

e:merge

uniting to equip youth for life



Resource Guide For Parents and Guardians

Capital Region

BUILDING & PROMOTING ASSET DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH

The Capital Region e:merge Coalition is a nonpartisan collaboration of adults and youth dedicated to helping our community make sure all young people are **e:merge: ready for college, work and life**. Our commitments are:

- ◆ **To invest in children and youth as our region's highest priority**
- ◆ **To foster caring adults who are actively involved in the lives of children and youth**
- ◆ **To provide physically and emotionally safe places for children and youth**
- ◆ **To ensure a healthy start that meets the basic needs of children and youth**
- ◆ **To ensure that all children and youth receive an effective education and acquire 21st century skills**
- ◆ **To provide opportunities for children and youth to participate and be involved in the community**

Young people need to have supports, opportunities and services to prosper and contribute where they live, learn, work, play and make a difference. The EMERGE Coalition provides youth and adult leaders with the information, network support and partnership opportunities needed to increase the quality and quantity of youth investment and youth involvement.

Kevin Johnson, Mayor
City of Sacramento
915 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dave Gordon
Superintendent SCOE
10474 Mather Blvd
Mather, CA 95655
916-808-5407

Sacramento City Council

Citrus Heights City Council

Elk Grove City Council

Sacramento City Unified SD

Twin Rivers Unified SD

San Juan Unified SD

CONTENTS:

Letter from the Leadership Team.....	3
Be an Asset-BUILDER	4
What Are Developmental Assets?	4
Why Assets Make a Difference.....	5
Youth Development Assets	6
Asset-Building Ideas	8
California Healthy Kids Survey	11
Keeping Youth Alcohol-, Tobacco- & Drug-Free	18
Talking About Alcohol, Tobacco & Drugs	22
Myths and Facts About Alcohol Use	24
Expressing Anger	26
Resolving Conflict	27
Bullying and Harassment	28
Body Image	30
Nutrition and Healthy Weight	31
Tattooing & Body Piercing	32
Risk of Sex and Dating Violence.....	33
Teen Depression and Suicide.....	34
What About Nicotine?	35
Gangs	36
Kindness—What You Can Do	37
In Summation	38
Web Sites and Books.....	39
Resource Directory	Back Cover

For a list of EMERGE Leadership Team
www.ydnetwork.org/emerge

Thanks to EMERGE sponsors:

Dear Families and Community Members,

As parents and guardians, we try to do everything we can to make sure our children are safe, learn how to make healthy choices to be tobacco-, alcohol- and drug-free, and have the assets and resources they need to be successful in college, work and life. Despite our best efforts, the results of the Healthy Kids Survey, reported on pages 11-16, indicate that too many of our youth find themselves without the supports they need to help them make positive choices and be prepared for their future. The lack of developmental supports results in our youth using drugs and alcohol, failing or dropping out of school. As a community we must face this issue, talk about what we know all youth need to succeed, identify what works, and employ our resources in unison to ensure our youth are not only problem free but also fully prepared for adulthood.

With leadership and cooperation from the city and county, our school districts, and neighborhood and community-based organizations, we are committed to helping parents and guardians meet this challenge; while ensuring community supports are also available. Research tells us that if our youth have an underlying background of family and community support, they will be more likely to make good choices about unsafe behavior, be more likely to graduate and be better prepared for their future. .

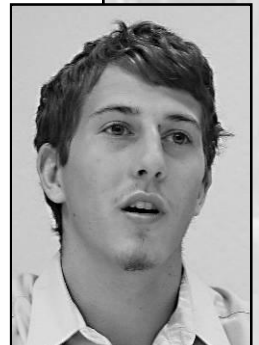
On pages 6 and 7 of this publication, you will find an inventory of the most important “developmental assets.” We urge you to review these assets to determine how many of them your child currently has, and to plan for ways to consciously increase your child’s total. Children who fall in this category generally are more successful in school, and less prone to illicit drug and alcohol use, premature sexual activity, violence or bullying. We’ve suggested a variety of ideas, books and local agencies that can help you be intentional about asset building.

Parents and guardians do make the difference. Be involved in your child’s life. Express your family’s values clearly. Listen to your children, and act as a positive role model. If you think your child is in trouble, seek help immediately, but also make sure your child knows he or she is still loved and that solutions can be found.

Please keep this guide in a handy place. Beyond tobacco, alcohol and drug prevention information, it contains suggestions to deal with anger, gangs and other issues that young people face today. Talking to your children about these things is never easy, but it is essential. We are hopeful this publication will serve as a valuable resource to you and your family.

Sincerely,

e:merge Coalition Leadership Team



WHAT ARE DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS?

All children and youth need support, opportunities, boundaries, expectations and structure. The people and programs surrounding children have the opportunity to nurture and mold the connections, values, skills and positive identity children need to grow up healthy and responsible.

The building blocks of young people's successful growth and development is well researched. These building blocks, or developmental assets, provide a common framework through which parents, guardians and the community can support youth.

The more of these assets young people possess, the less likely they are to get involved in problem behaviors such as...

smoking, drinking, drug use, early sexual activity and violence. The more assets young people have, the more likely they will make positive choices and be prepared for college, work and life.

As a parent or guardian, you can and should be the most influential asset builder in your child's life.

It doesn't matter if your child is an infant or a teenager, it's never too early or too late to start building the foundation your child needs to succeed. Youth develop 24/7, so parents, schools and the community have multiple opportunities to help youth succeed. There are probably many asset-building activities that you already do with your children—even if you don't call them that. Pages 6-7 list developmental assets that all youth need. Please also seek information online at www.search-institute.org, www.americaspromise.org, www.healthykids.org. Pages 8-10 give you some specific ways to build these assets in youth. In partnership, parents, schools and the community can ensure youth success.



WHY ASSETS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

While anyone can be an asset-builder by beginning with the strengths they already have or that they develop, specific qualities are characteristic of successful asset-builders. Who you are is just as important as what you do to help build assets with and for young people.

Who You Are—“Being” Characteristics

- Open, honest and an active listener
- Committed to maintaining integrity, being responsible and promoting positive change in the world
- Hopeful and optimistic about young people and the future
- Appreciative of others’ strengths and uniqueness
- Striving toward caring, respectful relationships with young people
- Willing to share your “assets” (time, knowledge, caring, experience, wisdom) with young people

What You Do—“Doing” Characteristics

- Respect and affirm children, seek to understand them and expect respect in return.
- Look for the good in others and seek common ground with them.
- Hold meaningful conversations with young people about personal values, beliefs, decision making and cultural differences.
- Model positive behaviors, including kindness, lifelong learning, voting and self-restraint.
- Forgive people when they make mistakes.
- Know how to apologize, explain, negotiate and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Encourage young people to succeed in school, serve their community and be valuable resources to others.

★ ★ ★ Assets Most Closely Related to Academic Success ★ ★ ★

Caring School Climate

- Young people feel that their school supports them, encourages them and cares about them.

Parent Involvement in Schooling

- Parents help with school work, talk about what’s going on at school, ask about homework, and go to meetings and events.

Time at Home

- Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

Resistance Skills

- Students are helped to resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.

Personal Power

- Opportunities are provided to help students identify dangerous situations and think of ways to prevent them or handle them by making healthy choices.

Planning and Decision Making

- Young person is able to identify dangerous situations and think of ways to prevent them or handle them by making healthy choices and decisions.

Community Values Youth

- Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.

Other Adult Relationships

- Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.

Safety

- Young person feels safe at home, school and in their neighborhood.

Peaceful Conflict Resolution

- Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Reading for Pleasure

- Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

Service to Others/Youth as Resource

- Young people are given useful roles in the community and serve in the community for one hour or more per week.

Creative Activities

- Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater or other arts.

Adapted from Search Institute materials

Building Blocks

America's Promise has identified building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible.

Which of these assets does your child have?

Which of these assets can you help build?

EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

- **Family Boundaries**—Family has clear rules and boundaries.
- **School Boundaries**—School rules and consequences are clear and fair.
- **Neighborhood Boundaries**—Neighborhoods take responsibility for monitoring youth.
- **Safety**—Youth feel safe at home, in school or community.
- **Non-School-Hour Programs**—Youth have safe, structured places to be after school, weekends and evenings that offer productive activities or just a place to hang out.
- **High Expectations**—Parents, teachers and communities encourage youth to do well.
- **Adult Role Models**—Adults model positive, safe and healthy behaviors.
- **Cultural Awareness**—Youth feel their culture is honored, valued and represented in the programs they participate in.

POSITIVE CARING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS AND PEERS

- **Caring Families/Caregivers**—Youth feel love and support from families/caregivers.
- **Caring Schools**—Schools provide welcoming, inclusive and encouraging environments.
- **Bonding to School**—Students care about their school and feel connected to staff.
- **Caring Connections to Adults**—Youth have at least two non-family adults they can talk to or go to for help and guidance, and for whom they look up to as role models.
- **Positive Peer Relationships**—Youth have peers they know and relate to who have a positive influence on them.
- **Cultural Acceptance**—Adults and programs take time to get to know youth and accept and appreciate youth cultures. Youth learn about and have comfort with people from different cultures.

The more assets that youth possess, the more likely they are to make healthy and safe choices and be better prepared for life.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN LEADERSHIP & CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY

- **Sense of Belonging**—Youth feel part of the community, and see themselves in the community.
- **Decision Making**—Youth are provided opportunities to make decisions that impact their future.
- **Leadership**—Youth have roles in the community where they can lead. Youth learn skills necessary for leadership.
- **Understand Community**—Youth have opportunities to learn about their community.
- **Give Back to Community**—Youth have opportunities to volunteer, or impact others in their community in a positive way.
- **Resources in Community**—Youth are valued by adults and given useful and meaningful roles.

OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP A BROAD RANGE OF SKILLS IN HIGH-QUALITY ENGAGING, CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS

- **Broad Array of Skills Developed**—Youth have opportunities to develop a broad array of skills—creative, physical, faith, values, cognitive, planning, decision making, interpersonal, resistance, cultural, conflict resolution—in the programs they participate in.
- **Positive Identity**—Youth develop a sense of who they are, appreciate and explore their culture, develop a strong sense of self, feel competent and confident.
- **Purpose**—Youth develop a sense of purpose, a sense of power, and hold an optimistic view of their future.
- **Character of Skills**—Youth learn to be caring, fair and just, have integrity, be honest, be responsible and to resist negative peer pressures and dangerous situations.
- **Constructive Use of Time**—Youth spend at least three hours a week in a positive activity after school that develops their skills.
- **Engaging and Challenging**—After-school programs provide engaging, challenging and relevant activities.

Ways To Become Involved

Happy, successful young people need supportive relationships at home, at school and with adults in the community.

Every adult can help by getting involved in asset-building activities.

ASSET-BUILDING IDEAS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents and guardians are a child's primary teachers. Being a parent or guardian can be very hard work, but research shows that one of the best ways to deal with problems is to focus on positives.

Following are some ways to concentrate on building your child's developmental assets. For more resources, see page 39.

- Post the list of developmental assets on your refrigerator door. Each day, focus on an asset.
- Regularly do things with your child, including projects around the house, fun activities and service projects. Take turns planning activities to do together as a family.
- Eat at least one meal together as a family every day.
- Negotiate family rules and consequences for breaking those rules.
- Talk about your values and priorities, and live in a way that is consistent with them.
- Give your children lots of support and approval, while also challenging them to take responsibility and gain independence.
- Nurture your own assets by spending time with people who care about you and are supportive. Learn new things, contribute to your community and have fun.
- Think about the way you were parented and how that affects your relationships with your children. If there are parts of your relationship with your parents that were very difficult or that get in the way of your parenting, consider talking with someone about these issues.
- As a family, choose to reduce time spent watching television. Find other interesting and meaningful activities for your children to do—some with you, some with their friends, some by themselves.
- Learn as much as you can about what your children need at their current ages. See resources on page 39.

- Recognize that children need more than just financial support; they also need emotional and intellectual support. Balance family time with other priorities like work, recreation and hobbies.
- Talk with your children before problems arise. Keep in regular contact with teachers about how your children are doing and find out what you can do to help your children learn.
- Think of teenagers as adults in training. Teach them something practical, such as how to change a tire or prepare a meal. Help them expand their interests.
- Do intergenerational activities with your extended family and with other neighborhood adults and families.
- Be an asset-builder for other young people in your life.
- Listen to your children. Let them talk about their thoughts, feelings, fears and dreams.
- Make sure your children are supervised after school. Enroll them in after-school programs at their school if needed. Or join with your neighbors or extended family to share support after school.
- Remember that you are not alone. Other asset-builders in your children's lives include teachers, coaches, child-care providers, religious leaders, club leaders and neighbors. Work with these people to give youth consistent messages about boundaries and values.

**ASSET-BUILDING IDEAS
FOR GRANDPARENTS**

- Find out your grandchildren's interests or skills and work together on a related project.
- Share a family tradition with your grandchild, like cooking a family recipe together.
- Share your family history with your grandchild. Tell bedtime stories, write them down or draw pictures.
- Stay in contact if you live far away. Call or write.

**ASSET-BUILDING IDEAS
FOR COACHES**

- Find ways for each child to participate.
- Insist that all team members treat one another with respect.
- Focus on helping players get better, not be the best.
- Model non-aggressive verbal and physical behavior. Model positive ways to express anger, frustration and disappointment.

**ASSET-BUILDING IDEAS
FOR ALL ADULTS**

- Learn the names of children and teenagers who live near you. Greet them by name.
- Expect young people to behave responsibly. Let them know what you expect from them—before there is trouble.
- Take time to talk with young people who live near you.
- Establish at least one informal, ongoing, caring relationship with a child or adolescent outside your family.
- Look out for the children and youth around you. Help keep them safe. Report dangerous and inappropriate behaviors to parents/guardians, school officials or law enforcement officers.
- Get involved in volunteer efforts and community programs that involve children and youth.
- Support local efforts to provide safe spaces for young people to meet and spend time together.

TAKE TIME TO TALK!

Communication is critical for asset building. It's not always easy! If at first you don't succeed, try and try again. Here are some ideas that can help:

Schedule uninterrupted time together.

Find a quiet room or take a walk. Turn off the TV.

Use words and ideas that are familiar to your child.

You must bridge the gap into your child's world.

Practice active listening together.

1. Relax and take a deep breath.
2. Maintain eye contact.
3. Take turns talking.
4. Stay quiet until it is your turn to talk.
5. Care about what your child is feeling.
6. Nod your head to show you understand.
7. Check with each other to see if you each heard what the other meant to say.

Use "I" rather than "you" statements.

"I feel (upset) because (I'm not being heard)." Not "You make me (angry)."

Set a family code/rule that some practices are not allowed:

Avoid put downs, name calling, blaming the other, excuses, threatening.

Stay in the present.

Nothing can be done today to solve problems in the past. Encourage learning from past experiences.

Observe the following rules of good communication:

1. Tell the truth.
2. Be fair and examine both sides.
3. Speak directly to your child.
4. Be willing to be wrong and admit it. Be big enough to say "I'm sorry."
5. Accept differences in values and lifestyles.
6. Respect your child's feelings and intelligence.
7. Respond to anger with a calm voice.
8. Take time out if necessary.

Focus on the feelings that are behind the words.

Restate thoughts in terms of feelings. "I felt disappointed when you were late."

Be aware of body movements.

Hand movements, facial expressions, posture and tension are important indicators of inner feelings.

Avoid talking down to or intimidating your child.

Your role as a parent is to improve your child's self-image, not to damage it.

FOSTERING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Cultural competence is one of the building blocks. Youth are more likely to grow up healthy when they have knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Cultural competence does not mean we all have to like each other. Instead, it means that we treat each other with respect, tolerance and equality. Children can strive to understand other cultures and come to appreciate them. Here are some strategies for parents, guardians and adults to foster cultural competence:

- Help your child develop an ethnic awareness and cultural identity of his or her own.
- Create an open family atmosphere that allows discussion of differences.
- Encourage children to talk about where their prejudices and discomfort originate. Examine images on TV and in movies, and discuss what's authentic and what's stereotypical.
- Help your child to be curious about your own culture as well as others. Read articles together, rent videos, cook new foods, or try other ways to focus on cultures other than your own.
- Encourage your child to get a pen pal from a different country.
- When your child has a negative reaction to a cultural or racial difference, find out what happened and what your child is feeling, and suggest alternative responses.



WHY WAS THE SURVEY CONDUCTED?

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) is a service provided by the California Department of Education to assist school districts in collecting information on the health risks and the resilience of their students. Students in grades 5, 7, 9 and 11 are surveyed every two years as required by the California Department of Education, Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office. This report provides a summary of the findings relating to substance use, violence and safety, physical health, and risk behaviors from the survey administered from 2004-2006. While it is essential to identify and address student problems, it is equally important that we not lose sight of the positive behaviors and attitudes of most youth.

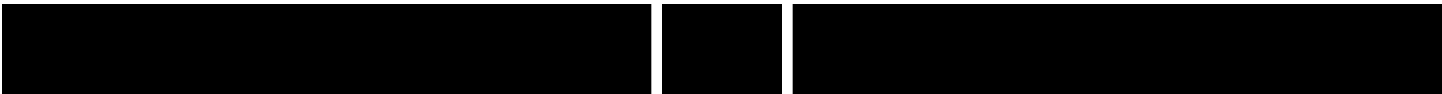
WHO TOOK THE SURVEY?

Sacramento City Unified School District	Galt Elementary School District	Elk Grove Unified School District	Folsom Cordova Unified
55% of 7th-graders	54% of 7th-graders	53% of 7th-graders	73% of 7th-graders
78% of 9th-graders		53% of 9th-graders	72% of 9th-graders
56% of 11th-graders		61% of 11th-graders	87% of 11th-graders

Some school districts (see examples above) fall short of the recommended 60% level. According to CHKS standards, a district must collect completed answer sheets from a MINIMUM of 60% of students at each surveyed grade (5th, 7th, 9th and 11th) to produce the representative data. The lower the percentage of participating students, the less valid and useful are the results. Survey information for every school district can be found in the Key Findings Reports made available at the Healthy Kids Survey Web site: http://www.wested.org/cs/chks/print/docs/chks_home.html/.

WHY NOT 60% PARTICIPATION?

The CHKS protocol requires parent consent in order for students to complete the survey. Current law requires that a consent letter be sent before or at the beginning of the school year. Research and experience show that most parents do not object to student participation. The challenge is making sure that they are fully notified and that the consent forms are returned to school. The commitment to ensuring that parent consent is obtained sometimes means that fewer than 60% of students participate, often because the consent forms are simply not returned.

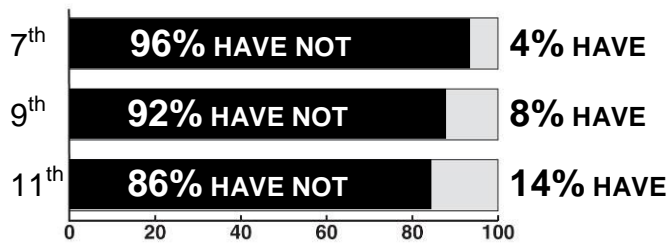


CALIFORNIA HEALTHY KIDS SURVEY 2007 7th, 9th, 11th GRADES

The following data was taken from the aggregated and weighted reports, which encompassed all school districts in Sacramento County that administered the California Healthy Kids Survey within the two-year cycle from 2004 to 2006.

The compilation of countywide data is focused on grades 7, 9 and 11. The participation rate of Sacramento students is more than adequate to provide reliable and valid data.

