

As seen in *Good Housekeeping*, *Redbook*, and *Woman's Day*

GREATER SAN DIEGO Healthcare Profiles

Your Child. Under Pressure. Under your Radar.

We haven't learned much in fifty years. Kids are still using marijuana as their first step toward other, more deadly highs. Parents are still saying, "It can't happen to my child."

"Yes, it can," says Interventionist Nancy Knott.

"It's happening in every neighborhood, from the most elite to the most humble. It's happening in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. We have an epidemic in this country, and we are losing our teens to drugs at an alarming rate."

Grim words...from a woman who knows.

Nancy works at the Scripps McDonald Center at Scripps Health in La Jolla. She specializes in reclaiming adolescents who are heading toward ruin at breakneck speed.

"Teens are under tremendous pressure at school, at home, out with their friends," says Nancy, "and that pressure needs a release. Teens find it in the numbing effects of alcohol, marijuana, prescription drugs, and heroin."

Saving your child's life

"Parents often learn about a child's substance abuse in the emergency room, following a catastrophe like an overdose or a car wreck," relates Nancy. "By then, it may be too late. Parents need to be as watchful with their teens as they were when those children were toddlers."

Watch for changes in mood, behavior, and school performance. Take note of your child's friends. Check Internet activity, know what's in your teen's bedroom, check on them before and during sleepovers and parties. You're not violating your child's privacy, assures Nancy. You're fighting for your child's life.

If you find reason to worry, seek help.

The Scripps McDonald Center offers a free assessment to any family concerned that a child may have an alcohol or drug problem.

The Center hosts a free seminar every Thursday night at 7:00 pm to educate families about what to look for, and what is being observed in the youth community.

For teens already caught in the grip of substance abuse, the Scripps McDonald Center offers a 12-week intensive outpatient intervention program. Teens meet at the center after school three times a week for three-hour sessions. Teens and their families receive education and support services to help them avoid drugs and alcohol and make positive changes in their lives.

"Parents who remember the 60s and 70s and think of drug use as a rite of passage need to know this: today, that 'rite of passage' isn't to the next stage of their child's life. It's to the cemetery. —Nancy Knott, CADC II"



Scripps McDonald Center

To learn more about the adolescent outpatient program, visit www.mcdonald-center.scripps.org

Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla
9896 Genesee Avenue, La Jolla, CA 92037
858-626-4300 800-382-4357

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