



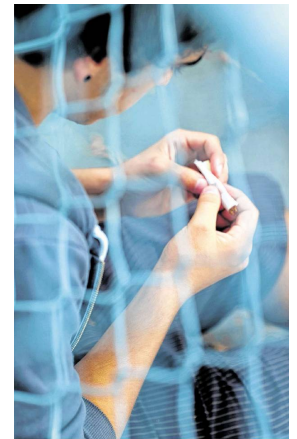
Positive Parenting

Helping Your Children Make Good Choices about Alcohol, Drugs and Sex



John Sharry

www.solutiontalk.ie



Parenting - An important note

THERE IS NO ONE RIGHT WAY TO BRING UP CHILDREN

What matters is finding a way that works for you, your children and your family

BE CAREFUL ABOUT PARENTING EXPERTS

Trust your own intuition and test ideas in your own experience

Parents Plus Programmes

Video based parenting courses developed by the
Parents Plus Charity in the Mater Hospital

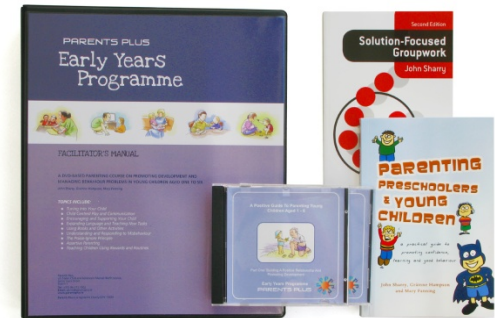
www.parentsplus.ie

Current Parents Plus Programmes

Parents Plus Early Years

Programme (1- 6 year olds)

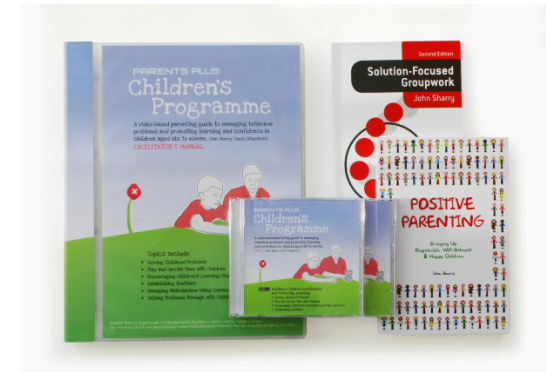
John Sharry, Grainne Hampson, Mary Fanning



Parents Plus Childrens

Programme (6-11 year olds)

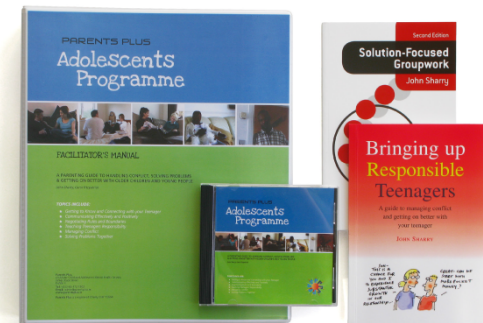
John Sharry, Carol Fitzpatrick



Parents Plus Adolescents

Programme (11 – 16 years olds)

John Sharry, Carol Fitzpatrick



Substance Abuse in Teenagers

What are the two most commonly used drugs used by teens which potentially have by far the most serious short and long term consequences?

Smoking in Teens Facts -

- Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the Western World
- 90% of smokers began before the age 19.
- About 30% of teen smokers will continue smoking and die early from a smoking-related disease.
- Teen smokers are more likely to have panic attacks, anxiety disorders, and depression.
- On average, smokers die 13 to 14 years earlier than nonsmokers.
- According to the Surgeon General, teenagers who smoke are 3 times more likely to use alcohol, 8 times more likely to smoke marijuana, and 22 times more likely to use cocaine.
- Cigarette smokers are more likely to get into fights, , attempt suicide, suffer from mental health problems such as depression, and engage in high-risk sexual behaviors.

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Drinking in Teens Facts -

- Big increase in underage drinking in adolescents over the last 20 years, especially amongst young women
- Abuse of alcohol by young people, associated with many serious problems including, road traffic accidents, violence and fighting , unplanned sex
- Drinking a significant factor in up 50% of suicides
- Young people unaware of safe levels of drinking
- Age of start of drinking is biggest predictor of later problems.
- Early alcohol use, associated with later more serious drug use
- Drinking/ drug taking in adolescents, who are still developing/ growing, can be particularly harmful
- Parental drinking habits predict teen drinking habits

Helping your children make responsible choices –What doesn't work?

