

Fall Activities Provide Opportunity to Discuss Marijuana With Teens

Fall is finally here — an exciting time for teenagers and families with football games, dances and parties. These fall activities provide an opportunity for you to have a conversation with your teen about marijuana.



Studies show that marijuana use is harmful to the developing brain. Unfortunately, marijuana and marijuana products are readily available to teens in various forms, from edibles to vapor pens that may contain unsafe ingredients. Marijuana might be part of many teen fall activities so now is the time for talking with your kids!

Research shows anger or scare tactics don't work, but a calm discussion of facts may. Remember that you remain a strong influence on your teen. What you say matters.

Basic Talking Points

- Just because marijuana is legal for adults, it doesn't make it safe for your teen. Marijuana use affects the brain. A teen's developing brain is especially vulnerable.
- Marijuana use can keep your teen from reaching their full potential, impairing learning, memory, and math and reading achievement.
- Marijuana use can affect emotions later in life. Teen users are more likely to be depressed or have suicidal thoughts in adulthood.
- If you have a family history of addiction or mental health risks, now might be the time to share this information with your teen. Your family history may make your child more likely to become addicted to marijuana.
- Marijuana affects reaction time, judgment and depth perception, making it dangerous to get behind the wheel of a car or be a passenger if the driver has used marijuana.

Conclude the conversation with a clear statement of your expectations and encourage your teen to avoid marijuana.

Additional Thoughts

- Encourage your child to attend school-sponsored, adult-supervised events that provide a safe environment.
- If your child's activities include a limousine or party bus, ask for more details.

Additional Resources for Parents

It's not just a plant www.thcphotos.org

Marijuana facts and risks for youth

www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana

www.samhsa.gov/know-risksmarijuana

Talking with your child about marijuana

www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/marijuanabrochure-newpics-r15f_508c.pdf

Drugged driving

www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drugimpaired-driving

Parents make the difference www.betheinfluence.us

Community RESOURCES

East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP)
100 Bullocks Point Ave., Riverside, RI (401) 437-1000

East Bay Center 2 Old County Rd., Barrington, RI
(401) 246-1195

East Bay Recovery Center 31 Railroad Ave., Warren, RI
(401) 302-6231 or 401-289-2055

BH Link Hotline — (401) 414-LINK (414-5465)
24/7 – help with a behavioral healthcare crisis.

St. Mary of the Bay Food Pantry
645 Main St., Warren RI (401) 245-7000 ext 19

Warren Health Equity Zone (HEZ)
790 Main St., Warren RI (401) 486-5195

For information, contact Ann Marie Roy at ARoy@townofwarren-ri.gov or Maria Ursini at Mursini@townofwarren-ri.gov.

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CommunityNEWS

Promoting Health & Wellness through prevention in our Community.

Tips for Parents Managing Back-to-School Anxiety & Stress

Many parents may experience stress or anxiety about their kids' mental wellness as they enter another school year. Finding strategies to work through their own feelings of anxiety can help parents be a better source of support and reassurance to their kids. Below are some simple ways parents and caregivers can make a difference for their children.

Strategies for Parents to Manage Their Own Anxiety

- Start by calming yourself. Working through your feelings of anxiety will make it easier for you to support your child.
- Accept the fact that things may be uncertain for a while. This requires flexible thinking and a willingness to tolerate uncertainty — because none of us have all the answers.
- Acknowledge whatever it is you're feeling as opposed to trying to deny or bury that emotion. You'll find it easier to do this if you remind yourself that feelings come and go. Sure, you're feeling anxious right now, but this emotion won't stick around forever.
- Look for opportunities to meet your own needs as opposed to just endlessly giving to other people. Self-care isn't selfish; it's self-preservation!

Strategies for Supporting and Reassuring Your Child

- Accept and validate your child's emotions. Let your child know that their feelings make sense and that there's no such thing as a "bad" or "wrong" emotion.
- Look for opportunities to address your child's specific worries and concerns in an age-appropriate way.
- Remind your child they can turn to others for support, both at home and at school. They're not on their own.
- Children are resilient and capable of weathering even the stormiest of storms if they can rely on the love and support of at least one caring adult.
- Make sure kids get enough sleep and eat a balanced diet. It's important for brain function, mood, and ability to focus.



Warren
Prevention Coalition

514 Main Street, Warren, RI 02885 • 401.245.7387

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Healthy Ways to Cope

In a world that is often infused with stress, it would behoove us to teach our young loved ones how to manage challenges with handy tools to create a healthy environment. Here are some easy tools you can teach your teens.

Enjoy Yourself/Find a Balance

Encourage your teen to take time for the things they enjoy. Have them try new things, fail, explore, be creative. They will enjoy the journey of discovery and learning, and lose the goal of perfection. Identify the root of stress and try to minimize as much as possible.

Sleep & Eat Healthy

Without the fuel a body needs, its performance can suffer. Maximize sleep and select foods that nourish/replenish vs. a quick sugar/caffeine hit. Hydrate with water for full functioning, purging toxins and keeping a clear mind.



Time for Exercise

Exercise is a great stress reliever. Physical activity produces endorphins, chemicals in the brain that act as natural painkillers and stress relievers. Exercise also improves the ability to sleep. Group exercise allows for important connections to feel supported. Outside exercise offers the benefits of nature, fresh air and sunshine.



