

Dear Friends: This is an open letter to any youngster or not so youngster who is abusing drugs, whether street drugs, prescription or over-the counter drugs, or inhalants. It's also a letter to any parents who want to educate themselves and their family about drugs and the effects they can have on the body and soul.

I wish so much that I had read a book as comprehensive as this one when my beloved only child was 15 years old. Had I done so, I would have recognized that he was abusing alcohol and a laundry list of illegal drugs and inhalants. I believe I would have helped him before he spent three years tangled up in a lifestyle that almost killed him and certainly damaged his ability to think clearly.

In my earlier book, "America's Hidden Epidemic: Young Adult Alcohol Abuse", I addressed the epidemic of underage and college age heavy and binge drinking and how individuals and parents can help prevent or treat that life-threatening behavior. In "Using is Abusing: the Dark Side of Drugs", I go after the subject of drug abuse – whether the drugs are street drugs, prescription or Over the Counter (OTC) drugs, or inhalants.

I hold nothing back. I tell it like it is. If you want or need to know about symptoms of various drug abuse, why youths use various drugs, how they affect the body, why very young kids are in more danger from drug dealers today than ever before, it's all here.

I left no stone unturned to find the information that will help you know what may be happening to your child, how to intervene and how to find the right treatment in time to save your child, or yourself.

I've also made a special effort to understand and pass the understanding of what "rapid detox", a controversial detoxification means. I've interviewed the founder's sister who helped to bring the procedure to America from Israel in the 80s. I've gone investigative and checked with others who now offer or have offered "rapid detox." I want you to understand all the options open to you.

In this book as I did in the first one about alcohol abuse, I keep talking to youngsters as I also talk to parents. Sometimes a strange voice can do more than a parent's voice. I pray that together we may be able to save lives and futures.

All my prayers are with you and yours, *Mary Weston*