

Research shows that parents are the first line of defense when it comes to the prevention of substance use among our youth. It also shows that our youth will state their parents are the biggest influence on their decision to use or not use substances. And, lastly, research shows that parents who are actively involved in their children's lives are less likely to use substances.

Initiated by John Kasich and his wife, here you will find some TOOLS to Start Talking.

***Start Talking!* to your child about drugs**

Drugs are robbing too many Ohio students of their critical learning years. Surveys show that some of our students as young as 11 and 12 are trying drugs for the first time. At the same time, almost one in three of Ohio's high school students is misusing prescription drugs.

Schools and parents must work together to turn the tide of drug abuse. Nordonia Hills City School District is doing its part through a new statewide program called *Start Talking!*

What does that title mean? Research shows that youngsters who hear anti-drug messages from parents and other important people in their lives, such as teachers and coaches, are 50 percent less likely to use them. Using *Start Talking!* guides called *TEACHable Moments*, Nordonia Hills City School District teachers already have begun chatting with our students in class twice a month about not using drugs. Their approach may be direct, or more indirect, like asking students about what they want their lives to look like in the future.

As a parent, you can give your children similar messages at home. Guides called *Know Parent Tips* come out twice a month. Please visit <http://StartTalking.Ohio.Gov> and sign up to receive them via email. The guides are free, and they will help you keep up an ongoing conversation with your child about avoiding drugs.