



POWER of PARENTS

Drug & Alcohol Education Newsletter

Upcoming Trainings in McLeod County and Surrounding Areas

[Check out the calendar for National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) Minnesota](#)

[2B Continued Events](#)

8:30 – 10:00 AM: **SARAH CIAVARRI**: Energized on Resilience and Self-Care



Bouncing Back: Methods to Target Professional Burnout

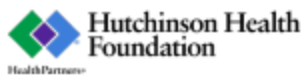


10:15 – 11:15 AM: **PETE VANDUSARTZ**: Make It Okay



FREE Professional Training made possible by:

10:15 – 11:15 AM: **PETE VANDUSARTZ**: Make It Okay



Northstar Counseling

MN DHS Children's Mental Health

12:00 – 1:15 PM: **LUNCH BREAK**

Food Trucks available in the Glencoe City Center parking lot

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Glencoe City Center

[Reserve your spot here](#)

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1:15 – 2:45 PM: **COREY MARTIN, MD:** Surviving to Thriving



3 – 4 PM: **TWIN PORT COMEDIANS:** Humor for Helpers

- Justin Rademacher
- Bob Oesterreich
- Danielle Thralow



More information about presentation topics can be found on the [registration page](#).

Drug Use Among Youth: Facts & Statistics - Minnesota

Teenagers in Minnesota are 2.14% less likely to have used drugs in the last month than the average American teen.

- 36,000 or 8.15% of 12- to 17-year-olds report using drugs in the last month.
- Among them, 80.56% report using marijuana in the last month.
- 12.45% of all 12- to 17-year-olds report using marijuana in the last year.

- 0.45% reported using cocaine in the last year.
- 0.23% report using methamphetamines.
- Up to 0.11% used heroin (data is limited).
- 2.26% report misusing pain relievers.
- 10.87% of all 12- to 17-year-olds used alcohol in the last month.
- They're 18.79% more likely to use alcohol than the average American in their age group.
- 220,000 adults aged 18- to 25-years-old used drugs in the last month.
- 18- to 25-year-olds in Minnesota are 8.87% more likely to use drugs than the average American in the same age group.
- 3.40% of all 12- to 17-year-olds met the criteria for IDUD in the last year.
- 1.59% of all 12- to 17-year-olds met the criteria for AUD in the last year.

[Source](#)

Back to School and Mental Health: Supporting Our Children for a Successful Year Ahead

Date: August 17, 2023 Category: Mental Health

By: Sunny Patel, M.D., M.P.H., Center for Mental Health Services

As the heat of the summer reaches its peak, and (hopefully soon) gives way to the cooler autumn breezes, it's time for children and youth to return to



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school. This transition — filled with excitement, anticipation, and some natural apprehension — is an annual ritual for millions of students across our nation. As we prepare for the new academic year, it's crucial to remember that school readiness isn't just about having the right supplies, it's also about mental health.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is committed to promoting mental health and preventing substance misuse as a critical part of overall health and wellness. As part of this commitment, we want to equip parents, teachers, and students with resources and tools to foster a mentally healthy return to school.

Mental Health Matters

Often unseen and untreated, child and adolescent mental health challenges can significantly impact the ability to learn and develop. One in five children has a diagnosable mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder, yet many of them do not receive the help they need. Research tells us that there is a robust link between students' mental health and their academic success. Therefore, awareness of mental health and potential for substance misuse should be a core part of every family's back-to-school preparation.

Promoting a Healthy Transition

The return to school can be a stressful time, whether it's a child's first day of kindergarten, a transition to middle or high school, or just the end of the freedoms of summer. It's normal for children to feel anxious about these changes. Here's how you can help ease their worries:

Communicate: Encourage your child to express their feelings about going back to school.

Acknowledge their fears, make them feel understood, and reassure them that it's perfectly normal to feel anxious about these changes.

Create Routines: A consistent routine fosters a sense of security in children. Establishing a regular sleep schedule, eating healthy meals, and setting aside time for homework and relaxation can help children adjust to the rhythm of the school year.

