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Online Exposure



Where can you see teenage girls licking beer off the floor, a step-by-step guide to smoking crack, and boys drinking six cups of beer in 10 seconds? Videos like these are just a click away and they're more pervasive than you might think.

As you might have seen on the [Today Show](#), a new National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign study about drug-related videos on popular Web sites reveals:

- Nearly one in 20 teens viewed drug-related videos online during a one-month period; 35 percent were under age 16 (Nielsen Online Custom Study).
- Almost 40 percent of drug-related videos contain explicit use of drugs and/or intoxication (Nielsen Online Custom Study).
- Even the youngest kids have access to dangerous online content. More than 8.9 million two-to 11-year-olds viewed video online in August 2008 (Nielsen Online, Video Census).
- Nearly a third of students say their parents would disapprove if they knew what they were really doing on the Internet (i-Safe Survey)

With teens spending so much of their time online and so many new Web sites, gadgets, and digital platforms popping up every day, how can parents effectively monitor their teens' technological habits?

[Catch up with your teen's tech savvy with this digital crash course.](#)

Even with so much media influence, parents can still encourage teens to assert their independence from the collective pop culture:

1. Discuss (don't lecture!) values in your own life.

Clarify the values you live by, how you have chosen those values, and examples of how the values have been in sync or out of sync with the larger culture.

2. Make rules about media use in your household.

Use of Facebook, cell phones, and e-mail is a parenting decision. Keep the computer in a public space in the home and enforce cell phone "turn-off" times.

3. Teach your teen to have healthy skepticism.

Help your child detach from the larger culture enough to see its strengths and weaknesses. Encourage your teens to think more critically about the world and to question ideas or

"Should I be worried about YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace?"

Many teens say their parents are unaware of the wide-ranging access they have to risky behaviors once they are in front of a computer screen. And while these popular sites offer some positive opportunities for staying in touch and learning new things, they also expose teens to drug use, promiscuity, and people they've never met offline. Establish clear rules about what your kids can watch online, who they can talk to, and what they can download. Be sure to check the computer history to see where they've been going.

Learn more about [monitoring your teen's online habits.](#)

actions promoted on the Internet, in music, or on TV.

Get more [tips from TheAntiDrug.com on communicating family values.](#)

NEWS ❖



U.S. official says online drug videos threaten teens

The U.S. Drug Czar says that videos showing people getting high pose a dangerous threat to teenagers by encouraging them to use drugs and alcohol.

[Read full article >>](#)

ADVICE ❖



Losing your teen to cyberspace? Candice Kelsey, author of *Generation MySpace*, offers [guidance for parents who are looking to reconnect](#) with their tech-savvy teens.

FREE RESOURCES ❖



Looking for **FREE** anti-drug information? Check out all of *TheAntiDrug.com's* [Parent Resources>>](#)

And check out our comprehensive package of materials, including an e-guide, fact sheet, pop-culture quiz, and more on [teens and technology.](#)

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