

**Behavioral Signs of an Adolescent Who May Be Abusing Alcohol
or Other Drugs**

Absenteeism – Excuses are usually forged or students may make many appointments to see the nurse.

Becoming More Secretive – Not sharing any, or very little, of their personal problems.

Bloodshot or Glassy Eyes – This is not always a reliable diagnostic tool, but a sign to be on the lookout for.

Change in Physical Hygiene – Becoming more sloppy, wearing same clothes frequently.

Constantly Late for Class – Student usually has poor excuses for being late, may come late with a group of other students.

Defensive Behavior – When confronted about behavior or other concerns.

Defiance of Rules and Regulations – Pushing limits, not following rules.

Drop in Grades – This could be a slow decrease or a drastic drop.

Drug-Related Jewelry, Clothing – Clips, spoons, pacifiers. T-shirts with drug-related messages; also may show up as drawing drug-related material on clothing, books, desks, and self.

Emotional Highs and Lows – Easily upset, emotional state changes rapidly, doesn't seem as happy as s/he used to.

Frequent Visits to Bathroom/Nurse/Counselor

Isolating Themselves – Spending a lot of times alone, not with their friends.

Leaving School Grounds – This happens usually during the lunch period or when dropped off in the morning before class starts.

Loss of Initiative – Less energy, sleeping more than usual.

Not Informing Parents of School Activities – Open house times, parent conferences.

Not Responding in Class – lack of concern regarding class and school in general. Difficult to motivate student.

Other Students Express Concern

Peers – Students will hang out with a crowd of known users.

Self-Mutilation

Selling Possessions – Clothing, records, gifts, seems to have money but no job.

Short-Tempered – Becomes angry often, short fuse.

Skipping Class and/or School – This usually comes out in chronic skipping of classes or the entire school day.

Sitting in the Back of Class – Sleeping, daydreaming, laughing, lots of talk regarding drugs or parties.

Sleeping in Class

Smell of Alcohol or Marijuana – This could be the smell of recent use or the after-effects of continued use.

Sunglasses in Class / At School

Switching Friends – Usually seen as a different set of friends, often users.

Vandalism – To school property or teacher's property.

Wearing Sunglasses in Class

Weight Changes –drastic loss or gain.

Work not Completed – Student usually has poor excuses for not getting work done on time or at all.

Verbal Abuse – This is usually directed towards teachers, and/or anyone that represents authority.

Withdrawing from Activities – After school activities, sports, clubs, etc.