

Parents - knowing 'P'

There are no symptoms that are absolutely reliable. But there are 'red flags' of a serious issue and the more signals you notice, the more danger your teen could be facing. Most of these symptoms tend to be gradual which is why parental awareness is so important.

Don't jump to conclusions.

Do investigate suspicions you may have as fully as possible and trust your parental intuition.

"Johnny just doesn't seem to be the same boy any more".

"There is something going on with Jenny - I just can't put my finger on it!"

In this case, if they tell you it is daytime – go outside and check!! But whatever the problem, we're talking about a child who may need help."

Be wary

Note that if teens are using marijuana before trying meth, the changes you observe might (at first) seem positive. They may go from being negative and unmotivated to self-confident, energetic and positive. They may begin to complete schoolwork and jobs around the house without their previous habit of complaining.

Some parents and teachers can unwittingly support meth use by responding to the behaviour changes by saying things like, "I like this change of attitude," or, "I don't know what you are doing, but whatever it is, I like it." To guard against unconsciously encouraging Meth use, do not immediately praise sudden changes in behaviour. Watch for possible signs of Meth use and talk to other adults involved with your teen before reinforcing the changes.

Information for this section was drawn from, The Capri Trust (Auckland), The Anti-Drug; Parenting Teens and "Walking the Talk" from Central CAPT (USA)