- 1) Not discussing the issues
- 2) Making vague threats - you better be careful?
- 3) Exclusively using 'scare tactics' or focusing on negative consequences

Levels of Safety – e.g. Drinking

1. Don't drink at all
2. Start Drinking as late as possible (e.g. over 18 or early 20s or 30s!)
3. Drink small amounts/ infrequently
4. Drink Safely (e.g. with good friends etc)

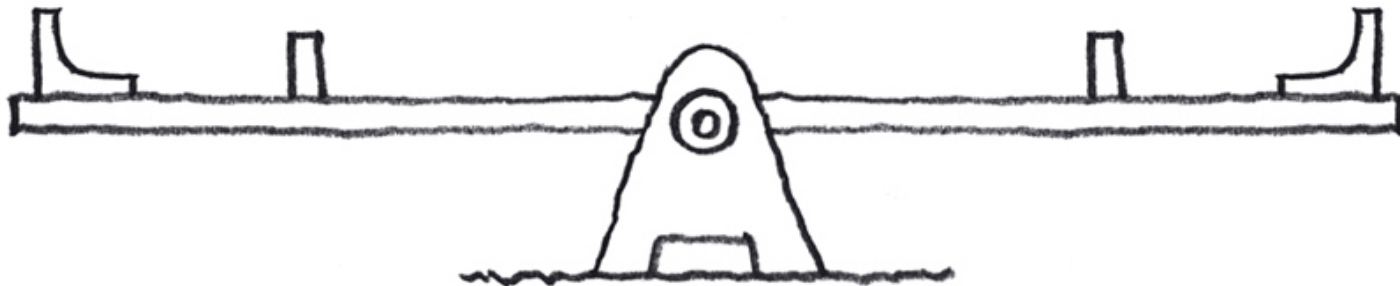
Parenting – Getting the Balance Right

POSITIVE PARENTING

**Being loving,
Caring
Encouraging**

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

**Being firm,
Able to set rules
Teach child to behave**



Helping your children make responsible choices – 7 principles

- 1) Maintain a Connection with your Child
- 2) Discuss Issues Early and Often
- 3) Share Values and Preferences
- 4) Set rules and supervise
- 5) Encourage your Child's Responsibility
- 6) Prepare them How to say No
- 7) Build your Child's Assets

Principle 1

Maintain a Connection with your Child



POSITIVE PARENTING

“Putting Money in the Bank”



Making a Connection

- When do you make a connection with your child/ teenager?
- When in the day do you enjoy being with them?
- When do you have the best chats?

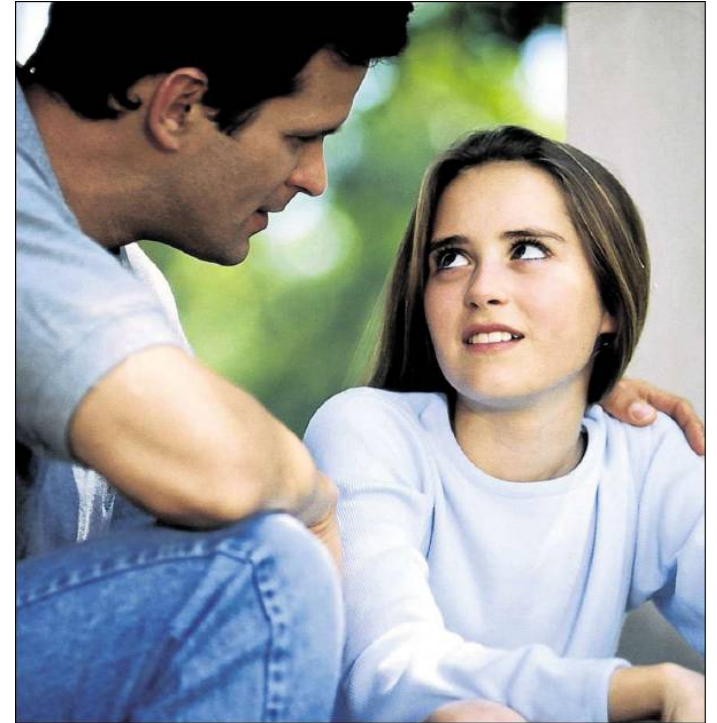


Putting money in the relationship bank – ‘Making a connection’

- Usually one to one time with child
- Good time of day, when child is open
- Activity that child enjoys or is interested in
- Ideally an activity parent loves also
- Activity that allows for chatting and talking
- Regularly occurring time – ideally daily

