

# Raising Healthy Kids



## THE DANGERS OF SUMMER

*During the summer months first time drug use among teens is at its highest. Survey results from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reveal four startling statistics that every parent should know:*

- On an average summer day, about 11,000 youth will take their first drink of alcohol. Compare that to the academic year when each day approximately 8,000 teens take their first drink.
- On a summer day, approximately 4,500 youth will smoke cigarettes or marijuana for the first time. Compare that to the academic year when between 3,000 to 4,000 teens smoke cigarettes or marijuana for the first time.
- During the summer months first time use of drugs like marijuana, hallucinogens and inhalants are at an all time high.
- Teens who drink and smoke report doing it more during the months of June and July.

*So as summer rolls out the welcome carpet, how can parents keep their teens safe? Below are six tips to keeping your teen's summer safe and drug-free:*

### **Find Constructive Ways to Keep Your Teen Busy**

Encourage your teen to take a summer job or participate in organized activities, such as sports.

### **Check in Throughout the Day**

Call them occasionally throughout the day, even if it's just one call, to see what they are doing and who they are with.

### **Know your Teen's Friends**

Is your child spending time with right crowd? Become acquainted with your teen's friends.

### **Set a Good Example**

If you do not want your teen using, then you shouldn't either! Don't keep alcohol or tobacco in your home and keep your prescription drugs out of reach.

### **Keep an Open Dialogue With Your Teen**

Even if you don't believe your child will ever try drugs or alcohol, make it absolutely clear that you do NOT approve of your child using these substances under any circumstances.

### **Watch for drug use warning signs.**

Not only should you listen to your gut, but you should also watch for the warning signs associated with substance use.



# ON RACISM AND COMMUNITY

Dr. Judy Paolucci, Superintendent of Smithfield Schools

Each February, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., we hear a collective cry for action to safeguard our American ideals and each year there are local or national headlines we can use to reflect on our efforts or failures at eliminating bias and hate. Several years ago, headlines included a proposed registration of Muslim citizens, and more recently, the nation was embroiled in turmoil over racist remarks made by our President. This year, the headlines hit home, as racist graffiti was discovered on the Stillwater Scenic Trail in Smithfield.

Most discrimination, as well as bullying, stems from a lack of knowledge. Schools have an important role in educating our youth about other genders, religions and countries so that they are less likely to exhibit sexist, discriminatory or ethnocentric behavior.

Moreover, studies have shown that social relationships, in particular, influence substance use disorder recovery and that social and school connectedness are predictors of teenage substance use. Over the past few years, the Smithfield school department has taken a number of steps to address bigoted speech and behavior and to set the tone for students positively interacting and collaborating together.

Through a Community-Based Opioid Overdose Solution Grant, we have engaged the Anti-Defamation League and their Classroom of Difference program to build leadership at the student level to combat hate and prejudice. In addition, we apply a systematic and research-based review of curriculum materials to ensure unbiased and equity-based content. While our actions, alone, can never be enough to overcome the negative forces that have brought us to this point in time, combined with the efforts of our families and town, we can positively affect change.

## Role as a Parent

When it comes to marijuana, alcohol and drugs, our role as parents is to protect. A few ways:

Secure or remove any alcohol, marijuana or other drugs in your home.

If addiction runs in your family, talk to your child about this predisposition and its implications.

Make sure your child knows that they can call you anytime they need an "out" if alcohol, marijuana or other drugs are offered at a party, school event, etc.

Role play with your child how to say "no" if offered marijuana, alcohol or other drugs.

## Communication Tips

Listen more than you talk. Everything sounds like a lecture to teens. Keep your statements short and simple.

Ask open-ended questions. "What do you think about marijuana and the kids who use it?"

Criticize the behavior, not your teen. "When you don't clean your room, it hurts my feelings." This is much better than "you are lazy for not cleaning your room."



## HOW TO TALK AND LISTEN TO A TEEN WITH MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES

LISTEN HERE →



[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/NPRTEENS](https://tinyurl.com/NPRTEENS)



# NEW DRUG TRENDS

Despite their appearance, cannabis edibles (sweet treats like gummies and chocolate bars infused with THC, the primary psychoactive component of marijuana) can be risky for some users. They may look just like candy, but these potent products definitely aren't for kids. And that's part of the problem. These are also easily bought online with a simple Google search and some are branded and look just like regular candy such as Warheads, gummy bears, and Sour Patch Kids.

