There are two main kinds of opioids...
LISTEN FIRST, TALK AFTER.
Creating a safe space to talk about drugs and other substances, without judgment, is important for healthy outcomes. Although it may be hard to do so, avoid language and conversations that focus on “just say no.” Taking time to explore life contexts and underlying reasons for substance use may lead to more long-lasting and healthy choices.

SOME TIPS ON TALKING!

Talk story often
Chat about routine matters in an open way to help talk about more serious matters later.

Be realistic and honest
Be honest about opinions versus facts, and you will be viewed as a reliable resource. Acknowledging substance use without judgment helps to encourage trust-building.

Show, not tell
Share and use stories and experiences (rather than “lessons”) to explore ideas and attitudes around drug and substance use.

Be consistent
Model the type of communication you would like to see. For example, show that you are paying attention by removing distractions such as phones/computer. Set and keep boundaries and expectations.

Reduce harm
If substance use is happening, suggest abstinence as just one of many choices for moving forward. For example, referral to counseling or support groups may be more effective at first.

Offer options
Talk with youth about pain treatment and management options (e.g., acupuncture, meditation, counseling) and refer them to an expert.

What Can I Do and Where Can I Find Out More?

- Safety First: A Reality-Based Approach to Teens and Drugs
drugpolicy.org/sites/default/files/DPA_SafetyFirst_2014_0.pdf

- Substance Use Prevention: A Resource Guide for School Staff
whitehouse.gov/ondcp/additional-links-resources/resource-guide-for-school-staff/

- Coalition For a Drug-Free Hawai‘i
drugfreehawaii.org

- Hawai‘i Prevention Resource Center
hiprc808.org, phone 808-545-3228 ext. 34

- The Hawai‘i Opioid Initiative
hawaiiopioid.org

- RMC Health Education Skills Models
rmc.org/health-education-skills-models/