Strengthening Families Program by Dr. Karol Kumpfer

Monitoring Kids' Activities and Well-Being

Monitoring means knowing where your children are, who they're with, what they're doing, when they'll be home, and whether there will be alcohol or drugs at the activity.

Monitoring is also being aware of their emotional state. It is an essential parenting skill to protect kids from using harmful substances or participating in harmful behavior.

Monitoring children and teens is essential because the risk-taking part of a teen's brain develops very early in life, and the good judgment, impulse-control part of the part of the brain doesn't finish developing until the early 20s. Because parents have the legal and moral responsibility to protect their children from harm, they have the inherent right to monitor their children's activities, rooms, possessions, and online and phone activity—regardless of how loudly teens push back.

Monitor these things:	Use these skills:
• Friends • Activities • Emotional well-being • Substance use • Online use • Risk for sexual abuse	• Trust but verify • Use the 5 Ws (below for reference) • Make sure activities are alcohol- and drug-free • Set a curfew • Practice the 5 Cs often with your child (below) • Involve friends' parents • Have pleasant personal chats; ask if they're happy • Teach about boundaries and consent

5 Ws

1. **Where** are you going?
2. **Who** are you going with?
3. **What** will you be doing?
4. **When** will you return?
5. **Will** there be alcohol or drugs there?

5 Cs

For you to practice with your children:

1. **Caution:** Ask Questions
2. **Cool it:** Name the negative behavior & say no
3. **Change the plan:** Suggest a better idea
4. **Catch you later:** Leave if necessary
5. **Call me:** Call me if you change your mind

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