

2nd Quarterly Newsletter-August 2017

B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol

51 High St. Bristol, CT 06010

T: 860-314-4690

Like us on Face Book and follow us on Twitter @best4bristol



Marijuana: What Parents Need to Know

Marijuana continues to become more of a hot topic as states across the country have begun to legalize its recreational use.

It is vital that parents become properly educated on the potential dangers of this drug. Many of the myths propagated by the media have led youth and adults alike to perceive this drug as not being harmful.

Marijuana activates the same parts of the brain as all other drugs of abuse.

Other studies suggest that marijuana has the potential to lead to the onset of psychotic symptoms, and potentially even schizophrenia. Out of nine major studies that have been conducted, eight of them suggested a link between marijuana use and the onset of schizophrenia.³

Parents will often report that they do not view marijuana as being harmful based on their use of the drug in the 1960's and '70s.

Approximately 9% of marijuana users will become addicted...

Approximately 9% of people who use marijuana will become addicted.¹ Drug use becomes an addiction once use continues despite the experiencing of negative consequences and decreased functioning in one's life.¹

A recent study found evidence that suggests some youth who engage in even moderate use over several years may experience a permanent reduction in their IQ score.²

The potency of marijuana has significantly increased over the years with some strains and variants containing up to 80% THC.¹

The marijuana of today is a highly potent drug that can significantly hinder cognitive functioning.

It is vital that parents become educated and communicate openly with their children about this issue.-

Tips for Parents

Ages 9-13

Set the tone. Start an open dialog about the use of marijuana so your child will feel comfortable discussing these topics as they grow older.

Ages 14-17

The chances of encountering marijuana, increase dramatically in high school. **Be prepared, so you know the right thing to say** at the right time.

Ages 18-20

Continue to guide them through life's challenges with your wisdom.

For More Info on how to deal with these types of issues visit....<https://drugfree.org>

The Truth about Vaping: Potential Danger to Youth

We have all seen them: In stores, advertisements, or pressed against someone's lips as they let out a puff of what appears to be smoke. Electronic Cigarettes; or "e-cigarettes" are battery operated machines resembling pens or cigarettes that are used for inhaling an aerosol generated from a vaporized liquid solution containing nicotine and various flavorings.⁴

E-Cigarettes gained initial popularity when they were marketed as a healthy alternative to smoking tobacco products. To their credit, many people have been able to quit cigarettes using these devices. However, many of these people have then become addicted to the e-cigarette products themselves. More and more evidence is starting to indicate that these products may not be quite as safe as everyone thinks. Despite the fact that e-cigarettes have helped many adults wean off of regular cigarettes (and perhaps even quit), research is also finding a reverse trend.

Students as young as 12 or 13 years old are now more likely to vape than to smoke.

Researchers at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor found that youth who reported past use of e-cigarettes were four times more likely not to consider smoking regular cigarettes dangerous. Prevention science is clear that the less harmful a person views a behavior to be, the more likely they are to engage in it. The Michigan study suggests that there is an increased risk for e-cigarettes being a potential "gateway" to smoking regular cigarettes.⁵

The most damning study to date was the one recently published by the University Of Connecticut (UConn). Researchers at UConn found that vapor from nicotine-based and non-nicotine based liquids in e-cigarettes caused as much DNA damage as regular cigarettes.⁶ DNA damage is what leads to many different forms of cancer.

In order to keep our youth safe from these health risks, it is vital for parents to be properly informed about this issue. The more harmful a parent views a behavior to be, the less likely it is that their children will engage in that behavior. It is for this reason that sending a clear message that engaging in e-cigarette use is unacceptable is important.-



Did you know.....

- E-cigarettes are addictive.
- E-cigarettes contain chemicals that are harmful to your health
- E-cigarettes are not currently regulated.
- The full health effects of these products are still unknown.

Want to Learn More.....

Partnership for Drug Free Kids

<https://drugfree.org/>

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/>

NIDA For Teens

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/>

Downloadable Parent Resources

<https://drugfree.org/resources>

Underage Drinking

Alcohol remains the most deadly drug for people under the age of 18. It is responsible for over 5000 deaths of adolescents annually. A 2015 survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) demonstrated that 10% of 8th graders and 35% of 12th graders drank alcohol during the previous 30 days. In addition, 5% of 8th graders and 17% of 12th graders reported binge drinking during the previous two weeks. Underage drinking is a clear issue in our society, and this may be due to several factors. Many youth are deceived by the myths often spread by peers. As a result, they do not understand the repercussions of underage drinking.