Principle 1

Discuss the Issues Early and Often

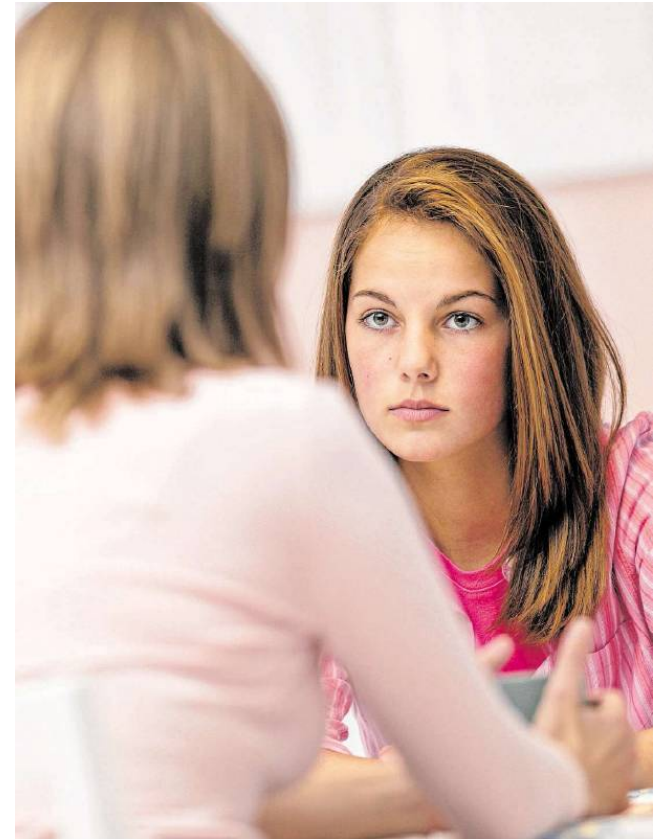


Discussing Issues with Children

- Check what child/ teen knows already
- Give factual information as well as information on values
- Explore issues using questions
 1. What do you think of how the girl was treated in that movie?
 2. Do you think smoking makes you cool?
 3. What do you think of drinking alcohol?
 4. When is someone ready to have sex?
 5. Who is responsible for setting sexual limits in a relationship and how is that done, realistically?

Principle 2

Share Values and Preferences



State your Values Clearly

- I think you are wait until you are 18 before you decide to drink alcohol
- It is a very brave and mature choice not to drink at all – it shows you are your own person
- Drinking does not make you a man/ Acting responsibly does
- I don't think you should have a boyfriend until you are at least 16
- I think that sex should be an expression of love within marriage/
- It's okay to think about sex and to feel sexual desire. Everybody does! But it's not okay to get pregnant/get somebody pregnant as a teenager.
- Whenever you do have sex, always use protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases until you are ready to have a child.
- One of the many reasons I'm concerned about teens drinking is that it often leads to unprotected sex.
- You don't have to have sex to keep a boyfriend. If sex is the price of a close relationship, find someone else.

Exercise - Clarifying your Own Values

- What do I think about teenage drinking, smoking and other drug taking? What do I want for my teen regarding this?
- What values do I want to communicate to my teen about sex and relationships?

Principle 3

Set Rules and Supervise your Children



Blanket Vs Negotiable Rules

- **Blanket Rule:** e.g. No drinking until 18
- **Negotiable Rule:** e.g. Under what conditions your teen can go to the party? How many outings can they have in a week?

Principle 5

Encourage Your Children's Responsibility



Gradually increase freedom and responsibility

- **Let teens experience consequences and rewards for their behaviour**

Principle 6

Prepare Them

How to Say No



Exploring how children can be assertive

- If someone offers you a cigarette, what will you say? How will you say no
- What would you say to someone who was pressurising you to take a drink?
- How would you manage if you were in a sexually charged situation.? How will you handle this? How will you say "no"? How will you ensure you use contraception? How will you negotiate all this?

Principle 7

Build your Children's Assets



Your Child's Assets

1. **Parental Connection** – “ Your parents love and support you ”
2. **Parental Rules** – “ Your parents set clear rules and enforce them ’
3. **Non-parental adult role models** - "You know adults that encourage you often."
4. **Peer role models** - "Are most of your friends responsible?"
5. **Family communication** - "How often do you talk to an adult in your household about your problems?"
6. **Use of time (groups/sports)** - You participate in an organized activity after class.
7. **Use of time (religion)** - How often do you participate in church/religious activities
8. **Community involvement** - You work to make your community a better place.
9. **Aspirations for the future** - As you look to your future, how important is it to you that you stay in school?
10. **Responsible choices** - You can say no to activities that you think are wrong
11. **Good health practices (exercise/nutrition)** - You take good care of your body by eating well and exercising"

Further Information

Parenting Articles and Features

www.solutiontalk.ie

Upcoming Dublin Talks

April 18th 'Helping Your Children Overcome Anxiety (3-11yrs)'

April 25th 'Building Self-Esteem and Confidence in Children and Teenagers'

May 9th 'Helping Teenagers make Good Choices about Alcohol, Drugs and Sex'



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Pressing the Pause Button



- Pressing the pause button is about realising you have a choice about how you respond