

**TEEN TALK** (an original column from The Daily Record)

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Your letters are great! Keep 'em coming! And remember to put "TeenTalk" in the subject line of your emails! Write us a note right now (teentalk@the-daily-record-com). We're listening!

Dear Teen Talk,

I have a problem with one of my friends. She was so nice to me at the beginning of the year but since this one girl came, she has been so mean to me. I think my friend is doing drugs now and I don't know what to do. I love her like a sister. Will you please help me try to tell her how I feel? I'm afraid to because everyone at my school thinks I'm tough and don't worry about people. That's not true. I don't want the people at my school to think I am weak, so how should I tell her without her telling everyone?? Please help me.

- Tough Girl

Dear Tough Girl,

You're a great friend for wanting to try to save the friendship and your friend! But what's this about not wanting to seem weak? Is it weak to be a great friend, to care about people, and to think it's stupid to ruin your life with drugs? Everyone we know thinks that's what strong kids do! You're one tough cookie - tough as nails - and that's what's going to help you to talk with your friend! Now, we can't guarantee you that she won't blab to the whole school anything you tell her - no one can. You have no control over if she blabs or what she blabs. You just have to do what you know is right for you, and it sure sounds like you want to let her know what you think of her new behavior. So find a time when you can talk to her privately - you might invite her over for ice cream or something, but make it clear that the invitation is for one only! Tell her that you miss your friendship, and let her know that her mean behavior is hurting you.

Concentrate on telling her how you feel. You can also tell her that you're worried that she might be doing drugs. If she is, let her know how you feel about that and offer to stick by her in finding some help if she wants to quit. (If she doesn't want to quit, you may want to reconsider the friendship.) And hang in there - if your friendship survives this, it will be stronger than ever!