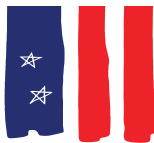


Parents Resource Guide



KEEPING KIDS DRUG-FREE



Partnership for a
Drug-Free New Jersey

in Cooperation with the Governor's Council on Alcoholism
and Drug Abuse and the NJ Dept. of Human Services

Getting ✓ The Facts



ALCOHOL

There is a good news to report on underage drinking. Recent surveys on alcohol use shows that underage drinking and binge drinking have been steadily declining the past few years. However, alcohol remains the primary drug of choice among American adolescents.

Use of alcohol has a negative effect on the adolescent brain in areas such as memory, cognitive development and decision-making skills.

When compared to youth who do not use alcohol, underage drinkers are much more likely to engage in risky behaviors, including aggressive or violent behavior, assaulting a family member or friend, or carrying out or being the victim of sexual assault.

Children who engage in underage drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop a problem with alcohol than those who do not drink. Adolescents who use alcohol before 21 are twice as likely to develop a substance use disorder.

The New Jersey State Legislature enacted P.L. 2000, chapter 33, allowing municipalities "to enact local ordinances making it unlawful for any person under the legal age, who, without legal authority, knowingly possesses or knowingly consumes an alcoholic beverage on private property."

Under New Jersey state law, anyone who purposely or knowingly offers, serves or makes alcohol available to an underage person or entices or encourages that person to drink alcohol is a disorderly person. It is also violation of the law for a host to make their property available (including leaving the property in care of another person) for the consumption of alcohol by an underage person. There is an exception in the law for parents or guardians when they provide alcohol to their own child/children.

VAPING & E-CIGARETTES

Recent findings from the Federal Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show disturbing rates of e-cigarette use among both middle and high school students, with more than 5 million youth reporting having used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days and nearly one million reporting daily use.

Scientists are still learning about the long-term health effects of e-cigarettes. The e-cigarette aerosol that users breathe from the device and exhale can contain potentially harmful substances.

Nicotine is a highly addictive chemical and can especially have a negative on the young brain. It can cause an increase in blood pressure, heart rate, and flow of blood to the heart. Based on the amount of nicotine in the vaping products, some teenagers are sending more nicotine to their brains than what regular cigarette users are getting.

Symptoms related to vaping include: Shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea, coughing, abdominal pain, diarrhea, weight loss vomiting, fever and chills.

While cigarette smoking is at an all-time low among high school students, increases in e-cigarette use have reversed progress made in the decline of overall youth tobacco use.

Misconceptions, peer pressure and marketing tactics all contributed to the staggering rise in the use of these electronic nicotine delivery devices. The primary reasons given by youth for using vaping products are use by friend or family member, availability of flavors such as mint, candy, fruit, or chocolate, and the belief that they are less harmful than other forms of tobacco such as cigarettes.

New Jersey has become the first state in the nation to impose a permanent ban on flavored vape products. The legislation (S3265) prohibits the sale and distribution of flavored vape products, such as mint, bubblegum and mango, as well as menthol.

MARIJUANA

Short-term effects of marijuana use include short-term memory loss, motor coordination, difficulty in problem solving, euphoria and eye irritation.

Use of marijuana at a younger age correlates with worse outcomes for a young individual's brain development, including their memory performance.

Long-term effects include psychological dependence on the drug, hallucinations emphysema, asthma, lung damage and damage to the immune system.

Recent research on regular use demonstrates for some users there is a link to greater anxiety, depression, psychosis and other psychotic disorders.

Clear evidence from state and local police regarding confiscation of marijuana products shows that most of the younger users are no longer using joints but prefer to adapt their vaping devices to inhale marijuana. There is also edible marijuana such as candy, cookies and other snack foods.

OPIOIDS/PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Opioids block the brain's ability to perceive pain and produce a "downer" at first and then rapidly induces a state of relaxation and euphoria.

Symptoms of opioid abuse include shortness of breath, dry mouth, constricted (small) pupils, sudden changes in behavior or moods, cycles of

hyper-alertness followed by suddenly nodding off, droopy appearances as if extremities are heavy, and itching. Most individuals who develop an opioid use disorder start with a legal prescription. When prescriptions are terminated, individuals often obtain painkillers for free from friends or family or in medicine cabinets of homes they visit. Individuals often move on to purchase medications illegally.

Heroin is a much cheaper alternative to prescription painkillers, which often leads to heroin addiction. Over half the overdose deaths in the United States are now caused by heroin laced with fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid that can be 50 to 100 times more potent than heroin.

