

# INTENSE BY NATURE

## YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD GET INVOLVED

Parental support and family commitment are protection factors that can help young people steer clear of problems with drugs, alcohol, and gambling. As parents, you can play a key role in supporting your child and promoting his/her involvement in structured activities.

## WHAT WE MEAN BY “INVOLVEMENT”

- › Involvement means participating in a variety of activities, such as volunteer work, social action, individual or team sports, music, arts, or intellectual endeavors. These activities may be with the family, at school, or in community youth organizations.
- › Activities count as “involvement” when they connect a person with the outside world and are considered to be important, significant, and structured, with a clear goal.
- › Involvement means more than just playing with friends or watching TV. The activities must allow the person to mix with caring adults who support and encourage involvement.

## THERE’S SO MUCH MORE TO LIFE

As part of *Drug Awareness Week*, young people age 13 to 16 will have access at school or through community organizations to materials designed to promote their involvement. And since young people at this age will eventually have choices to make about drugs, alcohol, and gambling, the *Drug Awareness Week* material also includes accurate and consistent information on drug and alcohol use and gambling.

Talking to teens about drugs and alcohol can be difficult. If you need ideas to open up a dialogue with your child, want to learn more, or would like help, go to [dependances.gouv.qc.ca](http://dependances.gouv.qc.ca) and click on *Drugs and Alcohol*, then *Parent Support*.

## BENEFITS OF INVOLVEMENT

When young people get involved in an activity that matches their interests, they not only develop their talents, they also learn to know themselves better and develop skills that are useful in all types of situations.

Examples include asserting themselves, developing critical thinking, respecting others and their differences, recognizing people who are a good influence, understanding themselves better, building confidence, developing perseverance, understanding social rules and standards, managing stress, emotions, and expectations of themselves and others, managing criticism or outside influences, developing team spirit and cooperation, etc.

These benefits are important for young people and can make them less vulnerable to problems associated with drugs, alcohol, and gambling.

## A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

There are many stimulating and engaging social, sporting, artistic, manual, and intellectual activities available.

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### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:

- › Community involvement (mutual aid, human rights, health)
- › Humanitarian committees
- › Student parliament
- › Homework assistance
- › Environmental protection
- › Recycling club
- › Student coop

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### SPORTING ACTIVITIES:

- › Team sports: Soccer, basketball, hockey, baseball, volleyball, ringette, etc.
- › Individual sports: Swimming, skiing, figure skating, judo, kickboxing, gymnastics, etc.

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### CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES:

- › Photography
- › Writing
- › Dance
- › Singing
- › Music
- › Drawing
- › Improv

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### MANUAL ACTIVITIES:

- › Carpentry
- › Sewing
- › Jewelry making
- › Mechanics
- › Bicycle repair

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### INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES:

- › Reading club
- › *Reach for the Top*
- › Science
- › Journalism
- › Chess
- › Computer science

This list is just a beginning—there are endless choices and a host of possibilities young people can explore to discover their passions.