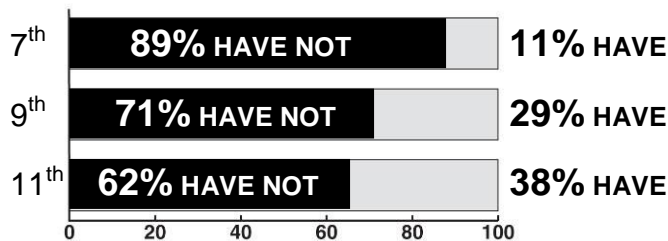
Used any TOBACCO in the last 30 days



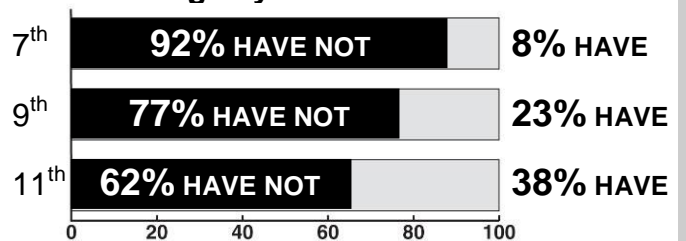
Used any INHALANTS in the last 30 days



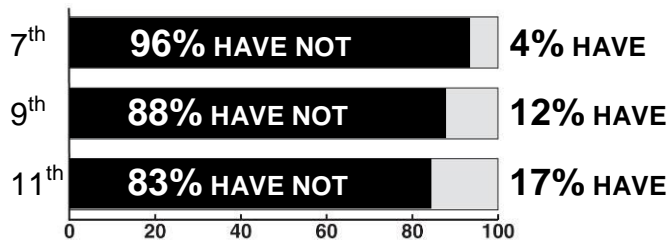
Used any ALCOHOL in the last 30 days



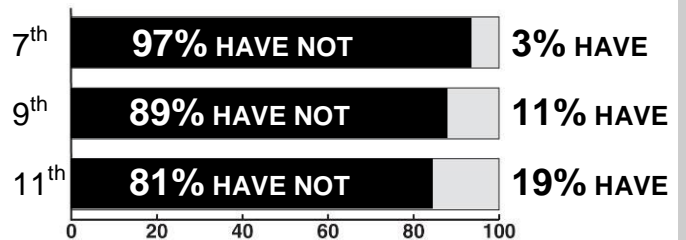
Ever been VERY DRUNK or SICK from drinking in your LIFETIME?



Used any MARIJUANA in the last 30 days

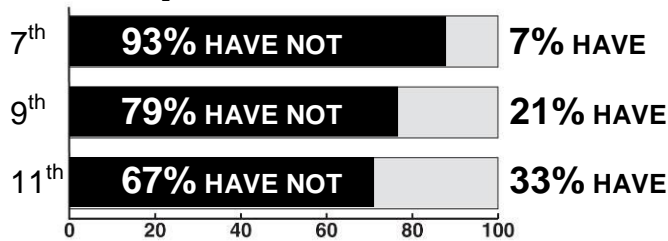


BINGE DRINKING in the last 30 days

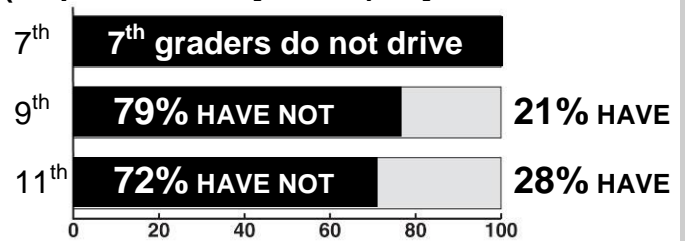


CALIFORNIA HEALTHY KIDS SURVEY 2007
7th, 9th, 11th GRADES

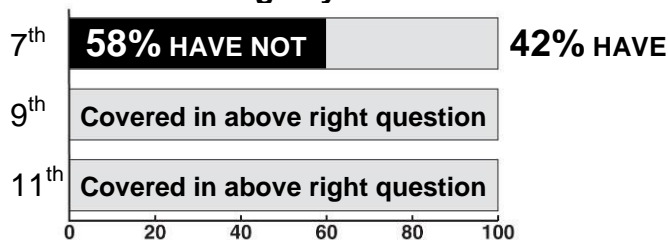
Ever been HIGH FROM USING DRUGS in your LIFETIME?



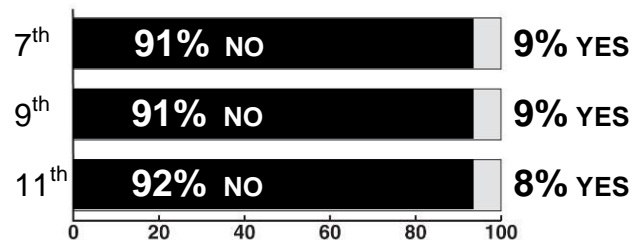
Ever DRIVEN AFTER DRINKING (respondent or by friend) in your LIFETIME?



Ever BEEN A PASSENGER when driver had been drinking in your LIFETIME?

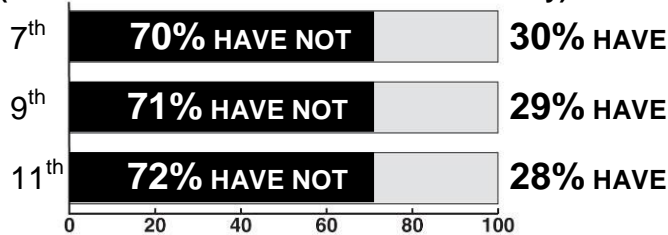


Are you currently involved in a GANG?

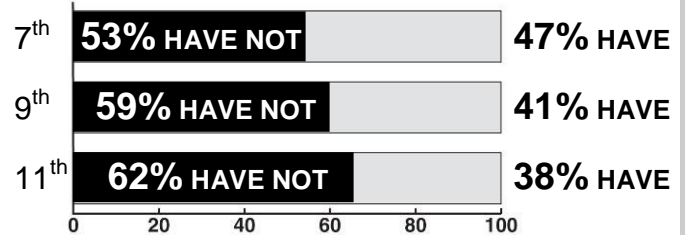


Over the last 12 months have you been HARASSED even once on school property for any HATE CRIMES?

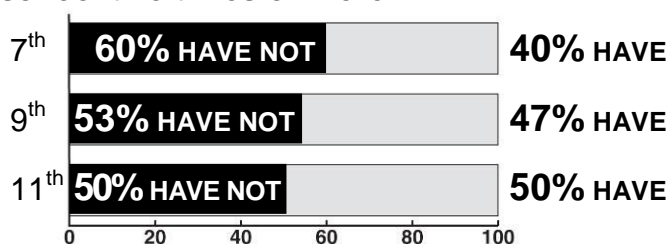
(race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability)



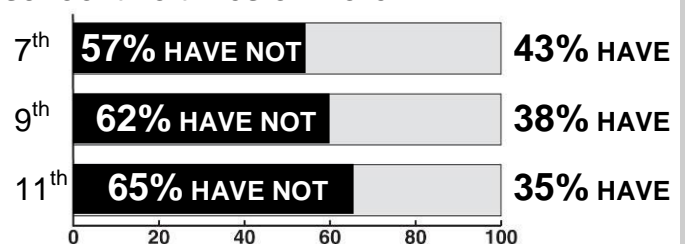
Over the last 12 months have you been verbally harassed with MEAN RUMORS or LIES while at school two times or more?



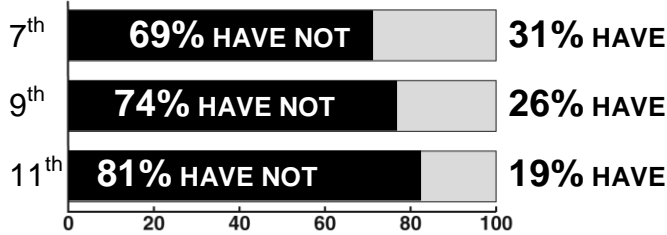
Over the last 12 months have you been verbally harassed with SEXUAL JOKES, COMMENTS or GESTURES while at school two times or more?



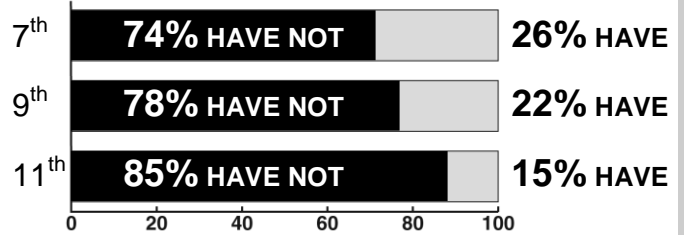
Over the last 12 months have you been verbally harassed about your LOOKS, ACTIONS or WAY YOU TALK while at school two times or more?



Over the last 12 months
have you been in a
PHYSICAL FIGHT?



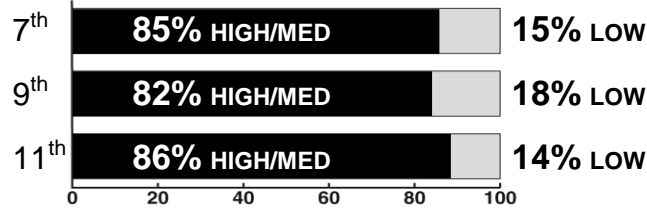
Over last 12 months have you been afraid
of **BEING BEATEN UP** on school property
more than 2 times?



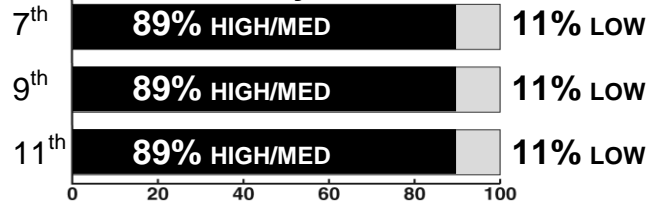
EXTERNAL ASSETS

Feel that they have a **CARING
RELATIONSHIP** with an adult...

