



BRING IT UP...

WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOU TALK TO YOUTH ABOUT MARIJUANA

YOUTH:

"I know, I know. We've already talked about this."

YOUTH:

"Marijuana is a plant. It's natural. How harmful could it be?"

YOUTH:

"Would you rather I drink alcohol? Weed is so much safer."

YOUTH:

"I'm only doing it once in a while on weekends, so it's not a big deal."

YOUTH:

"But it's legal in some states; why would they make something legal that could hurt me?"

ADULT:

"My concern is that things are changing quickly and there is a lot of new information out there. I've learned some new things and I care about you so much. That's why it's important that we talk about it. Would that be okay?"

ADULT:

"Not all plants are necessarily healthy or good for you — think about cocaine or heroin or even poison ivy — they are all plants."

"I would much rather you find healthy ways to cope with difficult feelings than turn to drugs. Can we brainstorm activities and alternatives?"

ADULT:

"What is going on in your life that makes you feel like you want to do either?"

"Honestly, I don't want you to be doing anything that can harm you — whether that's smoking pot, cigarettes, drinking or behaving recklessly. I'm interested in knowing why you think weed is safer than alcohol."

ADULT:

"What would make it feel like a big deal to you?"

"I'm happy to hear that this is not something you do on a regular basis. The fact is, using any drug can be harmful at your age because your brain is still developing."

"What are some things that keep you from using?"

ADULT:

"Well, alcohol is legal, but causes damage, car accidents and other behavior that leads to jail time. Alcohol can also cause major health problems, including liver problems and addictions. Cigarettes are also legal, even though they are highly addictive and proven to cause birth defects and cancer. Just because something is legal and regulated doesn't make it safe."