



# ADDRESSING CHRONIC SUBSTANCE USE IN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

## ▲ Tip #1: Delay, delay, delay

Major phases of brain development occur during teen years. The longer youth wait to start use, the more their brains are able to develop naturally.

## ▲ Tip #2: Ask, affirm, acknowledge

Ask why the youth chooses to use, affirm their reasons for using it, and acknowledge what they see as benefits to use.

## ▲ Tip #3: Dig deeper

Do not make assumptions about how their use interferes with their life. Ask questions about relationships, work, academics, and hobbies to get a full picture and better connect use to their goals.

## ▲ Tip #4: Look to the goal

Focus on ways that use could be a barrier to the youth's goals, ability to cope in stressful situations and ability to regulate emotions.

## ▲ Tip #5: Flexibility is key

Abstinence is not always realistic. Support the youth in identifying ways to cut down on use (on weekends, when they crave it, etc.) that makes sense for them.

## ▲ Tip #6: Increase self-management

Support the youth in building self-management skills and alternatives to use. By relying on a substance, youth are not learning other/healthier ways to cope with stress.





# ADDRESSING CHRONIC SUBSTANCE USE IN YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS: KEY PHRASES



## Tip #1: Delay, delay, delay

"The longer someone waits to start using substances, the lower their chances of negative side effects."



## Tip #2: Ask, affirm, acknowledge

"You're right, smoking weed can be relaxing for some people and it sounds like it works for you. What other ways do you relax when you can't smoke?"



## Tip #3: Dig deeper

"You mentioned that vaping helps you do better on homework and keeps you focused on your school work. Has it affected anything else? What do your friends say? Family?"



## Tip #4: Look to the goal

"Sounds like your \_\_\_\_\_ is important to you. Even if using \_\_\_\_\_ helps you \_\_\_\_\_, can you think of any ways it might hurt your chances of succeeding in \_\_\_\_\_?"



## Tip #5: Flexibility is key

"I'm not telling you that you have to stop. That's your choice. Have you tried changing how often, how much, or when you use so you avoid having to deal with negative consequences?"



## Tip #6: Increase self-management

"Stress can be hard to deal with. And sometimes, using \_\_\_\_\_ can make it easier in the moment. Stress is also a part of life. Let's add some other ways you can deal with it so you don't only have one option."