Prescribers in New Jersey are required to limit initial opioid prescriptions to a five-day dosage. They are also required to engage in a discussion about the addictive qualities of opioids and alternative treatment options with the patient or the patient's parent or guardian.



Talking With Your Children

Parents who talk with their children an average of 15 minutes a day have children who are 67 percent less likely to try marijuana than those who have less regular communication with their parents. Having a better knowledge of what your children are facing should make you feel more comfortable engaging in meaningful conversations with your them on this topic. Here are some tips for engaging in that conversation.

TALKING

Get into the habit of talking to your kids every day. Create realistic situations where kids can practice refusing to vape or try alcohol or other drugs.

"What would you do if you were over your friend's house, and she/he asked you to vape, drink a beer or smoke marijuana?" "What would you be thinking or feeling? What would you do or say?"

Use events that are happening in the media or commercials promoting alcohol as opportunities to engage in a conversation.

Make an effort to praise your child and encourage their talents and unique qualities as often as you can.

LISTENING

Ask open-ended questions that encourage your child to tell you a story or express what they are thinking or feeling. Avoid questions that kids can answer with a yes or no. Try not to interrupt your children when they are talking.

Devote your full attention to what your daughter or son is saying. Kids know when you're pretending to listen.

Show your child that you have been listening and you understand what they have said by summarizing what they have said back to them in your own words.

SETTING RULES & EXPECTATIONS

Research shows that young people are less likely to use drugs if their parents set clear rules and set high expectations.

Don't leave your kids guessing. Tell them very clearly you don't want them using alcohol, vaping or using marijuana or other illicit drugs. "I'm your parent. I care about you. I want to keep you healthy and safe. So I'm going to monitor your



behavior. I'm going to ask you questions about what you're doing with your time and who you are with."

Establish what the consequences will be if they are caught vaping, drinking alcohol or using other drugs and why you have these rules. Emphasize this is more about their health as opposed to just talking about what is legal and what is not. Tell your child that you will monitor their activities and that you will want to know their friends, as well as their friends' parents.

Be a positive role model. Make healthy decisions regarding your use of alcohol and prescription medication. Offer praise to them for not experimenting.

"DID YOU EVER DO DRUGS?"

Family History of Substance Use and Overcoming Stigma

Questions about your past drug use could be a signal that your child is simply curious, or has recently experimented with a substance or is feeling pressure to do so. Instead of being troubled by this question, use it as an opportunity for a discussion and to find out what your child already knows about drugs.

If you handled use of alcohol and other drugs well when you were growing up, share that and explain why you chose to do what you did. If, on the other hand as many parents have, you have some history of misusing or abusing substances, share that in an appropriate way. Experts agree it is best to be honest. Behavioral scientist Tony Biglan Ph. D, recommends that answering untruthfully can cause you to lose credibility with your kids if they ever discover that you lied to them about this topic. You need to decide when the time is right to have this discussion.

If there is a history of substance abuse in the family, that topic should be addressed in an appropriate manner and when your child is

mature enough to understand that this is a disease. Just as families take measures to prevent the onset of heart disease, diabetes and cancer, that same approach to health and well-being should be taken with substance use disorders.

Overcoming the stigma that is attached to substance use disorders also should be addressed. Using terms negative terms like "loser" or "low-life" when referring to individuals with this disease adds to rather than reduces the stigma associated with this disease.

What To Look For

AWARENESS OF RISK FACTORS & PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Teens try alcohol and other drugs for a variety of reasons – to exert independence, escape from stress, peer pressure, rebellion and even boredom – but they tend to do so without fully recognizing the negative effects or health risks of this behavior.



Risk factors that may contribute to your child experimenting with alcohol or other drugs include a history of substance abuse in the family, mental or behavioral health issues, such as anxiety, depression, or ADHH, impulse control problems or being combative. Recent research clearly demonstrates that children with Adverse Childhood Experiences (what we used to call trauma) puts them at risk of developing a substance use disorder, along with other issues such as an impact on their respiratory system or their overall immune system. Examples include death of a family member, being a witness to or victim of domestic or sexual abuse, being involved in car accident, and frequently moving from place to place. The more ACEs a child experiences,

the more likely he or she is to develop a substance use disorder or other health problems.

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Much has been learned in the science of prevention, which shows that building on or strengthening a child's protective factors contribute to their overall health. These protective factors increase a child's ability to resist risky behaviors. Examples include good parental monitoring, a healthy self-concept, self-control so that your child is comfortable making her/his own decisions rather than following what peers are suggesting, strong attachment to school, having healthy peer relationships, and being engaged in after-school activities or in a community or faith-based programs that are supervised by adults. For children who have experienced ACEs, having good coping skills is a critical protective factor.

