



Getting Past "No!"

Overcoming Resistance
to Treatment in Teens
and Young Adults



rosecrance
life's waiting®

ABOUT ROSECRANCE

Rosecrance is a private not-for-profit organization offering behavioral health services for children, adolescents, adults and families. With more than 40 locations in Northern Illinois, Southern Wisconsin and Iowa, Rosecrance offers comprehensive addiction services for adolescents and adults, including prevention, intervention, detoxification, inpatient and outpatient treatment, experiential therapies, dual-diagnosis care and family education.

Rosecrance also offers high-quality, efficient and effective outpatient mental health services for children, adults and families through a variety of programs. Rosecrance serves more than 32,000 families each year.

Taking the First Step

If you suspect your child has a problem with drugs or alcohol, it's important to get them professional help at the first sign of trouble. Rosecrance offers free confidential substance abuse assessments for teens and adults in person or by phone.

How do I know if my child has a substance abuse problem?

Mood swings, dilated pupils, change in sleeping patterns and eating habits, loss of interest in hobbies or activities, isolation, lower grades or increased tardiness in school, telling lies or giving unrealistic excuses, and using breath mints or air fresheners to cover scents are all possible signs of substance abuse.

What if my child refuses to have an assessment?

Rosecrance offers free consultations for parents in person or by phone to discuss any concerns. When necessary, we also offer intervention services.

What happens during an assessment?

A Rosecrance counselor will assess various areas of your child's life, including drug and/or alcohol use. There will be an opportunity for family members to address their concerns as well. Upon completion, the counselor will recommend the best level of care for your child.

What if my child refuses to go to treatment?

It's normal to experience some level of resistance when convincing your child to enter treatment, but it's important to follow through with the recommendation given by the counselor. The next page will give you a better idea of how to motivate your child and ease their fears.

Where can I find support for myself?

Rosecrance offers free Parent Cafés with licensed Rosecrance professionals in Naperville, IL and Hales Corners, WI and we are happy to connect you with other resources in your area.

We know that talking about a substance problem involving a loved one can feel overwhelming. At Rosecrance, we want to make the first step as simple as possible. It begins with a phone call.

To schedule an assessment or contact a Rosecrance representative call **815.391.1000** or **888.928.5278** (toll free).

Dealing with Resistance

When the conversation about getting help has resulted in refusal, denial, or defiance, what's next? Here are some common reasons for resistance and how you can prepare your child for the next step.

They're afraid to go to treatment:

Taking a virtual tour at [Rosecrance.org](https://www.rosecrance.org) is a great tool, or you can call and schedule a tour in person. Your son/daughter can also call and talk to our team directly. We are happy to answer any of their questions.

They don't think their use is "bad enough" for treatment:

The primary drug our teenage clients are using is cannabis. Substance use at a young age can cause more serious problems later in life and it's important to address the issue now before it gets worse. Our professional counselors will only recommend the most appropriate level of care for our clients. (See page 3 for more information on adolescent substance abuse.)

They don't want to leave their friends:

Clients are allowed to write and receive letters in treatment, but if friends are influencing their behavior, this may not be conducive to their recovery. Now is the time to focus on themselves.

They'll fall behind in school:

Our adolescent campus has a school on-site with certified teachers who work with their home school so they miss as little as possible. During the school year, teens spend four hours a day, five days a week in the classroom.

They won't go unless court ordered:

Once court ordered, they may not have their choice of facility, and might have to go to a much longer program. Taking ownership of their own admission will make a big difference with regard to the legal system and its response.

They will go in a few days:

If they don't want to go today, they likely still won't want to go in a few days. It's important to get them in as soon as possible before their issue gets worse or they become more resistant. (See page 4 for common mistakes parents make when dealing with their child's resistance.)



Adolescent Substance Abuse

Adolescence is a critical period for the onset of substance use and its potentially debilitating consequences. Adolescents are more prone than adults to taking risks, including experimenting with drugs and alcohol.

The human brain is not fully developed until around age 25.

The regions of the brain that are critical to decision making, judgement, impulse control, emotion and memory are not yet fully developed in adolescence.

