



### Statistics:

- One in seven U.S. adolescents who regularly log on to the Internet reported that they have received an unwanted sexual solicitation via the Web. Solicitations were defined as requests to engage in sexual activities, sexual talk or to give personal sexual information that was unwanted or, whether wanted or not, made by an adult.
- More than one in three youth reported having had an unwanted exposure to pictures of nude people or of people engaging in sexual activities.
- Four percent of youth Internet users reported receiving aggressive sexual solicitations to engage in offline contact with the perpetrator via regular mail, telephone, or in person.
- About 25 percent of youth who encountered a sexual approach or solicitation reported telling a parent. Almost 40 percent of those reporting an unwanted exposure to sexual material told a parent.

— *Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later, 2006*,  
[http://www.missingkids.com/en\\_US/publications/NC167.pdf](http://www.missingkids.com/en_US/publications/NC167.pdf)

### Recommendations to parents and guardians:

- Use the Internet with your kids and help them be safe and responsible online.
- Talk to your children about potential dangers on the Internet.
- Spend time with your children to learn about their online interests.
- Set limits on the amount of time your child can spend online each day or week.
- Teach kids to never give their personal information to people they meet online.

- Place the family computer in an open area.
- Take advantage of blocking programs that filter access to Web sites with addresses or key word descriptions that contain inappropriate information for children:

■ Lycos Searchguard at [www.lycos.com](http://www.lycos.com).  
Click on “parental controls.”

■ Yahoooligans at [www.yahoooligans.com](http://www.yahoooligans.com).

### Internet safety tips to teach your children:

- Never give out personal information.
- Never agree to meet with someone you have met on the Internet.
- Never send your photo.
- Never share passwords with anyone other than your parents.
- Tell a trusted adult right away if you come across information that makes you feel uncomfortable.

### Where to go for more information on Internet safety:

- [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com) – the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is the nation’s resource center for child protection.
- [www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org) – Get Net Wise is a public service created by a coalition of Internet corporations and public interest organizations to help families have an educational, entertaining and safe online experience.
- [Kids.getnetwise.org/americalinksup/index2.html](http://Kids.getnetwise.org/americalinksup/index2.html) – America Links Up is now a part of Get Net Wise.

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● [www.ikeepsafe.org](http://www.ikeepsafe.org) – the Internet Keep Safe Coalition is a coalition of governors and/or first spouses, crime prevention organizations, law enforcement agencies, foundations and corporate sponsors that teach children the importance of protecting personal information and avoiding inappropriate sites on the Internet.

● [www.netSmartz.org](http://www.netSmartz.org) – the NetSmartz Workshop is an educational safety resource from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America for children, ages five to 17 years.

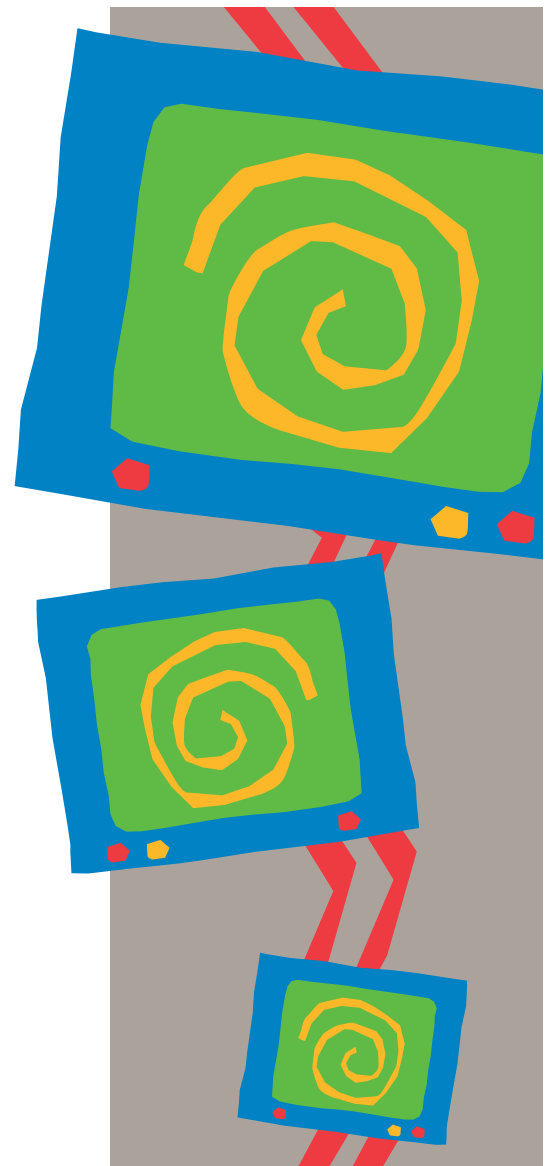
The AMA Alliance, Inc. is a national health advocacy network committed to promoting better health. The Stop America's Violence Everywhere (SAVE) program assists victims of abuse, teaches children about bullies and conflict resolution and educates the public about child health and safety. All resources, including health-focused coloring books and bookmarks for children, are available at [www.amaalliance.org](http://www.amaalliance.org).