Why Do Adolescents Drink?

There can be many reasons why a young person may begin to drink alcohol. One of the most common reasons is a combination of peer pressure and curiosity. The desire to 'fit in' is an incredibly powerful force that drives young people to make unhealthy decisions, especially once entering into high school. Without the necessary confidence and resistance skills, it is incredibly challenging for a young person to say 'no' in difficult situations with their peers.

Another reason why young people turn to alcohol is to treat undiagnosed mental health symptoms such as anxiety, depression and stress. Alcohol becomes a coping mechanism for many youth who are unable to effectively manage their feelings.

Preventing Underage Drinking

Underage drinking will continue remain a primary threat to the health of our nation's youth. It is important for them to be properly educated about the dangers of underage drinking. Providing them with the necessary resistance skills to say 'no' with confidence will significantly increase their chances of remaining alcohol free throughout their adolescence.

Common Myths Youth Hear about Alcohol

MYTH 1: Alcohol is not as harmful as other drugs.

FACT: Alcohol kills more adolescents than all other drugs combined.

MYTH 2: All of the other kids drink alcohol. I need to drink to fit in.

FACT: The majority of youth do not drink alcohol before the legal drinking age.

MYTH 3: I can sober up quickly by taking a cold shower or drinking coffee.

FACT: On average, it takes 2 to 3 hours for a single drink to leave the body. Nothing can speed up the process, including drinking coffee, taking a cold shower, or "walking it off."



Long-term Effects of Alcohol Use

- Liver diseases.
- Heart diseases and stroke.
- Brain cell death.
- Cancer of the mouth, pharynx, esophagus, breast, pancreas, liver, colon and rectum.
- Decreased bone density.
- Damage to eyes and skin.
- Malnutrition and gastric illnesses.
- Sexual problems in men and women.

Remember to Lock Up Your Meds

While great strides have been made to reduce prescription drug abuse among young people over the past several years of prevention efforts, it is still important for everyone to be educated about how to properly store and dispose of these potentially addictive substances.

Here are some steps you can take to limit a drug seeker's access to these potentially addictive substances:

- 1-Take an inventory of the prescriptions and over the counter medications you have stored in your home.
- 2-Secure all of your medications (the same way you would secure a checkbook, wallet, jewelry, etc.).
- 3-Place your prescription drugs in a locked container, and place it in a location that would be difficult to find.
- 4-Make sure you pay close attention to the following prescriptions: pain meds/opioids, anti-anxiety meds, and stimulants used for treating ADD/ADHD. Dispose of these immediately if no longer needed.

Restricting access to drugs is one of the most effective strategies for preventing substance abuse.

If you require further assistance with this topic, please contact us at drugfreebristol@gmail.com

Our Mission

B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol works toward unifying the community to promote wellness in our culture through increasing education, implementing strategies and enforcing policy to prevent substance abuse by youth and those who impact their development.

Our Vision

Developing a culture of awareness and sustained action that will promote positive youth development and a healthier community.

**Do you have any questions or concerns? Contact B.E.S.T.-4-Bristol's Project Coordinator Jesse Mancinone at (860) 314-4690 or Email: jessemancinone@bristolct.gov
Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @Best4bristol**



References

- 1 <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/marijuana-addictive>
- 2 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22927402>
- 3 <http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/03/06/390143641/pot-can-trigger-psychotic-symptoms-for-some-but-do-the-effects-last>
- 4 <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/electronic-cigarettes-e-cigarettes>
- 5 Miech R, Patrick ME, O'Malley PM, et al. E-cigarette use as a predictor of cigarette smoking: results from a 1-year follow-up of a national sample of 12th grade students. Tobacco Control Published Online First: 06 February 2017.
- 6 <http://today.uconn.edu/2017/06/e-cigarettes-potentially-harmful-tobacco-cigarettes/>
- 7 <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/electronic-cigarettes-e-cigarettes>
- 8 <https://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/>
- 9 <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/AA67/AA67.htm>