Because the teen brain is still developing, addictive substances physically alter its structure and function faster and more intensely than in adults, interfering with brain development, further impairing judgement and heightening the risk of addiction.¹

The younger you are when you start using drugs or alcohol, the more likely you are to become addicted.

Youth who start drinking before age 15 years are five times more likely to develop alcohol dependence or abuse than those who begin drinking at or after age 21 years.²

An estimated nine percent of all marijuana users will become addicted, but those who begin using before the age of 18 are 4-7 times more likely to become addicted than adults.³

Sources:

1. Adolescent Substance Use: America's #1 Public Health Problem, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2011
2. Underage Drinking, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), 2016.
3. Marijuana, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), 2016.

Common Mistakes

Admitting your son or daughter has a drug or alcohol problem can be difficult. You may have some struggles of your own to overcome. In order for your child to get the most out of treatment, it's important not to make these common mistakes.

Minimizing the problem

If you think “All kids drink,” or “Marijuana’s not harmful,” think again. According to the 2014 Monitoring the Future Survey, 60 percent of high school seniors have NOT consumed alcohol in the past month. Long-term, regular use of marijuana may impair brain development, lower IQ and cause respiratory problems. Not understanding the scope of your child’s substance issue can delay interventions that can save them from more serious problems in the future.

Denying the problem exists

Denial is a defense mechanism. There’s a tendency to deny a problem in youth because the progression of the disease may not have advanced. We start to believe stories and excuses that don’t make sense. Trust your gut – if something doesn’t sound or feel right, it probably isn’t.

Emotional Manipulation

Hope: *“I promise I’ll never use again. I’ve learned my lesson.”*

You want to believe your child, and you hope the problem will go away on its own, but when left untreated, substance abuse issues tend to get worse.

Fear: *“I’ll run away! You’ll never see me again!”*

You may be afraid of making things worse by addressing your child’s drug or alcohol use, but in the long-run your relationship with your child will be stronger because of it.

Guilt: *“You’re too busy with your own life! You drink all the time!”*

Your child may blame you for their actions and you may even feel some responsibility for their problem, but getting your child help is the best thing you can do for them.

Sympathy: *“My life sucks! I’m bored! I have nothing else to do!”*

Your child may try to make you feel sorry for them in an effort to avoid confrontation. If you give in to this behavior, they may never get better.



Not setting clear expectations

Even using alcohol or drugs once or twice can develop into problems with school, the law, your health and hinder good relationships. Let your child know that there are consequences for using drugs and alcohol, and it can affect their healthy development. Research shows the more parents talk to their children about drugs and alcohol, the less likely the children are to become users.

Not following through with consequences

Say what you mean and mean what you say. Establishing consequences for behavior is an important part of parenting, especially with a teen who is using drugs and alcohol. If you're not following through with your consequences, your child will continue with their destructive behavior.

Operating under the “Do as I say and not as I do” mentality

What kind of example are you setting? Believe it or not, your kids are listening to you, but more importantly, they are watching you and modeling their lives after you. Parents are the biggest influence in their teens' life.

Rescuing kids from the consequences of their choices

You may think you're helping your child by blaming the school for their code of conduct violations, lying for them, or protecting them from legal consequences. But if you don't let your kids face their own consequences, they will never learn from their mistakes.

Allowing kids to drink or use drugs under your supervision

Allowing teens to drink or use drugs with your knowledge sends a double message that it's okay to use other times too. Just because they are being supervised, doesn't make substance use safer for your child.

Residential Locations:

Griffin Williamson Campus (teens)
1601 N. University Drive
Rockford, IL 61107

Harrison Campus (adults)
3815 Harrison Avenue
Rockford, IL 61108

Chicagoland Locations:

3701 N. Ashland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60613

20635 Abbey Woods Court North, Suite 310
Frankfort, IL 60423

47 6th Avenue, Suite L
LaGrange, IL 60525

2135 CityGate Lane, Suite 300
Naperville, IL 60563

1200 Shermer Road, Suite 104
Northbrook, IL 60062

120 S. Marion Street (Thrive Counseling Center)
Oak Park, IL 60302

To learn more about the services
at these facilities, visit
rosecrance.org.

To schedule an appointment or talk to a
Rosecrance representative, please contact us at:
815.391.1000 or **888.928.5278** (toll free)
or **info@rosecrance.org**.

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