

SMARTPHONE SAFETY

MAKING SURE YOUR CHILD IS DRUG-FREE

In this age of instant communication, it is exceedingly easy for young people to contact anyone with their smartphones and mobile devices. While this is a great way of keeping them safe by staying in touch when they are at after-school practice or with friends, it can also have a dark side. Some young people are contacting drug dealers through social media and other messaging apps using emojis as a form of code to communicate about drugs.

The DEA has published a list of emojis that have found popular use in the form of drug code. It's important to be knowledgeable of what these emojis mean to keep your child safe.



LEARN AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT THESE DRUGS AND THEIR EMOJI CODES:

OXYCODONE



MARIJUANA



COCAINE



GENERAL DRUGS



METHAMPHETAMINE



COUGH SYRUP



XANAX



ADDERALL

MDMA / MOLLY



PERCOCET



HEROIN



MUSHROOMS



DEALER TALK



HIGH POTENCY



LARGE BATCH



RESOURCES

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

National Institute on Drug Abuse

www.nida.nih.gov/drug-topics/parents-educators

Partnership for Drug Free Kids

www.drugfree.org

>INFOCUS

DRUG EMOJIS:
DECODED



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Know Your Children

One of the best ways to detect if your child is using drugs is to know your child. Be familiar with your child's appearance, their attitude, behavior and activities. When you notice a significant change in your child, you should be concerned and take the steps necessary to discover if drug abuse is responsible. The sooner a drug problem is recognized, the easier it is to stop it.

Look for sudden changes in mood and behavior, such as:

- Unusual hostility, irritability or secretiveness
- Withdrawal from the family and friends
- Changes in friendship
- Resistance to discipline
- A pattern of dishonesty or stealing
- The possession of large amounts of cash
- A drop in grades
- A sudden increase in absences, tardiness
- Poor concentration and short-term memory
- Slurred speech
- A loss of motivation and interest in regular activities
- A lack of concern for appearance or hygiene

Notice changes in your child's physical well-being, such as:

- An unhealthy appearance
- Bloodshot eyes
- Dilated or shrunken pupils
- A constant runny nose or cough
- A major change in eating or sleeping patterns
- Sudden weight loss
- A lack of energy

KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

SAMHSA's National Helpline is available 24-hours a day with free and confidential treatment referrals and information regarding substance abuse disorders for anyone, including your child. If you feel you need help concerning your child, call **1-800-662-HELP (4357)**.

If your child has a drug addiction, outside help will likely be necessary. Those that can refer you to a drug treatment program in your community are your doctor, your hospital, your local mental health society, the school district's substance abuse counselor, parents of children who have been through such programs and religious leaders and institutions.



Keeping Your Child Safe

This pamphlet is intended to give parents, caregivers, and educators a better sense of how emojis are being used in conjunction with illegal drugs. Fake prescription pills, commonly laced with deadly fentanyl and methamphetamine, are often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms, making them available to anyone with a smartphone.

If you suspect that your child is using drugs, make sure you monitor what your child is doing as much as possible. Regularly check their phone or device and keep an eye on their social media and other forms of communication. There are multiple apps that help parents to keep an eye on everything that happens on their child or teen's phone.

It's important for parents to be fully aware of the messages your child or teen sends or receives. However, know that if you see these emojis it does not necessarily mean that drugs are being discussed. It's all about the context.

Know How to Communicate

The best way to prevent a drug problem from ever beginning is to provide an environment of open and honest communication. Try these tips for successful communication:

- Be calm. Anger can cloud your ability to communicate to your child rationally.
- Give your undivided attention. Don't interrupt or pass judgment until your child asks for it.
- Concentrate on understanding rather than always offering advice. Repeat what is said if you need to.
- Be aware of body language, both your child's and your own, and send positive messages.
- Speak for yourself. Emphasize your feelings. Begin sentences with "I" rather than "you."
- Be firm. Family rules, behavioral expectations and likely consequences need to be communicated to children and agreed upon by all family members.

Social Media

Social media can be a fun way for young people to keep in touch with friends and family. However, it is best to monitor what your child has access to on social media. It's always a good idea to keep track of your child's online habits and activities. Use of social media



or emojis is not indicative of criminal behavior, but, in combination with a change of behavior or increase in cash flow it's at least something to be cautious about.

Know What to Do if Your Child is Using Drugs (and What Not to Do)

- Don't panic or blame yourself.
- Do self-examine, consider the example you've set.
- Don't be sarcastic, accusatory or sympathy-seeking.
- Do express concern and understanding.
- Don't be swayed by denials if you have hard evidence.
- Do be firm, stick to the established discipline.
- Don't try to sway the child with emotional appeals.
- Do present the evidence calmly and rationally, without giving your child a chance to lie.



Armed with the power of knowledge, open communication, firm rules and consequences, you can protect your child from the dangers of drug use.