Make Advance Preparations: If possible, attend any scheduled school orientations. Meeting teachers, locating classrooms, and becoming familiar with the school layout can help students feel more confident on the first day of school. And if there is not a scheduled orientation, make time to visit the school ahead of time to help children familiarize themselves with the environment. It can also be helpful to practice morning routines like getting ready for the bus or identifying routes to school.

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Encourage In-person Social Interactions:

Facilitate interaction with classmates to rekindle old friendships and make new ones. This may be one of the first years of schooling for many children without the COVID-19 pandemic interrupting normal social interactions. Social relationships can make the transition smoother and more enjoyable.

Continuing Support at School: The Role of Educators

Schools are crucial partners in supporting student mental health. Here are some ways educators can help:

Spot the signs: Regular training sessions for teachers on how to recognize the signs of mental health concerns in students are vital. Knowledge of how to respond in such situations can ensure that children in need receive the help they deserve.

Create safe spaces: Every child deserves a nurturing school environment where they feel safe to explore and express their feelings. Schools can promote this by establishing safe, caring spaces where students feel comfortable reaching out about their mental health without fear of judgement.

Integrate mental health into the curriculum:

Incorporating mental health education into the curriculum is a powerful strategy to reduce the prejudice and discrimination associated with mental health and substance use conditions. This

promotes understanding and empathy, fostering a supportive environment for all students.

Resources: Partners in Promoting Mental Health and Preventing Substance Use

The Department of Health and Human Services offers a wealth of resources for parents, teachers, and students alike:

- [Parenting and Caregiver and Youth Mental Health Resources](#) — a collection of resources on parenting and addressing mental health needs of young people.
- [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Concerns: Signs and Symptoms](#) — a comprehensive guide for symptoms of mental health and substance use disorders in children and youth.
- [Back to School Resources for Success](#) — a collection of resources for children, parents, and educators on ensuring a safe return to school by caring for both body and mind.
- ["Talk. They Hear You."® Campaign](#) — a national youth substance use prevention campaign that helps parents and caregivers, educators, and community members.
- [Early Childhood Mental Health Programs](#) — as a part of its mission to reduce the impact of substance use

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and mental illness on our communities, SAMHSA funds programs that promote and support the health and wellness of young children and their families.

- [StopBullying.Gov](https://www.stopbullying.gov) — parents, school staff, and other adults in the community can help kids prevent bullying by talking about it, building a safe school environment, and creating a community-wide bullying prevention strategy.
- [SchoolSafety.Gov](https://www.schoolsafety.gov) — provides schools and districts with actionable recommendations to create a safe and supportive learning environment where students can thrive and grow.
- [SAMHSA's National Helpline](https://www.samhsa.gov/national-helpline) — **1-800-662-HELP (4357)** is a confidential, free, 24/7, 365-day-a-year information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders.
- [FindSupport.gov](https://www.findsupport.gov) — a user-friendly website, designed for the general public, to help people identify available resources, explore unbiased information about various treatment

options, and learn how to reach out to get the support they need for issues related to mental health, drugs, or alcohol.

- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](https://www.988lifeline.org) — If you or someone you know needs support now, you can contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Simply call or text **988** or chat [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).

As we approach the new school year, let's make 'Caring for Every Child's Mental Health' a priority. Every child deserves to have a successful academic year, and by equipping young people with mental health support, we are setting them up for a healthier and brighter future. This year let's commit to making the back-to-school transition about physical and academic readiness and about mental preparedness. Together, we can help build and support resilient young minds and allow every child to thrive, enjoy academic success, and reach their full potential.

[Source](#)

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How to Talk to Your Teen About Substance Use Research shows that clear rules help keep kids safe

Writer: Rae Jacobson

Adolescence is a tricky time. Teenagers are just beginning to establish their identities and this often means testing the limits of parental controls. When it comes to drugs and alcohol, pushing the boundaries can lead to dangerous territory.

