

# Parent Observation Form

## Symptom List

**Spotting any of these behaviors may be a serious concern. However, understanding adolescent behavior can be confusing. Before coming to any conclusions, consult your school counselor, a drug/alcohol counselor, or another knowledgeable professional.**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate the following behaviors on a scale of 0–5:

(0=Not present; 1=Present but least prominent; 5=most pervasive)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **A Drop In Grades**—This could be a slow decrease in the past six months to a year or a sudden decrease. Increase in absence or tardiness in school. Dropping courses. Adding numerous study halls.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Switching Friends**—Are you seeing a different set of friends? More friends that you object to? Not meeting any friends? Older friends? Friends who have dropped out of school, quit jobs frequently, have no job? Hostile or negative peers as a pattern? Friends joke and talk openly about drugs and alcohol?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Emotional Highs and Lows** (ugly mood swings, unreasonable resentments)—Easily upset, emotional state changes rapidly, doesn't seem as happy as she/he used to be.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. **Defiance to Rules and Regulations**—Pushing limits around the home and at school; not doing assignments; missing curfew; selective skipping, truancy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. **Becoming More Secretive**—Personal problems, strange phone calls, incommunicado stance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. **Loss of Initiative**—Less energy, sleeping more than usual; always late for curfew; school absence a pattern; not where they are supposed to be; change in appearance; hygiene, long sleeves in hot weather; becoming more sloppy; wearing some clothes frequently, wearing predominantly dark, black clothing; inattentiveness; lethargy in class.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. **Many Excuses and Alibis for Missing Curfew**—Not coming home on time, not coming home at all, constant excuses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. **Isolating Her/Himself**—Withdrawn, chronically unhappy, moping, irritability, unreasonable resentment.

- \_\_\_ 9. **Selling Possessions**—Clothing, records, gifts, jewelry; seems to have money but no job. Suspicious exchanges of money, gambling or debt repayment in school.
- \_\_\_ 10. **Parents Feeling Manipulated/Bargained With**—Playing one parent/family member against another.
- \_\_\_ 11. **Weight Changes**—Drastic loss or gain; eating disorder behavior.
- \_\_\_ 12. **Short-Tempered**—Becomes angry often, short fuse, takes aggressions out on others, fights in school/home, poor impulse control, cursing, threatening.
- \_\_\_ 13. **Legal Problems**—Driving while intoxicated, being at parties that get broken up by police, being brought home by police for stealing or vandalism, trespassing, etc.
- \_\_\_ 14. **Wearing Pro-drug Clothing**—Hats, T-shirts, jewelry.
- \_\_\_ 15. **Calls to Home from School**—Regarding poor attendance, poor performance, poor attitude.
- \_\_\_ 16. **Coming Home Drunk or High**—Smelling of pot or alcohol, seems unusually giddy, slurred speech, red and glassy eyes, avoids contact with you, goes directly to room.
- \_\_\_ 17. **Finding Paraphernalia**—Papers, pipes, clips, drugs, bottles, pills, *High Times* magazine or doodlings that are drug or alcohol specific.
- \_\_\_ 18. **Abusive Behavior**—Verbally or physically abusive to family members, history of physical, verbal abuse in the home.
- \_\_\_ 19. **Running Away From Home**
- \_\_\_ 20. **Boys Dating Girls That Are Much Younger**—A 19-year-old “going out” with a 15-year-old, or a 22-year-old dating a 16-year-old, etc.
- \_\_\_ 21. **Preoccupation**—With heavy metal music, rap music, or reggae music.
- \_\_\_ 22. **Involvement With The Occult**—Black bible, black candles, satanic doodlings, upside down crosses, pentagrams, goat heads, witches spells, etc.
- \_\_\_ 23. **Frequent Vague Physical Complaints**—Looking unwell, unhealthy.
- \_\_\_ 24. **A Family Predisposition For Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency**
- \_\_\_ 25. **Talks Openly About Drugs**—In a bragging way about drug-using prowess.

\_\_\_ **TOTAL SCORE**

## Interpretation of Total Score

- 0-7** Low risk; continued monitoring recommended, no formal action required at this time.
- 8-13** Your son or daughter is in a “need to rule it out category.” Please consult your pediatrician and school drug counselor, school counselor, or assistant principal today.
- 14-20** Your son or daughter has begun to show some traditional red flags for a high-risk student. Close scrutiny of peer interactions and evening and unsupervised activities is warranted.
- 21+** Indicates a high proclivity for drug involvement and a need for counseling and/or formal drug and alcohol intervention. Run, do not walk, to your School Drug and Alcohol Counselor’s office to request a formal drug and alcohol evaluation. In addition, ask your pediatrician to perform a supervised urine screen and/or hair follicle test to check for mood-altering agents.