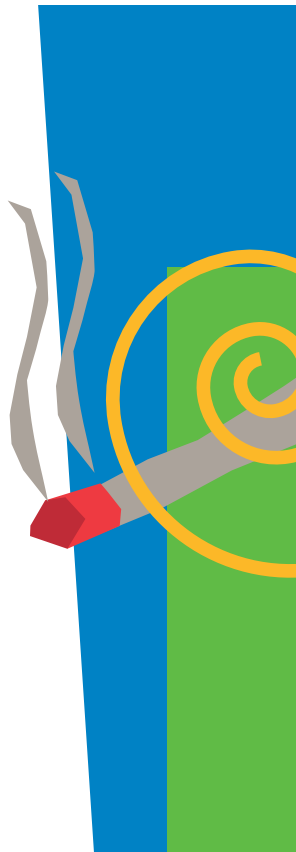
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### Statistics:

- 7.5 percent of eighth graders report having tried prescription-type amphetamines without medical instruction.
- In 2004, more than one in every 18 high school seniors (5.6 percent) reported smoking marijuana daily.
- Exactly half of American secondary school students today report having tried an illicit drug by the time they near high school graduation.
- Three out of every four students report having consumed alcohol (more than just a few sips) by the end of high school; 41 percent report having done so by eighth grade. In 2005, 58 percent of 12th graders and 20 percent of eighth graders reported having been drunk at least once in their lifetime.

— *Monitoring the Future, National Institute on Drug Abuse: National Survey Results on Drug Use, 1975-2005, Vol. II, College Students & Adults, Ages 19-45, 2005*, <http://monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/overview2005.pdf>

- Current illicit drug use by young people, ages 12 to 17 years, is continuing to decline from 11.6 percent in 2002 to 9.9 percent in 2005.

— *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, 2005*, [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org)

### Warning signs of substance abuse\*:

- Smell of alcohol, smoke or other chemicals
- Obvious intoxication, dizziness or bizarre behavior
- Change in dress, appearance and grooming
- Change in choice of friends
- Frequent arguments, sudden mood changes and unexplained violent actions
- Change in eating and sleeping patterns
- Skipping school

- Failing grades
- Runaway and delinquent behavior
- Suicide attempts

— *The American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org*

\*These signs can also be symptoms of a mental health disorder

### Recommendations to parents and guardians:

- Talk with your child honestly. Make discussions about tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs part of everyday conversation.
- Listen carefully to your child. Encourage your child to share questions and concerns about tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.
- Be involved in your child's life.
- Make clear, sensible rules for your child. Enforce them consistently with appropriate consequences.
- Set a good example. Your own habits and thoughts about tobacco, alcohol and other drugs make an impression on your child.
- Share your own values and beliefs about substance use with your children.
- Support your child's social development.
- Monitor your child's activities.

