

KNOW THE SIGNS



Although each case is different, there are common signs of potential opioid misuse and abuse in children and teenagers.

These include:

- **Negative changes in grades**
Are your child's grades suddenly dropping after a long record of academic success?
- **Skipping classes or school**
Do you no longer know what your child is doing during the school day?
- **Dropping longtime friends**
Have your child's friends suddenly changed?
- **Loss of interest in usual activities**
Does your child no longer seem interested in his or her "favorite" activities?
- **Changes in appearance**
Has your child developed an uncharacteristic lack of concern for grooming or hygiene?
- **Changes in general behavior, including sleeping and eating habits**
Has a normally energetic child become listless, or a laid-back child become unusually excitable?

Of course, the explanation for a sudden or unexpected change could have nothing to do with drugs. Each person is different, and the same behavior in different teens may have very different causes. Trust your instincts; after all, you know your child best. If something does not seem right, ask questions, investigate, and—if necessary—seek professional help.

In 2018, one in three 12th graders said that prescription opioids were easily available.