## Why are edibles dangerous?



Warheads Candy  
(500mg THC)

- Everyone is at greater risk of overconsumption and accidental ingestion of cannabis edibles.
- Unlike inhaled cannabis, ingested cannabis must be digested first before being absorbed.
- This delay can lead inexperienced users to inadvertently overconsume because they might not feel the intended effects immediately.

## New Vape Devices - Vfun Disposable Vape

Marketed as: Looks like a typo, tastes like heaven; it's the Vfun Disposable! It has a flashing LED light for every puff, a soft, food-grade rubber mouthpiece, and comes in a variety of exotic flavors! It's pretty and functional. Looks like a glow stick.



## Signs of Emotional Distress

It Starts With You  
Know the 5 Signs of Emotional Distress

It's Ok Not to be Ok!



Agitated



Personality Change

Everyone expresses emotions differently



Poor Self-Care



Hopelessness

Look for these signs in yourself and family



Withdrawn

There's no shame in reaching out for help.

## OPT INTO THE **KNOW!** TEXT MESSAGING



The Know! tips provide you with relevant, timely material that we can share with parents, caregivers, and other caring adults who interact with the young people. Scan QR code or text 401-258-7876 to opt in today!

# Marijuana and Secondhand Smoke

## ***New Study: Secondhand Marijuana Smoke More Hazardous Than Secondhand Tobacco Smoke***

*Marijuana joints produce 3.5 times as much secondhand smoke as a Marlboro*

The study compared emissions of fine particles, or particulate matter (PM 2.5) from tobacco smoke and marijuana smoke and found that the PM 2.5 emission rate of pre-rolled marijuana joints was 3.5 times higher than the average PM 2.5 emission rate of Marlboro cigarettes. Furthermore, the study also found that smoking marijuana indoors produced much more secondhand smoke emissions than the use of cigarettes indoors.

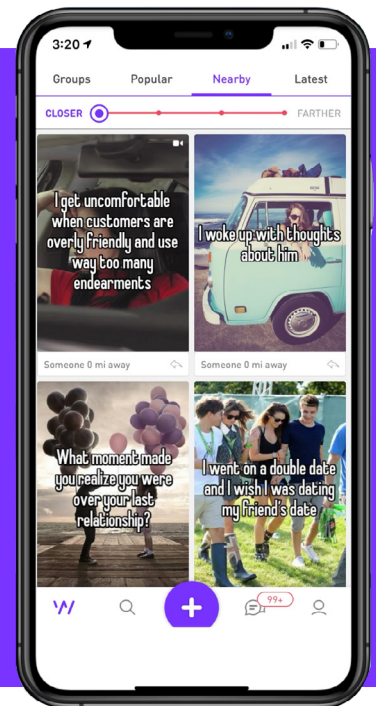
This study follows previous research finding marijuana users had higher levels of smoke-related toxins in their blood and urine than non-smokers. Marijuana users were found to have higher levels of dangerous toxins such as naphthalene, acrylamide, and acrylonitrile than those who do not smoke marijuana or tobacco. These toxins are associated with severe harms such as cancer, anemia, and liver and mental health damage.



Legalization organizations have long targeted provisions of the Clean Indoor Air Act to allow for a marijuana exception. They have also denied the harms of secondhand smoke in areas such as public housing, which exposes the most vulnerable. Recent studies have found public housing exposes children to secondhand smoke more so than tobacco.



The Whisper app allows users to quickly and anonymously share their feelings or thoughts with catchy photos or videos. Even though users are anonymous, the location sharing feature in this app helps users connect with other users nearby. Whispers can quickly escalate into off-app communications and dangerous situations. Terms of use say users must be at least 13 years of age and have parental supervision until 18 years of age. However, we found no age verification process to start using the app or browse the website. Users can search for Groups and add a specific school location. Whispers in school groups can be seen only when the user is on school grounds (or near enough to school the app thinks your location is on school grounds). Parents, school resource officers, and counselors must be aware of the Whisper app.



[www.spcprevention.org](http://www.spcprevention.org)



**Southern Providence County  
Regional Coalition**  
Cronston • Johnston • North Providence • Scituate • Smithfield



**SPCR is a federally funded organization providing mental health promotion and substance use prevention.**