WARNING: SYNTHETIC DRUGS

The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) warns about the dangers of synthetic drugs.

Generic "street" names include herbal highs, party pills, herbal ecstasy or bath salts. Some of the specific brand names include Kronic, White Revolver, Ash Inferno and Black Widow.

Effects reported after using synthetic drugs include:
- Suicidal thoughts
- Agitation
- Combative/Violent behaviour
- Confusion
- Hallucinations/psychosis
- Increased heart rate
- Hypertension
- Chest Pain
- DEATH or serious injury

The speed of onset is 15 minutes, while the length of the high from these drugs is four to six hours.

So what can parents say to young people about the dangers of these drugs?

A good overarching message to kids is to avoid putting anything in their bodies that would change their feelings or emotions – whether it is something they would smoke, drink, take in pill form or shoot with a needle. The human brain is an incredible machine, and you need to be even more careful with a teenage brain because it is a work in progress.

Additional messages include:
- It is impossible to know what these drugs contain, who made them or what you are going to get.
- Getting high – no matter how – carries risks of making unsafe or unhealthy decisions.
- Just because a drug is legal – or is labelled as legal – does not mean that it is safe.
- We don’t know the long-term effects of synthetic drugs because the drugs are so new.

Here are important tips, you can use to give your kids happy, healthy and safe futures, and help them avoid the dangers of drugs

COMMUNICATE
1. Clearly communicate the risks of alcohol and drug use
2. Let your child know you disapprove of any drinking or drug use.
   a. Kids who believe their parents will be upset if they try drugs are 43 percent less likely to do so.
3. Use teachable moments to talk about drinking and using drugs.
4. Frequently talk and listen to your kids about how things are going

MONITOR
1. Know WHO your child is with
2. Know WHAT they’re doing
3. Know WHERE your child will be
4. Know WHEN your child is expected home
5. Know who your teen’s friends are – communicate with their parents
6. Establish and enforce rules – including a clear “no use” policy

SPOT DRUG USE
Here are five changes to watch for…
1. Declining school work and grades
2. Abrupt changes in friends, groups or behaviour
3. Sleeping habits and abnormal health issues
4. Deteriorating relationships with family
5. Less openness and honesty

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SPOT DRUG USE
1. Focus, you can do this
   - Don’t panic, but act right away
2. Start talking
   - Let your child know you are concerned
Communicate your disapproval

3. Set limits, rules and consequences
4. Monitor – look for evidence, make lists, keep track
5. Get outside/professional help – you don’t have to do this alone

Help and support

**Western Australia**

**Parent Drug Information Service (PDIS)**
Perth: 08 9442 5050
Regional: 1800 653 203

**Alcohol & Drug Information Service (ADIS)**
Perth: 08 9442 5000
Regional WA: 1800 198 024

A 24-hour, confidential telephone service that provides information, counselling, referral and advice.