



*Alliance for Safe Kids, Inc.*

*Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drugs Information*

*Tobacco, alcohol and other drugs can all damage a promising athletic career and, in the long run, destroy a life. This athletic organization provides a safe place for children to expand their athletic skills; it also supports healthy, drug-free development of our children. The following information explains some of the dangers involved with substances our children may be exposed to in today's world:*

**Marijuana:** Today's marijuana is nearly 3 times more potent than it was just 10 years ago. Instead of smoking marijuana cigarettes (joints), teens may be smoking marijuana cigars (blunts). Marijuana can cause learning and memory deficits, and can be addictive. 60% of teens currently in drug treatment are dependent on marijuana.

**Cocaine:** Whether smoked, snorted or injected, cocaine is a powerful and highly addictive stimulant. Crack is a rock form of cocaine that is smokable. Synthetic forms of cocaine such as crystal methamphetamine (known as crystal meth or crank) are also available, and tend to be cheaper than cocaine.

**Heroin:** Like cocaine, there is a supply of very pure heroin available. Because of this purity, today's heroin can be snorted or smoked as well as injected. Heroin is a very powerful central nervous system depressant that can very quickly cause a fatal overdose. Contrary to common misconception, snorting heroin is addictive.

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is a drug, too. Alcohol and other drug use can impair judgment, which can result in inappropriate sexual behavior, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS), injuries and car crashes. Heavy use can lead to an inability to control drinking, blackouts and memory loss, cirrhosis of the liver, vitamin deficiencies, damage to heart and central nervous system, weight gain, sexual impotence.

*“Within eight to ten months of consistent drinking, children can lose 10 points from their IQ, or up to 70 points off standardized tests.” (Source: Michael Nerney in “Tips on Teens: Expert Advice on Boundaries & Communication” by Janet Weiss, The Larchmont Gazette, 11/14/03.)*

**Prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse:** 1 in 6 teens has abused a prescription pain medication; 1 in 10 report abusing prescription stimulants and tranquilizers; 1 in 11 has abused cough medication. Many teens believe medications are safer than street drugs. Abuse of medications can be lethal.

**Inhalants:** airplane glue, nail polish remover, cleaning fluids, hair spray, gasoline, Freon, cooking spray and spray paint are all examples. Kids inhale these substances to obtain a “high”. It can kill suddenly, and can kill those who sniff for the first time.

**Prescription Pain Relievers:** Codeine, Oxycontin, Hydrocodone, Percocet and Vicodin are all opioids—narcotics that relieve pain. Oxycontin is an extremely strong opiate and one of the most potent addictive pain killers ever created, with a similar effect as heroin, making both drugs attractive to the same users. A large single dose of Oxycontin can be lethal.

**Steroids:** Steroids come in tablets or liquid form. They can be taken orally or injected. Athletes who claim that steroids give them a competitive advantage or improve their physical appearance use these drugs illegally. Side effects can include (for men) shrinking of testicles, infertility, baldness and development of breasts; (for women) growth of facial hair, interruption or cessation of menstrual cycle, deepened voice; and (for teens) shortened stature as well. Emotional side effects include paranoid jealousy, delusions and impaired judgment.

**Tobacco:** All forms of tobacco (including snuff and chewing tobacco) contain nicotine, an addictive drug. Smokeless tobacco products also contain other toxic substances, such as polonium 210 and formaldehyde. Smoking reduces athletic performance and endurance, decreases lung capacity, and elevates the heart rate. This results in restricted amounts of air moving into and out of the lungs, therefore less oxygen being transferred to the blood and muscles and all body cells. It reduces the ability of muscle cells to take up oxygen – muscles don't function as well, and this reduces sports performance. It can also lead to impaired vision, and perception of time; it damages your coordination. Tobacco users are more easily exhausted, suffer shortness of breath, have reduced endurance, are slower to react, and have poorer visual judgment.

In short, usage of any illicit substance results in poorer athletic performance.

This athletic organization is committed to providing an environment that supports the health and well-being of families in the community. Your feedback is important.

Using the following scale, please let us know how helpful the above information has been.

Scale:

1= Not at all Helpful

2= Somewhat Helpful

3= Helpful

4= Very Helpful

On a scale of 1 to 4, please rate the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ The information sheet made it clear that sports ability is impacted negatively by usage of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

\_\_\_\_\_ The information sheet made me feel more comfortable/likely to talk to my kids about Tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

\_\_\_\_\_ The information sheet provided useful information about the dangers of underage use.

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### **Parent Pledge**

I have read the "*Information on substances banned from use by our athletes*" sheet provided by the Alliance for Safe Kids, Inc., and agree to talk with my child about the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other drug use.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Athlete Pledge**

I have read the "*Information on substances banned from use by our athletes*" sheet provided by the Alliance for Safe Kids, Inc., and will discuss the information with my parent(s).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_