



## **STEPS Ministries Announces Launch of PACES for Parents, a New Online Learning Center to Help Parents Protect Kids from Substance Abuse**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2021

STEPS Ministries, a Birmingham-based non-profit organization that focuses on life improvement and addiction prevention, has launched a new program called PACES for Parents, an online learning center with products that help parents protect their kids from substance abuse and other critical issues. They are also announcing the Proactive Parenting Program for organizations to offer prevention training to people they reach.

2020 was one of the deadliest years on record in terms of substance abuse. In January, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a spike in [drug overdose deaths](#) between June 2019 and June 2020. Over that 12-month-period, the U.S. reported 81,003 deaths, the highest recorded number of fatal overdoses in U.S. history.

America's youth are at a particular high risk for overdosing as substance abuse normally starts early, with many saying that 90% of people with addiction started to drink or use before the age of 18. In fact, a [survey](#) conducted by the CDC this past fall found that substance abuse remained prevalent among U.S. high school students in 2019.

In response to this crisis, STEPS Ministries has launched PACES for Parents, which features proven, research-based principles parents can learn at home to help protect their kids from substance abuse.

"I care deeply about the problem of teenage substance abuse and the challenges that poses for parents because I've been there," said Steve Ward, founder and Executive Director of STEPS Ministries. "I started drinking in high school, and that early desire to 'fit in and feel cool' turned into a 30-year struggle with alcoholism. And our older son had serious issues with drugs and alcohol that started when he was a teenager. I know how substance abuse affects the whole family and how it can tear lives apart."

The online learning center provides content and training in five areas:

Preparation: Become proactive and prepared to protect your kids from substance abuse.

Awareness: Be aware of what your kids are going through and challenges they face.

Connection: Deepen and strengthen your relationship with your son or daughter.

Education: Equip your kids to deal with life issues and situations they will face.

Steps: Build a plan to help them become the man or woman they are meant to be.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been especially difficult for America's teenagers. As a result, many risk adopting unhealthy habits, such as drinking alcohol or using drugs, to cope with these historically-challenging times.

However, PACES for Parents integrates a unique focus on prevention to get ahead of substance use problems before they turn into an addiction and incorporates emotional, spiritual, personal and recovery principles into easy-to-understand steps. As parents put these concepts into practice, their children will not only be safer, but happier as well. These resources are also delivered virtually which allows parents to utilize them more easily during the pandemic.

Also being announced is the easy-to-implement Proactive Parenting Program which allows churches, companies and other organizations to make prevention resources available to their members, employees, or clients. These groups can offer virtual prevention information and training with very little planning or overhead, multiplying the potentially life-saving benefits of the material.

The PACES for Parents online learning center and the Proactive Parenting Program are available now. Learn more at [StepsProactiveParenting.com](https://StepsProactiveParenting.com).