

## Unmask Drug Paraphernalia and Lingo

Do you know drug paraphernalia and lingo when you see or hear it?

Go to any shopping mall and you might be surprised to learn of the countless stores selling items that not only promote drug use, but also provide the means for teens to engage in drug-related activities.

Posters, stickers, T-shirts, key chains, and air fresheners may be obvious items to spot in a line-up, but drug paraphernalia comes in many forms. Some paraphernalia is specifically designed to look like everyday items that you might find in a teen's room, backpack, purse or car.

The Drug Enforcement Agency says drug paraphernalia is often marketed specifically to youth — with colorful logos, celebrity pictures and designs like smiley faces on the products. The items are meant to look harmless and disguise the dangers of taking controlled substances. For example, items made to look like magic markers can conceal pipes, and small, hand-painted, blown glass items look more like pretty trinkets than pipes or stash containers.

Drug lingo is also a tool teens use to disguise their drug related activities. Teens are always developing a language that is unique to them. But in some cases this language is more of a coded message than an effort to stay trendy. Have you heard teens reference the time “4:20?” This is a “secret code” for time to get high. The reference to 420 presumably dates back to ‘70s stoner lingo but is still widely used by youth today. It can also be tied to the reference of April 20<sup>th</sup>, designated as “National Pot Smokers Day”

**The attentiveness of parents and adult influencers is critical.** By knowing what to look for and what to listen for, parents can continue to play an important role in the lives of their children.

This article is brought to you by the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. For more information on drug paraphernalia and lingo, visit [http://www.theantidrug.com/ei/watch\\_for.asp](http://www.theantidrug.com/ei/watch_for.asp).

You can help educate your teen on the dangers of drug use by encouraging them to visit [www.Freevibe.com](http://www.Freevibe.com), a Web-site dedicated to educating teens on making drug-free choices. Additional materials, including brochures, posters, and postcards, are available free of charge through the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 1-800-788-2800.