

QuickBites



Every year since 1975, the Monitoring the Future study has measured drug, alcohol and cigarette use among American youth. The study, sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), surveys more than 40,000 eighth, tenth and twelfth graders. The 2013 results show a decrease in tobacco and alcohol use among teens. But drug use in this group is going up.

- Using drugs or alcohol can lead to a number of health threats, including impaired driving, unsafe sex and problems at school.
- Using drugs or alcohol before the brain has fully developed increases the risk for abuse. Young people who start drinking alcohol before age 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol problems than people who first used alcohol at age 21.
- Parents have an impact on a child's decision not to use tobacco, alcohol and drugs.
- Prevention starts when parents start talking with and listening to their child.

Substance Abuse and Teens: Strategies for Prevention

There's no way to shield kids from tobacco, drugs and alcohol. Yet most parents would love to do just that. Experts tell us that there are strategies to help you keep your teenager drug- and alcohol-free.

A conversation about substance abuse should top your list of prevention strategies. With practice you can learn to talk openly with your child about making healthy choices and avoiding risky behaviors. Don't lecture. Instead, listen to your teen's opinions and questions about drug and alcohol use. Encourage conversation by making statements instead of asking questions.

Talking isn't the only strategy parents can use. Consider these tactics:

- **Know your teen's activities.** Today's teenagers lead busy lives. Keep track of your teen's schedule. Pay attention to his or her whereabouts. Encourage your teen to get involved in organized activities.
- **Establish rules and consequences.** Make it clear that you won't tolerate drug or alcohol use. Set clear rules like leaving a party where there are drugs or alcohol and not riding in a car with a driver who's been drinking or using drugs. Agree ahead of time on the consequences of breaking the rules.
- **Teach your teen that it's okay to say "No."** When faced with a peer pressure situation, it is important for a teen to be confident in his or her decisions and answers. Try role-playing to develop some practice.
- **Set a good example.** Don't abuse drugs or alcohol yourself. If you smoke, consider quitting.
- **Build a parents' network.** When you know the parents of your kid's friends, you are able to compare notes and talk about tactics that work well. Having a network of parents will not only be personally helpful, but may contribute to a community effort to curb substance abuse.
- **Show support.** Offer encouragement when your teen succeeds in school or at home. A strong bond between you and your child may help prevent substance abuse.
- **Keep an eye on the pills.** Take an inventory of all prescription and over-the-counter drugs in your home. Do not store pill bottles in obvious places, like in the medicine cabinet or on your bedside table. Dispose of unused drugs properly. Read the label or talk to your pharmacist about the best way to dispose of unused medications.

Strategies for Prevention (continued)

- **Inventory alcoholic beverages.** Keep track of the alcohol you have in your home. Don't forget to include the beer in the fridge. Teenagers often supply parties with alcohol taken from their own home.
- **Make time to do eat together.** Eating together as a family is a good time to learn about what's going on in your kid's life. Kids who eat dinner with their parents several times per week tend to have less trouble with drugs and alcohol. They also eat healthier and show better academic performance than kids who share a meal with their parents less often, according to researchers at The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.

Resources:

www.monitoringthefuture.org

<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/>

<http://thecoolspot.gov/>

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health>

Enchilada Casserole Makes 8 servings.

What's the second-best part about Thanksgiving dinner? Leftovers! This popular dish is a great way to use leftover turkey and to feed a houseful of people over the Thanksgiving weekend.

Enlist your teen to give you a hand with preparing this easy recipe. Getting kids to help out in the kitchen can teach valuable skills—and encourage healthier eating. Kids who learn basic cooking skills now are more likely to prepare meals for themselves once they move out of the house.



Recipe Source: Healthy Living Kitchens

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1-3 fresh jalapeños or 1 can chopped jalapeños
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, preferably Mexican oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 28-oz. can no-salt-added chopped tomatoes, drained
- 18 corn tortillas
- 1 15-oz. can low-sodium pinto or black beans, rinsed and drained
- 3 cups shredded cooked turkey or chicken breast meat (about 18 oz.)
- 1 14.5-oz. can no-salt-added cream-style sweet corn
- 1 cup grated light cheddar or jack cheese
- 1 cup fat-free sour cream
- 1 cup salsa fresca or other low-sodium tomato salsa

NUTRITION INFO PER SERVING

440 Calories	62g Carbohydrate
7g Fat	7g Fiber
2g Saturated fat	612mg Sodium
32g Protein	

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic and jalapeños: cook until the onions are soft and translucent. Add the chili powder, oregano and cumin and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds.
3. Transfer the contents of the skillet to a blender or food processor: add the drained chopped tomatoes too. Puree until smooth.
4. Cut the tortillas into quarters. Spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Spread a thin layer of the tomato sauce in the bottom. Place one-third of the tortilla quarters on top, overlapping them. Spread the drained beans on top, followed by about half of the remaining tomato sauce. Top with a second layer of overlapping tortilla quarters.
5. In a bowl, combine the turkey or chicken and the cream-style corn. Spread in the baking dish. Top with the remaining tortillas followed by the remaining tomato sauce. Sprinkle with the grated cheese.
6. Bake, uncovered, for 45 minutes.
7. Serve from the pan. Pass the sour cream and salsa separately.