

# TINICUM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT



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Currently the country is experiencing a high number of drug related deaths and overdoses. Parents should be aware of this epidemic and recognize the WARNING SIGNS of their children before tragedy strikes.

Be prepared to take action and have a serious conversation with your children. During the conversation ask direct questions like "Have you been drinking or using drugs?", while none of us want to hear the answer "yes", being prepared for how to respond can have a positive outcome. No all children are going to confess, and a "no" answer could also mean they may be in need of help for other reasons, including mental health issues. In either case, professional help should be considered immediately from your child's primary care doctor or a psychologist.

Here is a list of WARNING SIGNS that should not be ignored:

- Has changed relationships with family members or friends
- Uses chewing gum or mints to cover up breath
- Often uses over the counter preparations to reduce eye reddening or nasal irritation
- Frequently breaks curfew
- Have cash flow problems
- Drives recklessly, and has car accidents or unexplained dents in the car.
- Car has excessive burn marks in the seats and carpet
- Avoids eye contact
- Goes immediately to their room and locks doors without much contact
- Goes out every night
- Makes secretive phone calls
- Makes endless excuses
- Has the "munchies" or sudden appetite
- Exhibits uncharacteristically loud, obnoxious behavior
- Laughs at nothing
- Has become unusually clumsy, stumbling, lacking coordination, poor balance

- Disappears for long periods of time
- Has periods of sleeplessness or high energy, followed by long periods of "catch up" sleep.
- Has placed location apps on your phones so they can track where you the parent is?

#### MOOD AND PERSONALITY SHIFTS

- Exhibits mood changes or emotional instability
- Sullen, withdrawn, depressed
- Shows loss of inhibitions
- Silent, uncommunicative
- Hostile, angry, uncooperative
- Deceitful or secretive
- Less Motivated
- Unable to focus
- Hyperactive
- Unusually elated

#### HYGIENE AND APPEARANCE PROBLEMS

- Smell of smoke or other unusual smells on breath or on clothes
- Messy appearance
- Poor hygiene
- Red, flushed cheeks or face
- Track marks on arms or legs (wears long sleeves in warm weather)
- Burn or soot on fingers or lips.

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#### HEALTH ISSUES

- Unusually tired
- Lethargic movement
- Unable to speak intelligibly, slurred speech, or rapid-fire speech.
- Nosebleeds
- Runny nose, not caused by allergies or a cold
- Frequent sickness

- Sores, spots around mouth
- Seizures or Vomiting
- Wetting lips or excessive thirst
- Sudden or dramatic weight loss or gain
- Skin abrasions/bruises
- Accidents or injuries
- Depression
- Headaches
- Sweatiness

#### SCHOOL AND WORK CONCERNS

- Absenteeism or loss of interest
- Loss of interest in extracurricular activities, hobbies or sports
- Failure to fulfill responsibilities at school or work
- Complaints from teachers or supervisors
- Reports of intoxicated at school or work
- Can't seem to keep a job and has excuses about every job they get

#### AT HOME AND IN THE CAR

- Disappearance of prescription or over the counter pills
- Missing alcohol or cigarettes
- Disappearance of money or valuables
- Receiving unusual packages in the mail
- Smell in the car of bottles, pipes, or bongs on floor or in glove box.
- Excessive amounts of smell masking items in the car
- Hidden stashes of alcohol

PREPARE TO TAKE ACTION IS YOU SUSPECT YOUR TEEN OR YOUNG ADULT IS USING DRUGS  
! DO NOT WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE.

#### From a Parent:

*"The signs were vividly present yet camouflaged with aspects of what appeared to be just teenage behaviors. Looking back I realized, with great anguish, how my stepdaughter's disease of addiction manifested right before our very eyes"*