WARNING SIGNS

Behavioral

- Risky behavior
- Slipping grades, lateness, skipping class
- Fights with family/friends
- Change in friends
- Change in mood, eating or sleeping patterns
- Depressed/lacking motivation
- Legal problems
- Increased candle or incense use or air freshener use
- Secretive, deceptive or manipulative behavior

Physical

- Neglecting appearance or hygiene
- Sudden change in weight
- Slurred speech
- Skin abrasions
- Chemical smell on breath or clothing
- Glass or red eyes
- Drug paraphernalia



KNOWING WHAT TO DO & TAKING ACTION IF THERE IS A PROBLEM

It is important for parents to know what they are going to do and what they are going to say to their children BEFORE the problem occurs. So you need to have contact information readily at hand for such a situation. If you suspect that your child has experimented with alcohol or drugs you need to: Know what you are going to say to your child and recognize that you may or may not get honest answers from her/him.

Adhere to rules you have set in place. Put them into practice. Otherwise, your child may think there is no reason to change her/his behavior.

Talk to individuals who have expertise in this field as they have experience with the issue and can provide help on how to proceed. These individuals in your community can help and offer advice:

- Student Assistance Counselor
- Family Physician
- Local Prevention Specialists
- Religious Leaders
- Employee Assistance Program



RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey call (973) 467-2100

- www.drugfreenj.org
- www.talknownj.com
- KnockOutOpioidAbuse.DrugFreeNJ.org

The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids

- www.drugfree.org

American Medicine Chest Challenge

- A resource for information on prevention of prescription drug-abuse.
- AmericanMedicineChest.com

Governor's Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

- www.state.nj.us/treasury/gcada
- KnowAddiction.NJ.Gov

NJ Connect for Recovery call (855) 652-3737

- For hearing impaired call (877) 294-4356
- njconnectforrecovery.org/

New Jersey Division of Addiction Services

- www.state.nj.us/humanservices/das/home

New Jersey Prevention Network

- www.njpn.org

Supporting New Jersey's Military Families call (732) 367-0611

Drug Identification Guide

- www.streetdrugs.org

National Institute on Drug Abuse

- www.drugabuse.gov

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services

- www.samhsa.gov

NJ Addiction Services Hotline

call (1)-844-276-2777

Parent Check New Jersey

- www.parentchecknj.com

The New Jersey Legislature enacted P.L. 2000, Chapter 33, allowing municipalities "to enact local ordinances making it unlawful for any person under the legal age who, without legal authority, knowingly possesses or knowingly consumes an alcoholic beverage on private property." A complete list of ordinances, with county by county and municipal breakdowns, can be found by visiting www.drugfreenj.org.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

- Nearly one in three parents of New Jersey middle school students does not believe there is a link between painkillers prescribed for things like sports injuries and wisdom tooth removal and the rising use of heroin in New Jersey. The study also found that less than 50 percent of parents feel they are knowledgeable about heroin.
- According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), upwards of 9 million people use prescription medication for non-medical uses.
- In New Jersey alone, nearly 4.3 million prescriptions for highly addictive opioids were potentially prescribed – to children, friends, and family members, and unfortunately, many times without the benefit of any information about their addictive qualities.
- 47 percent of New Jersey parents of middle school students said they know little or just about nothing about prescription drug abuse.
- About 11.1 million Americans age 12 and older misused prescription pain medicine.

DO YOU KNOW?

- The CDC has declared prescription drug abuse a public health epidemic.
- Every day, 129 people in the U.S. die from an opioid overdose.
- Prescription pain medication can become a gateway to heroin use, with research showing that 4 out of 5 new heroin users abused prescription pain relievers before turning to heroin.
- According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, legitimate opioid use before high school graduation is independently associated with a 33 percent increase in the risk of future opioid misuse after high school.
- This association is concentrated among individuals who have little to no history of drug use.



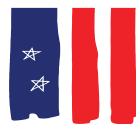
- Male adolescent athletes who participated in competitive sports had two times greater odds of being prescribed painkillers during the past year and had four times greater odds of medically misusing painkillers (i.e., using them to get high and using them too much) when compared to males who did not participate in competitive sports.
- According to the CDC, opioid pain relievers that are abused were most often obtained via prescription from physicians.

For more information, please visit DrugFreeNJ.org/DrugFacts



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For information on this and other PDFNJ programs in the School, the Community and the Workplace, please visit DrugFreeNJ.org



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