Talk to Your Children about the Risks of Drug Use

Below are some suggestions for getting the conversation started:

Learn from Others

☐ Be open and honest about someone you know who is battling addiction.
☐ Provide details about steps towards recovery.
☐ Emphasize need for support of family and friends in times of crisis.

Identify Positive Role Models

☐ Point out qualities of positive role models — those who drink responsibly or initiate recovery, don't abuse drugs.
☐ Encourage dialogue about drug use dangers to health, career and reputation. Contrast positive role models with negative examples from public life (celebrities with drug problems, for example).

Practice Refusal Skills

☐ Reinforce good decisions and promote confidence to avoid high risk behavior.
☐ Encourage options for direct refusal (no thanks)
☐ Brainstorm ideas for exit strategies when faced with tough decisions.

Relay Risks of Pain Medication

☐ Before taking a prescription opioid, have a discussion with the doctor about alternatives.
☐ Know the risks of addiction.
☐ Understand the importance of proper storage and safe disposal of medications.

Possible Signs of Addiction:

☐ Irritability
☐ Changes in personality
☐ Dramatic mood shifts
☐ Changes in behavior
☐ Change in sleeping patterns and eating habits
☐ Change in physical appearance/lack of hygiene
☐ Loss of interest in usual activities
☐ Change in friends
☐ Attendance or performance issues at school or work
☐ Sudden financial troubles
☐ Pill bottles around the house

Online Resources:

NJ Cares - A Realtime Dashboard of Opioid Data
www.njcares.gov

Project Medicine Drop
(locations for safe disposal of prescription pills)
www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop

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