...in School.

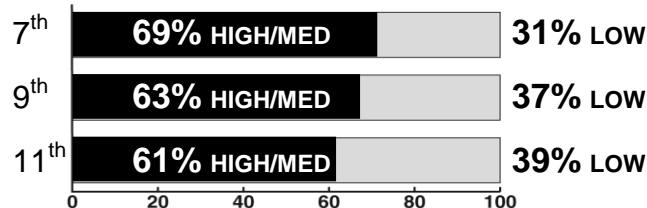


...in the Community.

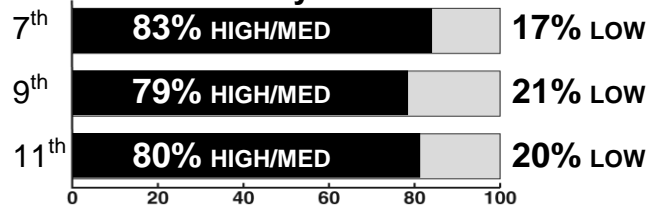


Feel that they have an opportunity for
MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION...

...in School.



...in the Community.

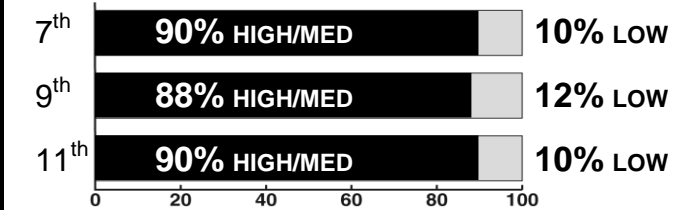


Do you feel **SAFE AT SCHOOL?**

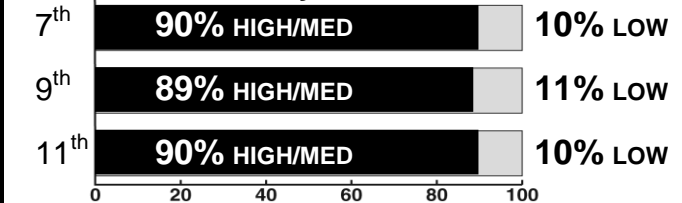


Feel that they have **HIGH EXPECTATIONS**
from an adult...

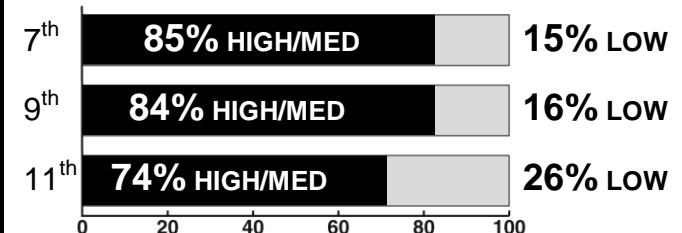
...in School.



...in the Community.

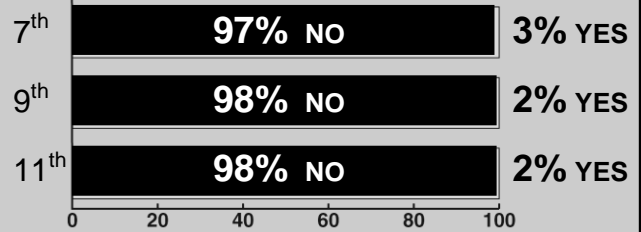


SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS

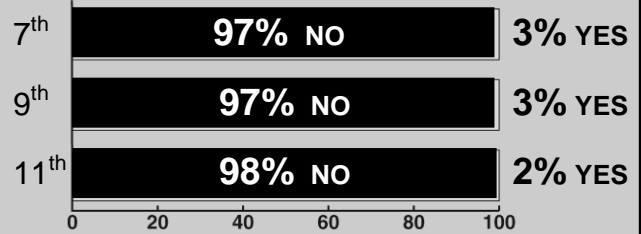




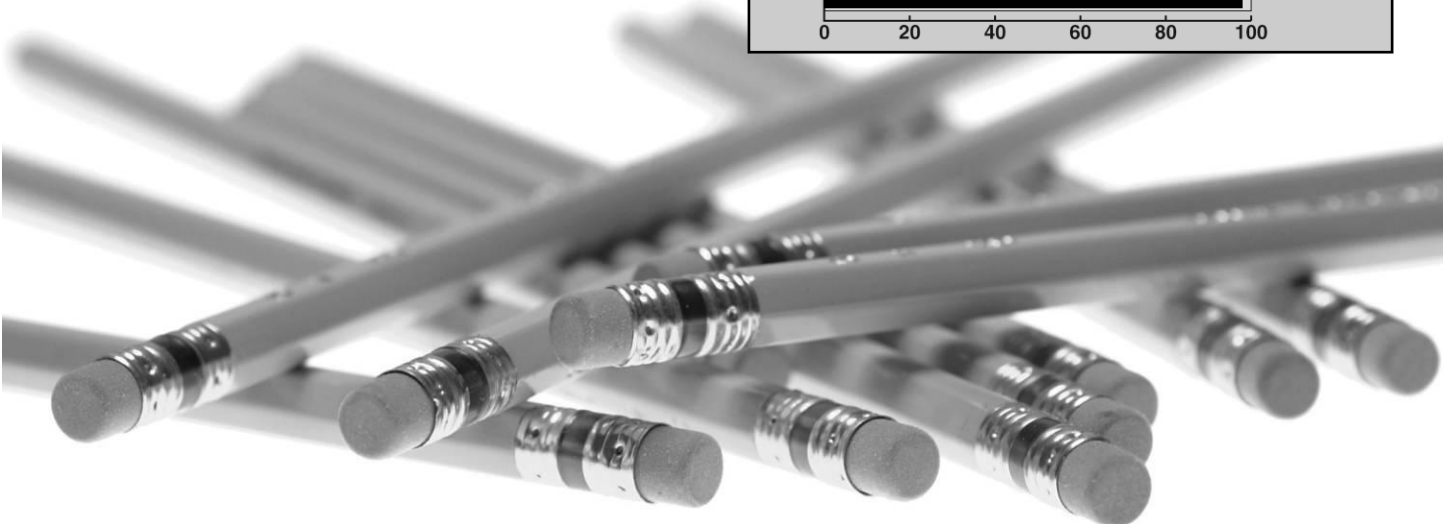
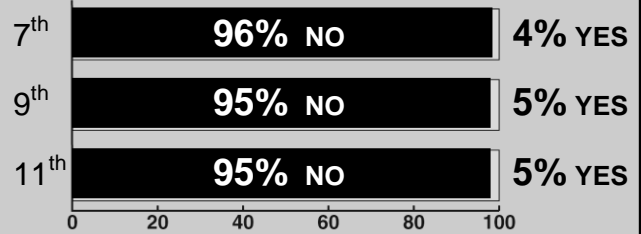
Do you believe that frequent use of TOBACCO is HARMLESS?



Do you believe that frequent use of ALCOHOL is HARMLESS?



Do you believe that frequent use of MARIJUANA is HARMLESS?



WHAT DOES THE SURVEY TELL US?

- Most students in Sacramento County make safe and healthy choices that highlight just how much students benefit when supported by caring adults.
- Virtually all students clearly feel that frequent use of tobacco, alcohol and marijuana is harmful.
- The majority of students do not take part in spreading rumors or harassing others. Given the opportunity, such students can serve as peer advocates for a positive school climate.
- Nearly all of our students feel safe at school.
- Sacramento's young people need more caring relationships and more opportunities for meaningful participation in school, community and home.

WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUTH IN SACRAMENTO?

- A large percentage of students surveyed reported using alcohol—11% in grade 7, 29% in grade 9 and 38% in grade 11.
- 41% of our 7th-graders surveyed report riding with someone driving under the influence (during their lifetime)
- 21% of 9th-graders and 28% of 11th-graders surveyed report driving or riding with someone under the influence (during their lifetime)
- 11% of 9th-graders and 19% of 11th-graders surveyed report binge drinking in the last 30 days (consuming 5 drinks or more in an hour's time).



OTHER KEY FINDINGS

- Students surveyed report the continued use of tobacco despite statewide tobacco control efforts—4% in grade 7, 8% in grade 9 and 14% in grade 11.
- 26% of 7th-graders and 22% of 9th-graders surveyed report having been afraid of being beaten up at school during the last 12 months.
- 12% of 9th-graders and 17% of 11th-graders surveyed report using marijuana in the last 30 days.
- Too few students report having a high level of feeling connected to school—only 41% in grade 7, 31% in grade 9 and 22% in grade 11.
- Too many students are being harassed, bullied or teased.

The Call to Educators, Parents, Business Leaders and the Community

THE CALL TO EDUCATORS

- Check in with students one-to-one by making personal contact with them every day.
- Be available to students so they feel comfortable dropping in if they need help or want to talk.
- Communicate caring and positive expectations equally and equitably with all students.
- Create learning circles where students share thoughts and concerns about issues.
- Give youth encouragement and support to make good choices and achieve their dreams.
- Promote rigorous curriculum and high academic achievement for all students.
- Support caregivers with resources to be successful advocates for their children.

THE CALL TO PARENTS

- Make sure your children are clear about your family values and standards of behavior.
- Set clear family expectations and boundaries.
- Know your children's friends, know where your children are and who they're with.
- Eat family meals together—it's a good time to talk and listen to your children.
- Praise your children for good behaviors and choices.

THE CALL TO THE COMMUNITY

- Take ownership of the well-being and safety of the children in the community.
- Support and encourage young people.
- Support and encourage after-school programs throughout the community.
- Demonstrate good citizenship, tolerance and positive communication in your own actions and behaviors.

