

Raising Healthy Kids

SPCPrevention.org



**Southern Providence County
Regional Coalition**
Communities. Prevention. Collaboration.

EDUCATION

HELPING YOUR CHILD ADJUST TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle school brings big changes—more academic pressure, social shifts, and logistical challenges. Instead of stepping in to fix every problem, focus on coaching your child to build confidence and independence. Help them stay organized, encourage a growth mindset, and be a calm sounding board as they learn to navigate new situations. Most importantly, listen without judgment—your support and steady presence will go a long way during this major transition.

DRUG TRENDS

KRATOM DRINK “FEEL FREE” LINKED TO ADDICTION CONCERNS

Marketed as a natural, sober-friendly alternative to alcohol, the popular tonic Feel Free Classic contains kratom and kava—both psychoactive substances. Some users, like one Texas woman, report becoming dependent, drinking multiple bottles daily and experiencing withdrawal symptoms. Despite its wellness branding, health experts warn that kratom can act like an opioid and may be habit-forming. Awareness is growing online as more people share similar experiences.

To learn more, check out this article:

Feel Free is hooking young people with horrible consequences

(nypost.com)



PARENTS, ARE YOU ON MUTE?

Talking to our children about marijuana isn't always easy...but it is critical to prevention.

Silence may be mistaken for permission.

Talking with your child about drugs and alcohol can be simple. Use everyday moments to show they can ask questions, share feelings, and know support is available if needed.

- If you see someone smoking, talk about tobacco's harmful effects.
- Discuss news stories and ask your child's thoughts on situations and consequences.
- While watching TV or movies, ask if drugs or alcohol are portrayed as fun and discuss real outcomes.
- If someone you know is affected by substance use, remind them anyone can develop a disorder.

Talk to your teens. Prevention starts with awareness.

SPCPrevention.org/parents

RESOURCES

DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT?

Hidden in Plain Sight allows parents a unique interactive opportunity to look into a Teenager's Mock Bedroom. The room is full of common household items that could be used to hide or disguise drug, alcohol, tobacco use or other "risky" behaviors. Adults are asked to search for the items, and then compare their results with the answers.

Visit **SPC-Hips.com** to explore the interactive bedroom.

NICOTINE POUCHES RAISE CONCERNS FOR TEENS

- Tiny nicotine pouches, like ZYN, are raising alarms among health experts and prevention groups. The FDA approved them as a safer option for adults 21+, but teens are using them because they're easy to hide and flavored like candy.
- "Nicotine is highly addictive," said Dr. Allison Heinly of Hasbro Children's Hospital, warning that use can cause serious health risks and accidental ingestion by young kids can even be fatal.
- Prevention advocates say the tobacco industry is once again drawing in youth, while Philip Morris, which owns ZYN, insists its products are for adults only and uses age-verification systems.
- Each pouch contains 3–6 milligrams of nicotine—comparable to a cigarette. Experts stress these are not cessation tools, but another way to get hooked on nicotine.
- **Bottom line: No amount of nicotine is safe for kids.**



Warning for Parents & Schools

Nicotine pouches like ZYN are flavored, easy to hide, and addictive. Each pouch can contain as much nicotine as a cigarette. Doctors say no amount of nicotine is safe for kids.

NATIONAL DRUG TAKE BACK

October 25, 2025 10:00 a.m.– 2:00 p.m.



Find a drop box near you.

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, or is experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, just call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

Every Day is Take Back Day

Dispose of unneeded medication

Nearly 17,000 locations nationwide

- Clean them out.
- Take them back.
- All year long.



REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Cranston, Johnston, North Providence, Scituate, & Smithfield

Cranston Fall Festival (September 20): The Cranston Prevention Coordinator will host a prevention resource table to engage families and community members.

Johnston Apple Festival (September 20): The Johnston Prevention Coordinator will host a prevention resource table to engage families and community members.

Freshman Orientations (Smithfield & Johnston): Coordinators distributed prevention resources to parents of incoming high school students.

National Night Out: Johnston, Smithfield, and Cranston Prevention Coordinators tabled at community events to connect with parents and raise awareness of prevention initiatives.

Media Ready & Pick Your No's: All municipal prevention coordinators are working with school administrators to schedule implementation of these evidence-based curricula in every middle school in the region.

Beyond the Influence Handbooks: Prevention handbooks will be distributed to all incoming freshmen across the region to support healthy decision-making.

Environmental Scans: We are conducting ongoing environmental scans as THC-infused beverages are becoming increasingly popular among teens. These products are being sold in local liquor stores—some with proper licensing and some without. Findings will be shared in the next issue of RHK.

Rhode Island College Partnership: Collaborating to provide a pain management education/opioids program for freshman athletes.

Tri-County Head Start Partnership: Partnered with both northern and southern Rhode Island Head Start programs to provide families with lock bags for medications and cannabis, helping to keep young children and teens safe.

New Staff: Welcomed a North Providence Prevention Coordinator, beginning in September.

Rise Above Prevention Activity Book: A prevention-themed activity book will be distributed to all 6th-grade students across the region.



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09.2025