.”

Closed response: Well, things don’t always go the way we want them to. That’s part of life.

Open response: It seems as if you are feeling disappointed and left out.

3. To validate another, identify as being with them, and then move forward, use Feel, Felt, Found:
“I understand how you feel, I would have felt the same way, here is what I found out...”

The Art of Enforceable Statements

Ineffective Technique

- *Don’t shout at me.
- *You show some respect.
- *Quit breaking the rules of the game.
- *Stop arguing with me.

Love and Logic technique

- *I listen to people who do not yell at me.
- *I’ll be glad to discuss this when respect is shown.
- *Those who can follow the rules are welcome to play the game.
- *I’ll be glad to discuss this with you as soon as the arguing stops.

Resource List

Web Sites

www.ParentsHelpingParents.info – The best web site for parents who suspect or have found alcohol or drug use in their child. The site includes self-education information, resources, referrals to services, and more.

www.OCARTA.org – OK Citizen Advocates for Recovery & Treatment Assoc.

www.ODAPCA.org – OK Drug & Alcohol Professional Counselors Assoc.

www.OSASA.org – OK Substance Abuse Services Assoc.

www.jointogether.org – Nationally run web site addressing addiction.

Recommended Reading

Choices and Consequences by Dick Schaefer- What to do when a teenager uses alcohol/drugs. Features a step-by-step system that really works. This author has worked with chemically dependent teenagers for thirty years and is the director of the Touch Love Center in Fargo, North Dakota. A licensed addiction counselor with a Master's Degree, he holds a level II certification from the National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors. Available at Hazelden Books, 800-328-9000 or www.hazelden.org

Alcohol Is A Drug, Too by David J. Wilmes– What happens to kids when we're afraid to say no! Available at Hazelden Books, 800-328-9000 or www.hazelden.org

Love First by Jeff and Debra Jay "A new approach to Intervention for Alcoholism & Drug Addiction." Any concept that has proven to alter the destructive behavior of adolescents is worth investigating. I found this concept (intervention) to be a very viable tool for any family (see section on local counselors for referral).

Beyond the Influence by Katherie Ketcham "This is the best book I have ever read on the subject of alcohol/drug abuse." Pat Nichols

Parents Helping Parents

“Caring parents offering hope through resources, education, and shared experience.”

Parents Helping Parents Programs include:

1. Regular meetings: for parents with guest speakers, and time to talk.
2. Parent/Coach Program: ‘Experienced’ parents matched by request.
3. Police Department & Juvenile Court: Parents are referred to PHP.
4. Web site: Information, resources, services list, a contract to drive, and hope.
5. Email newsletter: Information and options for parents.
6. Speakers Bureau: Speakers are available on topics related to drugs and alcohol.
7. Private consultation by e-mail: With a licensed professional for parents whose child is using.
8. Resource Referral: Resources and professional help for children and adults.
9. Bimonthly column in Edmond Sun: Communication, adolescents, alcohol, drugs.
10. Collaborations: Coordinating with Oklahoma Citizen Advocates for Recovery and Treatment Association, the Oklahoma Statewide Association of Substance Abuse Providers, and the Oklahoma Drug and Alcohol Professional Counselors
11. Additional Chapters: Parents Helping Parents is working to assist other communities to start chapters.
12. Newsletter: A City of Edmond grant provides for a quarterly newsletter mailed to parents of children between 11 and 17 with information, options, and resources to address youth use of drugs and alcohol.
13. Contract to Drive: Available on-line, in tag agencies and insurance offices for parents and teens.
14. Family Contract: Work has started to provide a family contract similar to the Contract to Drive.
15. Family Mediations: Planning has started to provide free family mediation services.

www.ParentsHelpingParents.info

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