— *The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), www.samhsa.gov*

### Additional Resources:

- [www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov) – the National Institute on Drug Abuse's mission is to lead the nation in bringing the power of science to bear on drug abuse and addiction.
- [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) – the American Academy of Pediatrics is a professional organization committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

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- [www.SAMHSA.gov](http://www.SAMHSA.gov) – the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration’s site offers numerous resources for individuals, coalitions and communities interested in preventing all forms of substance abuse.
- [www.healthinschools.org](http://www.healthinschools.org) – the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools (CHHCS) is a nonpartisan policy and program resource center dedicated to strengthening health care delivery systems for children and adolescents.
- [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org) – the Partnership for a Drug-Free America is a nonprofit coalition of communication, health, medical and educational professionals working to reduce illicit drug use and help people live healthy, drug-free lives.
- [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com) – the AntiDrug.com Web site equips parents and other adult caregivers with the tools they need to raise drug-free kids.
- [www.freevibe.com](http://www.freevibe.com) – freevibe.com equips teens with the tools they need to keep friends and peers drug-free.
- [www.faceproject.org](http://www.faceproject.org) – FACE is a national non-profit organization that stands for “Facing Alcohol Concerns through Education” and provides resources for individuals and organizations to take action on alcohol issues.

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### Statistics:

- In 2005, 47 percent of high school students reported having had sexual intercourse, and 14 percent of high school students reported having had four or more sex partners during their life.

— *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2005*

- In 2002, 55 percent of males and 54 percent of females, ages 15 to 19 years, reported that they had engaged in oral sex with someone of the opposite sex.

— *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2005*

- Forty percent of teenage girls reported that they have experienced personal pressure about sex and relationships.

— *Henry J. Kaiser Foundation, 2003*

- Of the 19 million new sexually transmitted diseases diagnosed annually in the United States, almost half of them are among teenagers and young adults, ages 15 to 24 years.

— *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2006*

- In 2003, teenage girls, ages 15 to 19 years, gave birth to approximately 414,580 babies.

— *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2005*

### Recommendations to parents and guardians:

- Seize the moment. When a TV program or music video raises issues about responsible sexual behavior, use it as a springboard for discussion.

- Keep it low-key. Don't pressure your child to talk about sex. Simply broach the subject when you are alone with your child.

- Be honest and share your parental values. If you are uncomfortable, say so—but explain that it is important to keep talking. If you do not know the answers to your child's questions, offer to find the answers or research them together.

- Be direct. Clearly state your feelings about specific issues, such as sexual intercourse. Present the risks objectively, including sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancy.

- Consider your child's point of view. Don't lecture your child or rely on scare tactics to discourage sexual activity. Instead, listen carefully and encourage dialogue.

- Invite more discussion. Let your child know that it's acceptable to talk with you about sex whenever he or she has questions or concerns.

- Be prepared for questions like these:

- “How will I know I'm ready for sex?”

Peer pressure, curiosity and loneliness steer some teenagers into sexual activity. Remind your child that it's okay to wait.

- “What if my boyfriend or girlfriend wants to have sex—but I don't?” Explain that no one should have sex out of a sense of obligation or fear. Any form of forced sex is rape, whether the perpetrator is a stranger or someone your child has been dating. Emphasize that alcohol and drugs impair judgment and reduce inhibitions.

- “What if I'm questioning my sexual orientation?” Help your child understand that he or she is just beginning to explore sexual attraction. These feelings may change as time goes on. Above all, however, let your child know that you love him or her unconditionally. Praise your child for sharing his or her feelings.

— *The Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, from an article on Sex Education: Talking to your teen about sex, 2005, www.mayoclinic.com*

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**Where to go for more information on teen sexuality:**

- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) – the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a federal agency protecting the health and safety of all Americans and providing essential human services.
- [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org) – the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation is a private foundation focusing on the major health care issues facing the nation and providing facts and analysis for policymakers, the media, the health care community, and the general public.
- [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com) – the Mayo Clinic is a not-for-profit medical practice dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of virtually every type of complex illness.

- [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/teensexual-health.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/teensexual-health.html) – MedlinePlus brings together authoritative information from the National Library of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other government agencies and health-related organizations on the latest health news.

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