Meditation & Breathing

Make sure they take time for quiet reflection and gratitude. Sit in silence, and focus on deep breathing to slow the heart and quiet the mind. Look for the positive in situations rather than the negative. Yoga offers physical poses as well as meditative practices, but deep breathing can be done anywhere.



Ask for Help

Encourage teens to reach out to family and friends for support or to listen. Seek out professionals to provide guidance if appropriate. Teach the use of professionals more proactively for ongoing benefit. Realize there will be peaks of higher stress within any life-stage so help your teen learn what works best for them.

Teens & Academic Stress

Parents juggling both their work and family calendars can present a real challenge but they should also recognize the extra stress from school on our often-overextended teens.

Stress is extremely common among teenagers. According to a survey conducted by American Psychological Association, teens reported that they're experiencing what they think are unhealthy levels of stress, especially during the school year.

Stress can affect the body from head to toe. The survey found teens experience both emotional and physical symptoms of stress. Common symptoms include feeling nervous or anxious, feeling tired, procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities, feeling overwhelmed, having negative thoughts and experiencing changes in sleeping habits. Problems with concentrating and changes in eating habits (eating too much or too little) are also linked to stress.

To help your child better prepare for academic pressure, make sure they're getting rest, eating healthy, exercising, and experiencing some balance at home. Tune in to your teen's calendar and help them with time management. Talk about their schedule, and possible need for after-class help or a tutor to help them be ahead of the study curve. Good study habits build confidence, reduce stress and enhance results.



Teach your child to say no to things that doesn't bring joy or add value to their life. When a teen is overtaxed, guide them to pick what will help refuel them and offset stress they may be experiencing.

Be a strong role model for your child on how to manage relationships and reduce becoming overextended. Tune into your teen's need for quiet or alone time. Practice self-care, and share that example and expectations with your teen.

For more information, log on to <https://www.apa.org/topics/child-development/stress>.

Three Ways Vaping Affects Mental Health

While it is well known that nicotine harms developing brains, including making young people more susceptible to addiction, lesser known are the worrying connections between nicotine and mental health.

Though nicotine hasn't been found to directly cause mental health conditions, studies reveal troubling links between vaping, nicotine, and symptoms of depression and anxiety.

The Relationship Between Vaping, Depression & Anxiety

According to a 2019 JAMA study of nearly 30,000 current e-cigarette users above age 18, frequent vaping is tied to even higher odds (2.4X) of having a diagnosis of depression compared to never users. Researchers also believe that trace metals in vape liquid may play a role in the potential link between vaping and depression.

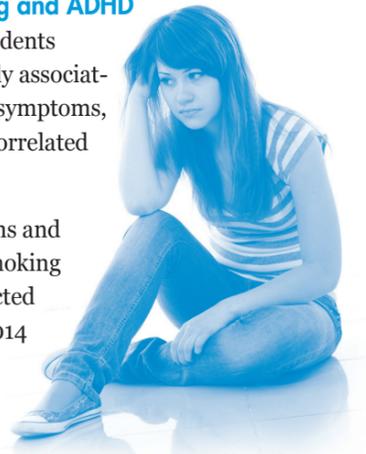
Based on the results of a 2017 study of nearly 2,500 ninth graders who had never previously used e-cigarettes or combustible tobacco in Los Angeles, those who used e-cigarettes at a higher frequency were associated with higher depressive symptoms.

What We Know about Vaping and ADHD

A 2019 study of U.S. college students found that vaping is significantly associated with higher levels of ADHD symptoms, and nicotine dependence was correlated with greater anxiety symptoms.

It is critical to both prevent teens and young adults from vaping or smoking and to help those who are addicted to quit as soon as possible. A 2014 meta-analysis showed quitting smoking is linked with lower levels of anxiety, depression and stress as well as improved positive mood and quality of life compared with continuing to smoke.

Source: *The Truth Initiative*.



The Power of Peer Pressure When It Comes to Underage Drinking

Underage drinking is a common problem in the U.S. About 11 percent of alcohol consumed in the U.S. is in those under the age of 21, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. When you consider this, realize that peer pressure and underage drinking often go hand-in-hand.

Even Educated Teens Can Make Mistakes

When it comes to peer pressure and underage drinking, any teen, even those with good grades and those who promise to not use drugs or alcohol, could be at risk. Peer pressure influences teen decisions over many things. Within the brain, that type of stimulation can influence decision making as well as the ability to see the risks and rewards of any action. This happens with adults, too. The difference is that adults put more weight on the risks whereas many teens overlook those risks, for fear of being left out.

Many people believe alcohol isn't harmful or that as long as they do not drink every day, they are safe. The fact is, teenagers are at a high risk of developing substance abuse even with limited use. It also makes them more likely to turn to drugs as the alcohol stops providing the high they are seeking.

The Connection Between Peer Pressure & Drinking

There are many reasons why teens are at such a high risk of both peer pressure and underage drinking:

- The decision making processes in the teen brain are not fully developed yet

It's Here
When You
Need It! **tip 411**



With the Warren Police Department smartphone tool you can get updates, view alerts and submit anonymous tips.

Text "warrenpd" to 847411 or submit message through the department's website. TIP411 is not intended for reporting emergencies. **Always call 9-1-1 in an emergency.**

Download free on Google Play Store, iTunes App, or by visiting the Warren Police Department website.

More information available on the WPD website at <https://www.warrenipolice.com/tip-411>