

ECHO IDAHO

K12 Substance Use
Prevention & Treatment

Effective communication strategies for short, impactful conversations with Students

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Learning Objectives

- Understand the Importance of Building Good Rapport and Trust.
- Identify Things to Consider when Preparing for the “Talk”
- Identify and Review Communication Techniques

Why it's Important to Have a Conversation About Substance Use

It is crucial to have open and honest conversations with our teens about the risks associated with substance use. By providing them with accurate information and emphasizing the potential long-term effects, we can help them understand the importance of making healthy choices.

Building Rapport and Trust – Setting the Stage

- Creating a Safe and Inclusive Environment – Five Things Everyone Wants from their School
- Relationship Building
- Showing Genuine Interest and Care
- Respecting Student Autonomy
- Knowing When to Have the Talk and When Not

Five Things Everyone Wants from their School

1. To Be Safe
2. Sense of Belonging
3. Good Education
4. Opportunity to Be Involved
5. Developing Good Citizenship

Positive Teacher-Student Relationships

Demonstrates support in students' adjustment to school, contributes to their social skills, promotes academic performance, and fosters student resiliency in academic performance

(Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2010)

Impact of Teacher-Student Close Relationships

“Student-Teacher relationships throughout elementary school (first through fifth grade) found that teacher-student closeness linked to gain in reading achievement, while teacher-student conflict related to lower levels of reading achievement”

“Kinder children with more closeness and less conflict with teachers developed better social skills as they approached the middle school years”

(Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, 2010)

Ways to work on building relationships with students

- Checking our biases at the door
- Assuming good intentions
- Recognizing when we need help
- Not taking student behavior personally
- Starting the day with a clean slate



Preparing for the Conversation

- Understanding the Student Perspective
- Know when or When Not to Have the Conversation
 - Looking for the “Shaken Can”
 - Crisis Creates Major Changes
 - Crisis Cycle
- Get the Facts Before If Possible
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA.gov)
 - APP: Screen4Success

Understanding the Student Perspective

- Recognizing the Diversity of Student Experiences
- Common Challenges Faced by Students
- Debunking Myths Commonly Heard by Students
 - **“It’s just a phase.”**
 - **“Everyone is doing it.”**

When Not to Talk

Crisis Creates Major Changes:

Blood pressure

increases.

Heart rate

increases.

Respiration

increases.

Adrenaline level

increases.

Endorphin level

increases.

Reasoning skills

decrease.

Hearing skills

decrease.

