



Is your child at risk?

Many things place young people at risk today. But at risk for what? Involvement with the legal system? Drug Abuse? School dropout? Being targeted by an on-line predator? There is no simple test or an instruction manual to follow.

As a parent you must first and foremost **stay actively involved in your child's life**. Kids need their parents and really do want you to stay involved in their lives!

- Be observant
- Meet their friends
- Check with other parents your child is spending time with
- Keep lines of communication open
- Set reasonable guidelines for your child's behavior.

Here are some things that can be **warning signs**:

- Have there been changes in their friendships that cause alarm? Do they refuse to allow you to meet their friends, or their new associates who are known to use alcohol, drugs or are in trouble?
- Have they lost interest in former activities, sports or hobbies?
- Does he or she struggle with basic family rules and expectations?
- Are grades falling?
- Does your son or daughter seem depressed or withdrawn?
- Are there instances of verbal attack and rage, resulting in parents having to be very careful in approach?
- Are there threats to run away from home or to live with others?
- Does he or she engage in self-injurious behavior or self- destructive behavior?
- Is an excessive amount of time spent on line?
- Is an excessive amount of time spent playing violent video games?
- Sharing of strange thoughts and feelings or unusual behaviors?
- Are there instances of deceitfulness and manipulation?
- Is there a severe lack of motivation?
- Has the young person been caught or suspected to be stealing money or personal items from others in the home or whom they are acquainted with?
- Do you suspect experimentation with alcohol and other drugs?
- Is the teen sexually promiscuous?

Not sure where to turn?

When issues occur, address them immediately. Ignoring them will only result in escalation of the problem. for the service or referral that may be of help.