THE CALL TO BUSINESS LEADERS

- Include young employees and interns in team meetings and business decisions.
- Commit to hiring youth and to providing paid and unpaid internships.
- Volunteer as a mentor or tutor and provide incentives for your employees to be involved with youth.
- Partner with educational institutions around theme-based learning.



PARENTING SKILLS: TIPS AND IDEAS TO HELP YOU KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE, HEALTHY AND SUBSTANCE FREE

What's the biggest deterrent to your child using drugs and alcohol?

IT'S YOU.



I wish I'd known...how important it is to be awake when your teen comes home in the evening. Give him or her a big hug, and take a deep sniff for tell-tale signs of alcohol or marijuana use. Engage your teen in conversation about the evening to make sure your teen is sober and coherent before going to bed. Teens are awake and talkative late at night and you'll probably find these conversations enlightening and insightful.

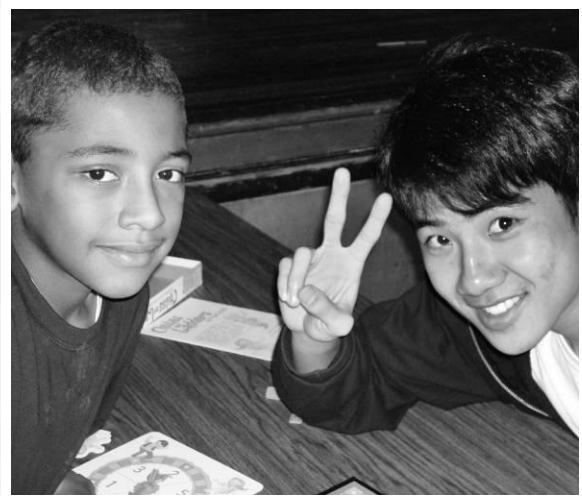
Advice from local author and anti-drug advocate Christy Crandell excerpted from her book: *Lost & Found: A Mother and Son Find Victory Over Teen Drug Addiction.*

Get Involved

Youth who are close to their parents or guardians are least likely to engage in risky behaviors. The more involved you are in your children's lives, the more valued they'll feel, and the more likely they'll be to respond to you.

- Establish "together time." Establish a regular weekly routine for doing something special with your child—even something as simple as going out for a walk.
- Don't be afraid to ask where your children are going, who they'll be with, and what they'll be doing. Get to know your child's friends—and their parents—so you're familiar with their activities.
- Try to be there after school when your child gets home. The "danger zone" for drug use is between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., when no one's around; arrange flexible time at work if you possibly can. If your child will be with friends, ideally they have adult supervision, not just an older sibling.

- Eat together as often as you can. Meals are a great opportunity to talk about the day's events, to unwind, reinforce and bond. Studies show that children whose families eat together at least five times a week are less likely to be involved with drugs or alcohol.



Learn to Communicate

Do you know your child's favorite music group? What's cool at school? The more you communicate, the more at ease your child will feel about discussing drugs and other sensitive issues with you.

- Be absolutely clear with your children that you don't want them using drugs. Ever. Anywhere. Don't leave room for interpretation. And talk often about the dangers and results of drug and alcohol abuse. Once or twice a year won't do it.
- Be a better listener. Ask questions and encourage them. Paraphrase what your child says to you. Ask for their input about family decisions. Showing your willingness to listen will make your child feel more comfortable about opening up to you.
- Give honest answers. Don't make up what you don't know; offer to find out. If asked whether you've ever taken drugs, let your children know what's important—you don't want them using drugs.
- Use TV reports, anti-drug commercials, news or school discussions about tobacco, alcohol and drugs to help you introduce the subject in a natural, unforced way.
- Don't react in a way that will cut off further discussion. If your child makes statements that challenge or shock you, turn them into a calm discussion of why your child thinks people use tobacco, alcohol or drugs, or whether the effect is worth the risk.

- Role play with your child and practice ways to refuse drugs and alcohol in different situations. Acknowledge how tough these moments can be, especially if friends are involved.

Walk the Walk

Be a role model of the person you want your child to be. What stronger anti-drug message is there?

- Be a living, day-to-day example of your value system. Demonstrate the compassion, honesty, generosity and openness you want your child to have.



Lay Down The Law

Children between 11 and 13—ages highly at risk for drug experimentation—are increasingly independent. Despite their protests, they still crave structure and guidance; they want you to show them you care enough to set limits.

- Create rules and discuss in advance the consequences of breaking them. Make your expectations clear. Don't make empty threats or let the rule-breaker off the hook. Don't impose harsh or unexpected new punishments.
- Set a curfew and enforce it strictly. Be prepared to negotiate for special occasions.
- Have children check in at regular times. Give them a phone card, money or even a pager or cell phone with clear rules for using it. (Remember, pagers and cell phones are not allowed in some schools.)
- Call parents whose home is to be used for a party. Ask about adult supervision.
- Make it easy to leave a party where drugs or alcohol are available. Discuss in advance how you or another designated adult will come to pick your child up the moment he or

she feels uncomfortable. Later, be prepared to talk about what happened.

- Listen to your instincts. Don't be afraid to intervene if your gut reaction tells you that something is wrong.

Praise and Reward

What encourages a child more than his or her parents' approval? The right word at the right time can strengthen the bond that helps keep your child away from substances.

- Reward good behavior consistently and immediately. Expressions of love, appreciation, and thanks go a long way. Even children who think themselves too old for hugs will appreciate a pat on the back or a special treat.
- Accentuate the positive. Emphasize the things your child does right. Restrain the urge to be critical. Affection and respect—making your child feel good about himself or herself—will reinforce good (and change bad) behavior far more successfully than embarrassment or uneasiness.

*Parenting skills adapted from
<http://www.theantidrug.com>*



ALCOHOL AND THE LAW

The minimum age for drinking in California is 21. This means the sale or transfer of alcoholic beverages to anyone under that age is prohibited. Underage drinking at unsupervised social gatherings can have legal consequences. In such situations, a peace officer who lawfully enters the gathering can seize alcoholic beverages from anyone under 21.

The punishment for violating these laws varies. In many instances, the offender may be found guilty of an infraction or a misdemeanor. Young people between the ages of 13 and 21 may have their driver's licenses suspended, revoked or delayed up to one year for each offense. This is true even if the offense does not involve an automobile. Young people may also be asked to pay fines of up to \$250 or perform between 24 and 32 hours of community service.

All minors must also abide by city and county ordinances that prohibit alcohol consumption in public places, driving under the influence of alcohol and use of false identification to purchase alcohol.

DRUGS AND THE LAW

It is against the law to use or be "high on drugs." In regard to drug use, young people are most often charged with "possession of a controlled substance" under California law. More than 135 controlled substances carry a felony charge for possession. For a few drugs, the punishment is less severe. For example, possession of an ounce or less of marijuana is treated as an infraction, resulting in a fine of up to \$100. Minors may also be escorted home to their parents or taken to a juvenile probation officer.

In California, courts now have the discretion to suspend a young person's license for six months to a year if that person has been found driving under the influence of drugs or convicted of a drug-related offense. If the minor has yet to get a license, a suspension or one-year delay in issuing the license may be imposed for each conviction.



When young people are arrested with greater quantities of drugs than they could reasonably be expected to use themselves, they may be charged with "possession with intent to sell" drugs. This is a felony, even if the simple possession of the particular drug involved would not have been a felony.

PARENTS' LIABILITY

Parents can be held financially liable when their child's willful misconduct results in personal injury or destruction of property. Provisions in California law set these current liability limits for parents:

- \$10,000 for personal or property damage; adjusted yearly (EC Section 48904[a][1])
 - \$10,000 for reward (GC Section 53069.5 and EC Section 48904[a][1])
 - \$10,000 for personal or property damage (CC Section 1714.1)
 - Up to \$30,000 for personal or property damage involving use of firearms (CC Section 1714.3)
-

SIGNS OF SUBSTANCE USE

Presence of drugs and drug paraphernalia:

- Possession of pipes, rolling papers, small decongestant bottles, needles or small butane torches
- Possession or evidence of drugs—peculiar plants, seeds, leaves or butts in ash trays or clothing pockets
- Odor of drugs or smell of incense or other “cover-up” scents

Identification with drug culture:

- Drug-related magazines and drug-oriented slogans on clothing
- Conversation and jokes about drugs or alcohol
- Resistance to discussing drugs or alcohol with adults

Signs of cognitive deterioration:

- Memory lapses, short attention span, difficulty with concentration

Poor physical coordination and slurred or incoherent speech.

Poor Deteriorating physical appearance:

- Slovenly dress, indifference to hygiene or grooming

Overt physical signs of drug use:

- Bloodshot eyes and dilated pupils

Dramatic changes in school performance:

- Distinct downward turn in grades—from As to Cs or from Cs to Fs
- Assignments not completed
- Increased absenteeism or tardiness

Changes in behavior:

- Chronic dishonesty (lying, stealing and cheating)
- Trouble with the police
- Changes in friends, evasiveness about new friends
- Possession of large amounts of money
- Increasing and inappropriate hostility, irritability, secretiveness
- Reduced motivation, energy, self-discipline, self-esteem
- Diminished interest in hobbies and extracurricular activities
- Association with known drug users

Caution:

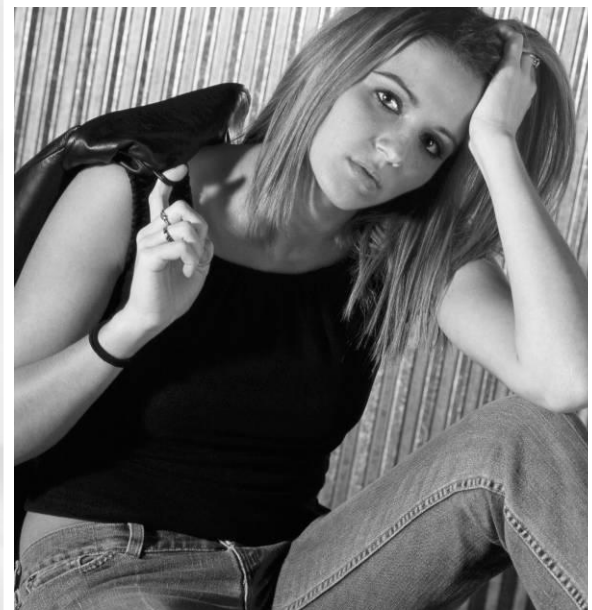
Adolescent behavior is often unpredictable and ever-changing. If you detect signs of substance use, follow up by being aware of your child's behavior and radical changes. Keep communication open and don't ignore signs of problems. Seek professional advice if you feel unsure. Pay attention to your intuition.



WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS USING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

Parents often do not want to admit their child is using substances, even when the signs are clear. But avoiding the problem could delay treatment for your child.

- Be courageous enough to seek help. Ask your doctor, or call one of the hotlines or resources listed on page 39 of this guide.
- Do not confront a child who is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Wait until the child is sober.
- Impose whatever discipline your family has decided upon for violating the rules and be consistent.
- Focus on the fact that you care about your child. Be clear that it is the behavior you disapprove of, not your child. Make sure that your child hears that message.
- Try to remain calm, unemotional and factually honest in speaking about your child's behavior and its day-to-day consequences. Avoid emotional appeals and punishments.
- Discuss the situation with someone you trust—a counselor, clergy member, social worker, friend or another individual who has experienced drug or alcohol abuse in their family.
- Don't keep the problem a secret. Get help for your child, and get support for yourself and your family.
- Be patient and live one day at a time. Recovery does not happen overnight. Try to accept setbacks and relapses with calmness and understanding.



ALCOHOL AND TEENS

There are many misconceptions concerning adolescents and alcohol use. These issues confuse not only young people, but their parents and other responsible adults. Following are some common myths and realities about teenage drinking.

Myth: *All teenagers will drink at some point, no matter how hard we try to stop them.*

Fact: Although underage drinking is a serious problem, 81 percent of adolescents ages 12 to 17 have chosen not to drink in the past year.

Myth: *My son or daughter knows everything about drinking, so we don't need to talk about it.*

Fact: Many teenagers have dangerous misconceptions about alcohol—for example, they don't realize that wine coolers have the same alcohol content as a shot of distilled spirits, or they think they can sober up by drinking coffee or getting fresh air.

Myth: *What parents say or do won't make any difference; teenagers only listen to their friends.*

Fact: Parents can be very influential. A study of adolescents and their families conducted by the Research Institute on Addictions revealed that both adolescent girls and adolescent boys whose parents supervise their friendships and activities are less likely to engage in problem behaviors, including drinking, and that this was true regardless of race or income level.

Myth: *He only drinks beer. It's a phase—he will get over it, just like I did.*

Fact: Adolescents who begin drinking at age 15 or younger are four times more likely to develop problems of alcohol use and dependence than

those who begin drinking at age 21 or older. Many engage in binge drinking, which is drinking five or more drinks on one occasion. Some people mistakenly believe that beer and wine are light in alcohol content when, in fact, they have the same alcohol content.

Myth: *A person will not do anything while intoxicated that he or she would not do sober.*

Fact: Alcohol is a depressant. What alcohol depresses are inhibitions that allow us to do things we would not do if sober. As the inhibitory processes are depressed by alcohol, the effect on the brain can cause a personality change and cloud judgment. As few as two drinks can impair coordination and thinking.

Myth: *It's okay for young people to drink, just as long as they don't drive. The worst that can happen is he will wake up with a terrible hangover.*

Fact: Wrong. The worst thing that can happen is that they won't wake up at all. A person can drink enough to kill himself or herself in a couple of hours by drinking a large amount of alcohol quickly. When the blood alcohol content reaches a certain concentration, heart rate and respiration can shut down. Drinking also increases the risk of injury from car crashes, falls, burns, drowning and suicide, as well as the chance that a young person will commit a crime or become a victim of crime.

Myth: *She's a big girl. She can handle her liquor.*

Fact: Size alone does not determine how alcohol affects females; gender-based physiology plays an important role. Females become more intoxicated than males after drinking the same amount of alcohol, even when differences in body weight are taken into account. This is because female bodies have proportionately less water than male bodies. Because alcohol mixes with body water, a given amount of alcohol becomes more highly concentrated in a female body than in a male body.

Myth: *One drink does not affect driving.*

Fact: Youthful age has been cited as one of the most important variables related to crash risk. Young drivers are inexperienced not only in driving but in drinking and in combining the two activities. According to one study, each 0.02 percent increase in blood alcohol content (BAC) above 0.00 percent places 16- to 21-year old drivers at greater risk for a crash than older drivers. Roadside surveys indicate that young people are less likely than adults to drive after drinking; however, especially at low and moderate BACs, their crash rates are substantially higher than those of other groups.

Myth: *We've been through this before. Treatment does not work with her.*

Fact: Treatment can be seen as taking place on a continuum starting with outreach, screening and assessment to identify youths who are at risk or who already engage in substance use. It continues through the stage of counseling and treatment to continuing care support to reinforce abstinence. Coercive pressure to seek treatment is generally not conducive to the behavior change process.

Treatment providers should be sensitive to motivational barriers to change at the outset of intervention.

Myth: *Alcohol is not such a big deal, compared with illicit drugs.*

Fact: Alcohol is a factor in the three leading causes of death among 14 and 15 year olds: unintentional injuries, homicides and suicides.



A survey of high school students found that 18% of females and 39% of males say its acceptable for a boy to force sex if the girl is stoned or drunk.

Source: SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

How to teach your child to express anger.

Give your child three basic rules for expressing anger:

1. Do not injure yourself.
2. Do not injure others.
3. Do not damage property.

Help your child find safe ways to express anger. It is natural and healthy.

Anger may get more destructive over time unless it is expressed.

Teach your child safe ways to express anger.

Examples are physical exercise, relaxation, games, crying, shouting, attention diversion, humor, controlled breathing and talking.

Accept your child, but not his or her destructive behavior.

Acknowledge your child's need to express anger while being firm about acceptable ways to do so.

Set aside time to listen to your child.

Listen closely and do not judge your child. You may be able to identify and change a problem situation.

Attempt to understand what's underneath the anger rather than focusing on the anger itself.

Anger masks feelings such as hurt, guilt, fear and low self-esteem. Look beyond the anger.

Be aware that you are a role model in handling anger.

Show your child how to express anger appropriately. Evaluate your own responses when angry.



Permit your child to experience the consequences of their own destructive behavior.

Don't always rescue your child. Protecting children from logical consequences can be harmful.

Seek professional help when needed.

Look for symptoms such as staying angry, being angry often and destructive behavior. Talk to your health care provider or religious counselor, or use the resources on page 39 of this guide.

Allow your child to calm down before taking action.

This allows time to think about choices and consequences. Adopt a "time-out" procedure.

How to teach your child to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Conflict means that there are differences.

It is okay to disagree on issues.

Realize it is not possible to avoid all conflict.

Differences are normal. Conflict can be healthy.

Ignoring conflict does not make it go away.

Denial and avoidance may make the problem worse.

Conflicts are difficult because of the feelings involved.

Be aware of the other person's feelings as well as the words that are being said. Teach your child to communicate feelings in ways that can be heard.

The outcome of conflict may be good for all parties.

A new decision or action may make life better for everyone. Focus on a win-win situation.

A compromise is often the best answer.

Rather than one person take all, each party gets some and gives some.

Cooperating may provide the most gains for everyone.

Working together toward solutions is better than "you against me."

Focus on the problem rather than the individual.

It is not necessary to make the other person wrong to solve the problem. Attempt to "stand in the other's shoes" for a moment.

Look at many possibilities.

The best answer may be something you have never even considered. Brainstorm options.

When hostility is intense, call in a neutral mediator.

A third person can often see new opportunities for resolution.

Violent conflict often produces negative results.

Violent behavior can hurt others and property can be destroyed. No one wins with violent behavior.

Good communication is important to solving conflict.

See page 10 for some communication strategies.

Sometimes the best immediate solution is to take "time out."

Agree to take up the problem at a later time after thinking things over.



Evidence from the California Healthy Kids Survey indicates that bullying and harassment are issues for our young people. In order to stem these behaviors, each of us must take responsibility for a zero tolerance of unkind behavior toward others.

What Parents and Guardians Should Know About Bullying Behavior

4 Types of Bullying:

1. Physical

Using the body or object to harm.

Kicking, shoving, tripping, slapping, punching, hair pulling, biting, throwing objects at someone, use of weapons

2. Verbal

Using words to harm.

Name calling, threatening, put-downs, blackmailing, making up stories, spreading rumors, betraying a confidence either face to face or on the Internet.

3. Emotional

Using overt or covert methods to silence or exclude.

Laughing, mocking, rolling eyes, negative body language, imitating, writing notes, using finger/hand signs, rejecting, excluding, ostracizing and isolating

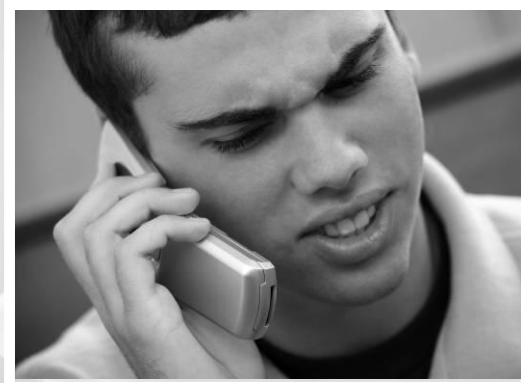
4. Sexual

Using sexual means or nuances to intimidate or harm.