Setting clear rules about substance use helps give teens the structure they need to stay safe. Let's be realistic: You can't guarantee that your rules won't be broken. But research shows that kids who have clear rules are less likely to get into serious trouble than kids who don't. Even when the rules are broken, teens whose parents have clearly outlined what is and isn't acceptable are less likely to run to extremes and more likely to make safer choices.

So you need to have the talk, but for a lot of parents initiating a potentially difficult conversation is daunting. A few guidelines can help get the ball rolling and make for a smoother, more productive experience for all.

Plan to have the talk

Springing a serious conversation on your teenager can make her feel ambushed and defensive. Give her a heads up before hand and make sure to be clear about what the conversation will entail, so everyone can be on the same page. "Tomorrow night let's have a talk about drinking and drugs. You're not in trouble. I just want to talk about where we stand and hear any concerns you might be having."

Spell out the rules

Clearly spell out your rules and the specific consequences of breaking them. Avoiding ambiguity lets your teenager know where you stand, and research shows that kids tend to be safer when parents set limits. And for kids who are being pressured to do something they aren't comfortable with, it can make it easier for them if they know they can use their parents as an excuse for saying no.

Explain your reasons

Be very clear about your reasons for prohibiting substance use. Teenagers are often ordered to do things without being given a clear reason why and by explaining

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yourself you're inviting them to have a more open, adult conversation.

The potential consequences of drinking and using drugs are real. Any kind of experimentation is illegal when you're a teenager, and it's dangerous.

Be honest and rational. Obviously, some illegal substances are more dangerous than others. Heroin is more perilous than pot. But any substance can be harmful: one beer is intoxicating but 10 beers could be deadly.

And any substance use impairs judgment and kids are more likely to find themselves in problematic and potentially dangerous situations like driving drunk or having unwanted or risky sexual encounters. It can affect them in school, too. If they get caught it could go on their record—something they won't want when they're applying to colleges—and if they play sports they could be cut from the team.

Obey the golden rule

Speak to your kids the way you'd like to be spoken to. Teenagers are acutely sensitive to condescension, and it's important to remember that at the end of the day they are the ones who will make the final decisions.

Treat them like the adults you want them to become. By showing respect you're modeling good behavior and letting them know you expect them to act responsibly, not just for your sake, but for their own as well.

Let them speak

Give kids a chance to express their concerns and feelings. They may have been hoping for a chance to ask questions or check in about something troubling. Opening an equal, active dialogue will increase the chances that your teen will feel comfortable being honest with you in the future.

The 'I learned it from you, Dad,' dilemma Parents sometimes feel hypocritical hiding their own experiences. If your daughter asks if you've ever tried drugs, you can choose to keep your experiences private (not everything in your history needs to be available to your kids) or to share them, but don't reminisce or otherwise glamorize your experiences. You can also explain that as a parent, it's your job to help them avoid things they will regret, and substance use definitely increases the chances of doing something you will regret.

Conditional amnesty

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What we want, first and foremost, is for kids to be safe. Being open and honest with your kids about drugs encourages them to reciprocate. One way to create safeguards for your teen is to have an “amnesty policy.”

In an amnesty situation, your child can call and ask for help without incurring the regular repercussions they might have if they tried to hide their behavior. Amnesty policies keep kids safe and encourage them to make appropriate choices without letting them off the hook.

For example: If your child (or their designated driver) is drunk at a party and they want to leave, they can call you and ask for a ride or cab fare instead of putting themselves at risk. They’d then be allowed to come home and go to bed without yelling or grounding. In the morning, you and them could have a talk about their drinking and safety.

An ongoing conversation

Talking to your teen about substance abuse should be a process, not a single event. Risk factors for substance use can change and multiply as teenagers weather the trials and pressures of adolescence. Keep an eye out for changes in your child’s mood and

demeanor, shifting peer groups, and other signs that it might be time to check in about their safety and your expectations.

Make sure they know your conversation is an open-ended one and that it’s a two-way street — “I’m going to be checking in with you about this sometimes, and if you have any questions or concerns, you can always ask me, too.” Keeping the lines of communication open will help you and your teenager feel engaged and safe during a potentially turbulent time.

[Source](#)