

A.C.T. – ASK, CARE, TELL

Directions:

Help your teen become empowered to:

- ✧ **ASK** when they observe a red flag in a friend's life.
- ✧ **CARE** about their friend by responding without judgment and with support when that friend discloses an unsafe secret or unsafe situation.
- ✧ And, most importantly, **TELL**. Your teen needs to understand that they must involve a trusted adult and either accompany that friend when they tell an adult or tell an adult themselves if the friend feels as though they cannot tell.

The most important lesson for teens to learn is that they must tell.

A.C.T.

Discuss these responses with your teen. Help them to understand how important it is for them to A.C.T. if they observe a friend in an unsafe situation.

ASK – when your teen observes a red flag in a friend's life. Encourage the following questions that they can use to begin a supportive conversation with that friend.

- ✧ "Is everything OK?"
- ✧ "Is something bothering you?"
- ✧ "Do you need some help?"
- ✧ "What can I do to help?"
- ✧ "Is there anything you want to tell me?"
- ✧ "Is there anything going on that is worrying you?"

CARE – help your teen to understand how important it is for them to respond without judgment and with support when that friend discloses an unsafe secret or unsafe situation.

- ✧ "I understand why you are..."
- ✧ "That must be difficult for you."
- ✧ "That must be tough on you."
- ✧ "I am your friend and I want to help you."
- ✧ "I care about you."
- ✧ "What is happening to you is not your fault."

And, most importantly, **TELL**. Your teen must involve a trusted adult and either accompany that friend when they tell an adult or tell an adult themselves if the friend feels as though they cannot tell.

- ✧ "You need to tell someone. I will go with you."
- ✧ "We can go and tell ... (teacher, school counselor, principal, my mother and father, our scout leader, our coach, our pastor, our school resource officer)."
- ✧ "Even if you don't tell anyone, I have to tell because you are not safe."
- ✧ "It's OK to tell."

Use each of these scenarios to practice the concept of A.C.T. with your teen. Using the examples of responses above, discuss with your teen what they would do in each situation.

1. Your best friend since kindergarten suddenly thinks that you are too babyish to hang out with anymore, begins to dress in revealing clothing, and seems to flirt with the older boys at school.

Ask – What will you ask?

Your friend tells you that she is afraid of her stepfather.

Care – What will you say now?

Tell – What will you say?

2. Your friend who is a straight-A student is now not turning in homework and failing tests.

Ask – What would you ask?

Your friend tells you that things are tough at home.

Care – What will you say now?

Tell – What will you say?

3. When you spend the night with your friend you witness her locking her bedroom door and pushing a dresser in front of the door.

Ask – What would you ask?

My brother and his friend are home from college and I don't want him to come in my room again.

Care – What will you say now?

Tell – What will you say?

4. You notice bruises on a friend's upper arm while changing clothes during gym.

Ask – What would you ask?

My mom got fired again and is pretty mad about that.

Care – What will you say now?

Tell – What will you say?

5. Your usually calm teammate is now having problems with his anger, losing his temper and yelling at others for no real reason.

Ask – What would you ask?

Your friend tells you that he just can't take it much longer.

Care – What will you say now?

Tell – What will you say?