Touching someone in an inappropriate way, making fun of someone's body, comments about sexual orientation, sexual coercion

Statistics on Name-Calling, Bullying and School Violence

- Six out of 10 American teens witness bullying at least once a day.¹
- For children in grades six to 10, nearly one in six—or 3.2 million—are victims of bullying each year and 3.7 million are bullies.²
- Nearly one-third of middle schoolers have been the object of sexual jokes, comments or gestures. Another 15 percent have been bullied or harassed because of their religion or race.³
- Those who are bullied are five times more likely to be depressed and far more likely to be suicidal.²
- Harassment and bullying have been linked to 75 percent of school-shooting incidents, including the fatal shootings at Columbine High School near Littleton, Colorado, and Santana High School in Santee, California.⁴
- Nearly 60 percent of boys whom researchers classified as bullies in grades six to nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24; 40 percent of them had three or more convictions by age 24.²



1 National Crime Prevention Council, 2003

2 Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, September 2003

3 National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

4 U.S. Secret Service Report, May 2002

**TIPS FOR HELPING A CHILD WHO IS
BULLIED:**

1. When a child tells you about a bullying problem:
 - Listen to what the child has to say. Find out what support the child needs—and what help he or she would like from you.
 - Avoid blaming the child. This is not a time to focus on what the child should or could have done differently (even if the child “provoked” the incident).
 - Keep a written record of the incidents and make sure to report them to the appropriate school personnel.
 - Do not encourage the child to fight back.
2. Observe how the child talks and plays with other children. Help him or her develop skills to make and sustain friendships.
3. Teach the child to be assertive and to say “NO!” or “Leave me alone!” in a clear, firm voice when feeling pressured or uncomfortable.
4. Help the child identify social supports and practice ways to stay safe (e.g., play or walk with a friend, identify and play near children who could help or step in, avoid eye contact with bullies, etc.).
5. Teach the child to recognize “vibes” and body language that could signal danger. Always encourage children to walk away if a situation feels dangerous or out of their control.
6. Practice through role plays how to handle specific situations.
7. Encourage the child to ask for adult help. Reinforce the difference between telling and tattling.
8. Teach the child strategies for staying calm and confident if teased or bullied.
9. Help the child to develop techniques for diverting a bully’s attention away from hurting him (e.g., verbal retorts, humor or stalling tactics).

**TIPS FOR HELPING A CHILD WHO BULLIES
OTHERS:**

1. Take every incident or report of bullying behavior seriously; don’t dismiss any as a one-time incident.
2. Supervise the child’s interactions and play more closely. Intervene to redirect or stop any behavior that is inappropriate.
3. Do not tolerate behavior that hurts others.
 - Respond swiftly and consistently with natural consequences (e.g., restrict time with others).
 - Build empathy by asking them to notice how the other person felt because of their actions. Work on improving their ability to recognize feelings in others and themselves.
 - Practice actions or words that might make the other person feel better or to make amends.
 - Help the child recognize how and when his or her behavior crosses the line from being acceptable to unacceptable.
4. Teach the child ways to recognize internal signals that he or she is about to lose control.
5. Use real-life situations to practice kind or friendly alternatives to unfriendly or bullying behavior.
6. Teach the child positive ways to get what he or she wants. Offer reasonable and acceptable alternatives for the child to have power and control.
7. Praise and reward positive interactions and negotiation.
8. Do not label a child as a bully. Teach the child that bullying is behavior that can be changed—and it takes courage to change.
9. Get at the root of the bullying behavior. Use school specialists and other professionals as resources.
10. Be a good role model. When adults use words or actions to bully or shame children or others, children learn that those behaviors are acceptable. Avoid using physical punishment.

Signs of Distorted Body Image

- Weighing oneself daily or multiple times each day
- Spending a lot of time in front of the mirror, obsessing about specific body parts
- Hiding one's body with oversized clothing
- Feeling ashamed or self-conscious about one's body, and even refraining from fun activities
- Obsessing about food, weight and level of fitness in private and in public

Eating Disorders

Both boys and girls can develop eating disorders. Girls ages 12 to 20, and boys involved in sports, such as long distance running or wrestling, are especially at risk. Eating disorders can be fatal, and they cause physical damage at a time when teenagers need extra nutrition to support healthy growth.

Eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorder) are extremely complex. They are often characterized by one or more of a combination of specific behaviors, including: restrictive food intake, weight loss or gain, excessive exercise, bingeing, binge/purge cycles, menstruation cessation, thinning hair, obsessive behaviors, as well as inaccurate thinking about food and weight.

How to help your child avoid eating disorders

Avoid overemphasizing beauty and body shape. Do not promote the belief that thinness and weight loss are "good," while having body fat and weight gain are "bad."

Do not convey an attitude that says, "I will like you better if you lose weight or fit into slimmer clothes."

Discuss with your children the genetic basis of differences in body types. Make a connection between respect for diversity in weight and shape with respect for diversity in race and gender.

Help children see the ways that TV, magazines and other media distort the true diversity of human body types.

Talk with children, especially children age 9 and older, about the dangers of dieting. Dieting is not harmless, nor is it a necessary part of a healthy life.

Accept children no matter what they weigh. Help them to understand the importance of the person, not the appearance.

Teach children to think critically and communicate assertively. This helps them resist unrealistic messages from the media, peers and other adults.

- ★ *Encourage children to be active and to enjoy what their bodies can do.*
- ★ *Avoid rewarding or punishing children with food. This adds to the emotional meaning of food.*
- ★ *Trust children's appetites. Do not limit their calories unless a doctor recommends it.*

Adapted from *A Guide to the Primary Prevention of Eating Disorders* pamphlet. Michael P. Levine, Ph.D. and Margo D. Maine, Ph.D.; *How to Help A Friend with Eating & Body Image*, published by The National Eating Disorders Association, (800) 931-2237, www.edap.org; and the Dairy Council of California

Every body can be a healthy body

Excessive weight gain among children has increased dramatically in recent decades. The number of children diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, hypertension and heart disease is on the rise. There are numerous reasons to attempt to prevent unhealthy body weight and promote healthy lifestyles for children. Children may receive immediate benefits such as improved nutrition and fitness, have a reduction in diseases and be more alert and ready to learn. Some tips to help you and your family promote good health and fitness:

- Eat together as a family.
- Plan meal and snack times rather than allowing children to self-select their meals.
- Discourage “grazing” through the kitchen.
- Allow children to control their own appetites by deciding when they are full.
- Avoid the “fast food trap” and take the time to serve nutritious foods at home.
- Serve plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Reduce serving sizes—we have become a nation of “supersizing.”
- Restrict intake of sugary foods, especially soft drinks and sugary fruit juices.
- Encourage drinking lots of water.
- Try replacing processed foods with organic choices.
- Find ways for family members to exercise—bicycle, walk and participate in sports.
- Turn off the television.
- Discourage televisions in children’s bedrooms.
- Be aware of how foods are marketed to children.
- Model good eating habits.

**Children need at least 60
minutes of fun, active play as
well as organized play at
school and sports.**



Tattooing and body piercing have become popular with some young people. Be sure your child knows the facts about these practices. Body art can be a form of self-expression. Before the decision is made, make sure your child has the facts and has discussed the pros and cons.

Are tattoos permanent?

They can be removed, but the process is costly and painful and may take several sessions, spread out over a few months. You may also end up with a mark or scar. Once you get a tattoo, you should be prepared to live with it for the rest of your life.

Are body piercing holes permanent?

Most close up on their own. If not, surgery can fix the hole. Again, this is expensive and may still leave a mark or scar.

What if your child is thinking about getting a tattoo or body piercing?

Before they decide, have them consider the following questions:

Do I know all the health risks?

Am I sure all the equipment will be sterile?

Can I afford to have it done by a licensed or certified professional?

Have I talked to my parent or guardian about this? Do I have their permission, if required?

Can I handle the pain during the procedure and the discomfort that follows?

Do I have instructions for proper after-care? Am I willing to follow all these?

Have I considered other options that are not permanent (temporary tattoos, magnetic jewelry, body paint, etc.)?

Am I ready to face negative reactions from other people?

Am I sure this is what I want?

How will I feel about this a year from now? In five, 10, or 15 years?

What kinds of infections and other health problems could result from tattooing or body piercing?

They include:

HIV infection (HIV is the virus that causes AIDS)

Hepatitis B and C (liver diseases)

Blood poisoning

Staph infection (a severe wound infection)

Skin diseases

Allergic reactions to the jewelry or ink

What is the law for people under 18?

To get a legal tattoo or body piercing in many states, minors need their parent's or guardian's permission. Laws vary in other cities, towns and states. In some places, tattooing is illegal.

In California, every person who tattoos or offers to tattoo a person under the age of 18 can be guilty of a misdemeanor.



**PARENTS NEED TO BE EXPLICIT
ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN SEX AND
SUBSTANCE ABUSE.**

**THE MESSAGE TO TEENS IS
EVEN CLEARER: IF YOU ARE
DRUNK OR HIGH, YOU CANNOT
MAKE GOOD DECISIONS ABOUT
SEX.**

Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
—Sarah Brown, Director



RISKS OF SEX

Parents and teenagers are often too embarrassed to talk about the risks involved in sexual activity.

More than one half of all teenagers have sex before they are 18 years old. Every 10 seconds, another teenager contracts a sexually transmitted disease. More than 3,000 teenage girls become pregnant every day.

Parents and guardians, tell your teenagers the facts about having sex too soon.

- Educate teenagers about the risks of unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.
- Describe the hardships of becoming a parent at a young age.
- Explain how sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS can change one's life forever.

DATING VIOLENCE

Teen dating violence is similar to adult domestic violence—and can be as deadly. Both include hitting, yelling, threatening, name calling and other forms of verbal, sexual, emotional or physical abuse.