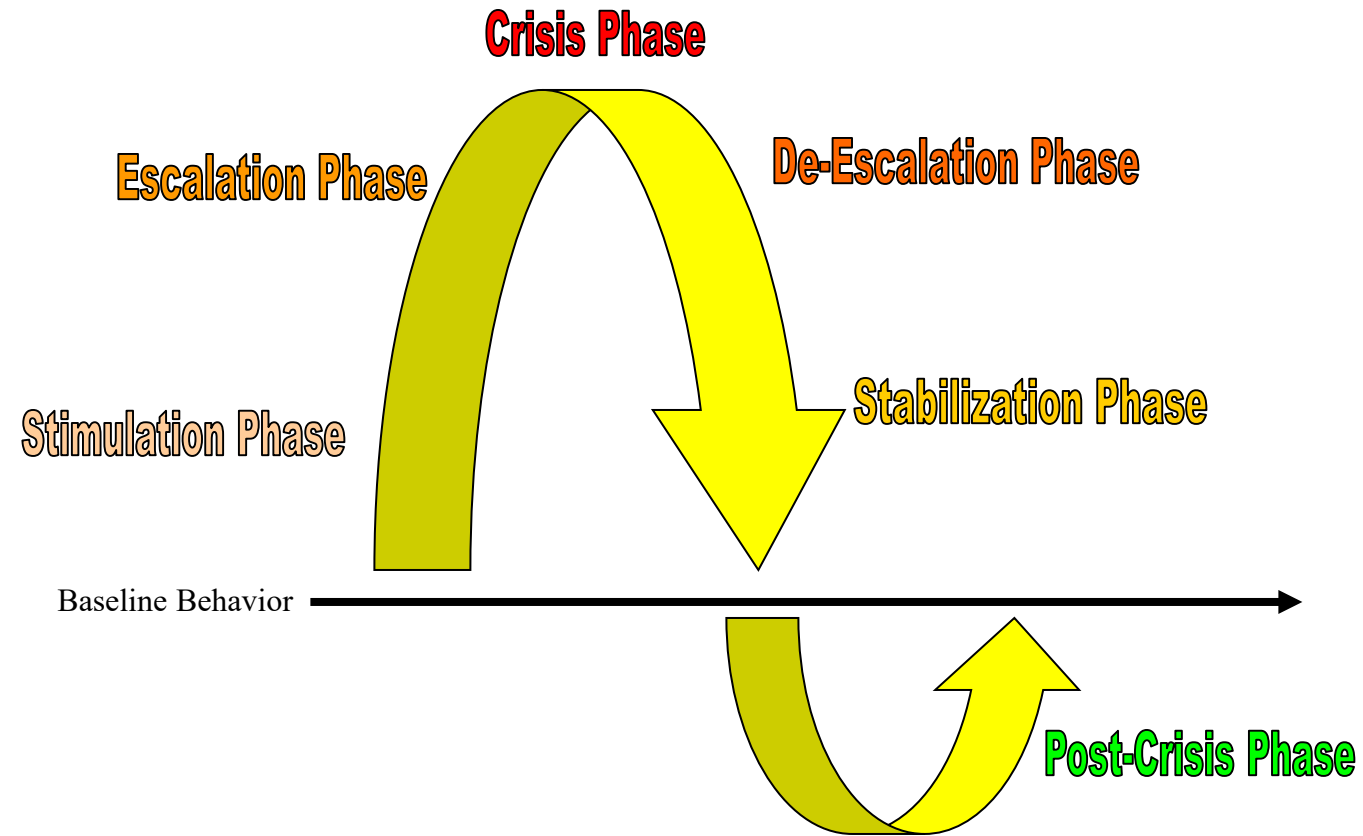
Compromising skills

decrease.

Communication skills

decrease.

Crisis Cycle



Techniques for Short, Impactful Conversations

- Keep conversations short, informal, and frequent.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage student participation
- Use Active listening to help show empathy and connect with the student.
- Be Aware of your non-verbal communication
- Have solid goals for the conversation and make your position clear.
- You don't have to be an expert to know where to get the facts.
- Be prepared for the conversation to change over time.
- If the student tells you they are struggling, support them.

Key Points

- **Communication Importance:** Effective communication strategies are crucial for impactful conversations with students.
- **Building Trust:** Creating a safe and inclusive environment helps build rapport and trust with students.
- **Teacher-Student Relationships:** Positive relationships support students' adjustment, social skills, and academic performance.
- **Substance Use Conversations:** Open discussions about substance use help teens understand risks and make healthy choices.
- **Preparation Tips:** Know when to have the conversation and use techniques like active listening and open-ended questions.

References & Resources

Resources

- Online Materials and Tools

[Talk. They Hear You: Underage Drinking Awareness Campaign | SAMHSA](#) (Online Materials, Readings, and App)

- Contact Information for Further Support

If your child is misusing drugs or alcohol, show you love them and get help. Contact their health provider or go to [FindTreatment.gov](#) for mental health and substance use disorder services in your area. You can also call the [SAMSHA National Helpline](#) at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) (TTY: 1-800-487-4889), which is free and open 24/7, 365 days a year. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

References

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration - SAMHSA
- HIDTA and ADAPT
- <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/brain-science-says-4-reasons-to-build-positive-relationships-with-students>
- <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-building-deeper-relationships-students/>