Know the signs of teen dating violence

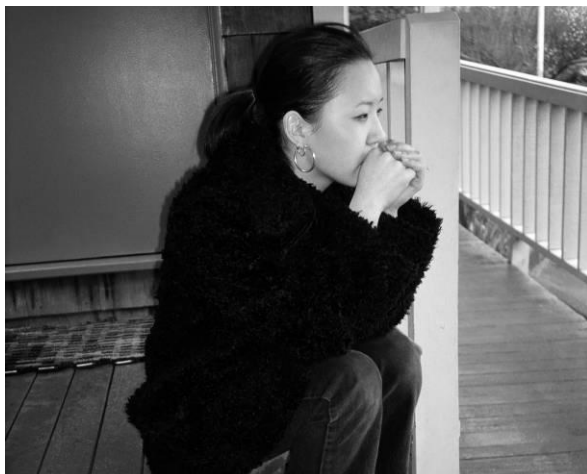
- Have you seen physical bruises, other signs of injury or damaged property? Be aware of explanations that seem out-of-place, or changes in makeup or dress.
- Does the teen's boyfriend or partner call several times a night or show up unexpectedly to "check up?"
- Has the teen become secretive, ashamed, hostile to or isolated from friends or family because of the relationship?

If you notice any of these behaviors or injuries, it may be an indication that the teen is involved in dating violence. See resources on page 39.

Signs of depression or suicidal feelings

People who are depressed and thinking about suicide often show changes in their behavior. Look for these warning signs:

- A focus on themes of death
- Talking about or making plans for suicide—even jokingly
- Giving away prized possessions
- Persistent boredom and/or difficulty concentrating
- Complaints of physical problems that are not real
- Noticeable changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Unexplained, unusually severe, violent, or rebellious behavior
- Withdrawal from family or friends
- Running away
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Unexplained drop in quality of schoolwork
- Unusual neglect of appearance
- Drastic personality change
- Threatening or attempting to kill oneself



ACTION STEPS

Although feelings of sadness and depression can disappear quickly, they can also build to a point that a teen thinks of suicide as the only way out. Parents and friends can help a depressed teen.

-
1. Talk, ask questions and don't dismiss your child's problems as unimportant. Ignoring or making fun of these problems can worsen the depression.
-
2. If you're worried about your teen, say so. You will not spark thoughts of suicide just by asking about it.
-
3. Let your child know that he or she is not alone. Share your feelings.
-
4. Get help for your teen and for yourself. Talk to your pediatrician, clergy member or one of the hotlines.
-
5. A teen engaged in an act of suicide should immediately be taken to a hospital emergency room.
-

**See page 39
for resources.**

Nicotine is found naturally in tobacco leaves. The nicotine in tobacco causes users to become dependent on regular use of tobacco products. When cigarettes, cigars, or pipes are smoked, the nicotine is absorbed directly into the bloodstream through the walls of the mouth and gums and travels to the brain.

How Nicotine Affects Your Body

Nicotine alters and controls special cells in the brain responsible for controlling our moods and memory. Nicotine reaches the brain within 10 seconds after intake. Nicotine stays active in the body for 20–40 minutes, then withdrawal begins. As withdrawal increases, the cigarette, cigar or pipe smoker becomes irritable and anxious—craving another “hit” of nicotine.

Cigarette, cigar and pipe smokers develop routines and behaviors that reinforce their desire to smoke. They smoke at times of stress because of the mild stimulant effect of nicotine. They also smoke during pleasurable times such as while relaxing after a meal. These behaviors actually make it harder to quit and are exactly what the tobacco companies promote in their advertising.

TOBACCO AND THE LAW

California law prohibits minors under the age of 18 from purchasing, receiving or even possessing tobacco products or any paraphernalia designed to prepare or smoke tobacco products. Punishment for breaking this law is either a \$75 fine or 30 hours of community service.

It is also against the law to knowingly sell, give or furnish tobacco products to minors. Although it is most often the store owner who gets in trouble when tobacco products are sold to minors, a young person who uses false identification to make such purchases is violating the law and may be prosecuted for that conduct.

The law that prohibits providing tobacco products to minors does not specifically exempt parents.

TOBACCO FACTS

Premature death rates for smokers are two to three times higher than for non-smokers at all ages.

- Many of those who die from smoking were not particularly heavy smokers, but most of them did start smoking in their teenage years.
- Smokers in their 30s and 40s have five times as many heart attacks as non-smokers.
- Heart attacks are the main way in which smoking kills young tobacco users.
- Lower-tar cigarettes do not substantially reduce the risk of heart attack in smokers.
- By the end of the 20th century, cigarette smoking killed about 62 million people in developed countries (52 million men, 10 million women).
- The risk of lower-respiratory tract diseases (such as croup, bronchitis and pneumonia) is estimated to be about 50-60 percent higher in children exposed to secondhand smoke during the first one to two years of life, compared with unexposed children.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD STAY OUT OF GANGS

- Be sure you know where your children go after school and with whom they spend their time.
- Speak candidly with your child to find out what he or she knows about gangs in your neighborhood. Ask if they feel pressured or intimidated by gangs.
- Help your child get involved in positive activities after school. Many elementary and middle schools have fun, safe on-site after-school programs.
- Be watchful for unusual injuries, tattoos, slang, graffiti scribbling on books or elsewhere, or a fascination with the gang lifestyle.
- Look for consistent wearing of one color handkerchief, belt or hat, especially in blue or red.
- Look for cryptic letters or numbers written or tattooed, especially the Roman numerals XIII and XIV or the numbers 13 and 14.
- Children are still at risk if they have friends involved in gangs. Victims of gang violence are often not involved in the gang.
- Seek help from community resources. Call helpline at (916) 498-1000 or neighborhood alternative information: (916) 875-0560.





When one person performs acts of kindness toward another, they both win. The one who gives and the one who receives the gift of kindness are both enriched through the interchange. Building caring attitudes and compassionate behaviors among young people can have positive effects for everyone.

Try **SMILE**:

S—Stop!

Take time to think about the impact your words and actions have on others (and yourself). Teach your children the skill of empathy as you model it for them.

M—Motivate!

Encourage your family and friends to resolve differences peacefully through problem solving, negotiation and compromise. Hold family meetings in which differences and solutions are safely discussed.

I—I Love You!

Let family members know you accept them—with their strengths and weaknesses. When they feel unconditionally loved, they can more readily accept others on those terms.

L—Listen!

Make time to hear your children's joys and concerns. As their strongest advocate, your support and belief in them provides them with an anchor as they grow and change.

E—Expect Kind Behavior!

Make it a priority to create family rules of kindness that family members are responsible for following.



IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT/ASSET BUILDING

Youth development is an approach that supports youth in developing skills and relationships so they can transition from being taken care of to taking care of others. Remember the key principles and practice ways to involve youth in building their skills, connections and relationships.

- Provide youth with emotionally and physically safe and supportive environments.
- Foster relationships between youth and caring adults who can mentor, teach and guide them.
- Support development of a youth's full range of knowledge and skills in a variety of ways, including study skills, sports, physical health, the arts, vocational educational support, and civic and social skills.
- Engage youth as active partners and leaders who can help move communities forward.
- Provide opportunities for youth to show that they care—about others and society.
- Promote healthy lifestyles and teach positive patterns of social interactions.
- Youth develop 24 hours, seven days a week. Everyone has a role in developing youth.



WEB SITES

<http://www.saclibrary.org/teens/index.html>

Sacramento Public Library online offers live tutorial assistance, online safety advice, teen blog, college & career support, reading for teens, and local programs & events.

<http://www.edd.ca.gov/jsrep/jshow.htm#YouthEmploymentOpportunityProgram>

Youth Employment Opportunity Program (YEOP) provides special services to youth ages 15 to 21, to assist them in achieving their educational and vocational goals through peer advising, job referrals, placement assistance and training workshops

<http://www.jasac.org>

Junior Achievement Sacramento inspires and prepares elementary to high school students to succeed in a global economy through student-adult mentoring with a focus on entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy.

<http://www.thebeehive.org/local/sacramento/infast/default.asp?language=1>

The Sacramento Beehive provides resources in a variety of topics from activities & arts, education, health care, nutrition and fitness and much more.

<http://www.jobshadow.org/>

Year-round national effort to enrich the lives of middle school and high school students by acquainting them with the world of work through on-the-job experiences and a carefully crafted school curriculum that ties academics to the workplace.

<http://www.saccenter.org>

Sacramento's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center offers a youth group, programming and events, counseling and resources related to the LGBT community.

<http://www.suicide.org/hotlines/california-suicide-hotlines.html>

An extensive resource guide on suicide prevention, information on mental illness, handles all types of discrimination support, crisis lines and general support groups.

<http://weaveinc.org/services/teens>

Weave provides support for teens who have experienced dating violence, sexual assault, and harassment or know someone who has.

<http://safestate.org/index.cfm?navId=10>

California Attorney General's Crime and Violence Prevention Center provides information on drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, child safety and community conflict.

http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/p.asp?WebPage_ID=298

National Eating Disorders provides information & referral hotline for those suffering from eating disorders

http://www.birthebeyond.com/Content/Locations/FRC_map.htm

Birth & Beyond provides information and resources for families including family activities, parenting classes, substance abuse support and more.

<http://www.youthcitizenship.org/elementary/rr/sacto.html>

Center for Youth Citizenship prepares elementary through high school students to be leaders through conflict resolution and mediation training.

<http://mystrength.org/>

The national My Strength campaign teaches young boys and men character building and non-violent behavior.

BOOKS

- **Queen Bees & Wannabes:**
Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends & Other Realities of Adolescence
by Rosalind Wiseman
- **The Shelter of Each Other:**
Rebuilding our Families by Mary Pipher, Ph.D.
- **The Dance of Connection**
by Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.
- **The Real Boys/Whole Curricula**
by William Pollack, Ph.D.
- **Parenting Teenagers:** *STEP Guide Book Review for Parents of Teens* by Mary McCarthy
- **See No Evil:** *A Guide to Protecting Our Children from Media Violence* by Madeline Levine, Ph.D.

