



**NORTHEASTERN**

Wisconsin Area Health Education Center

# Prevention Starts with Parents

**LOCAL RESOURCES TO  
HELP PARENTS KEEP THEIR  
KIDS SAFE**



# Table of Contents

- 03. About your local coalition
- 04. Quick facts about risky behaviors in youth
- 05. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- 06–07. How to have healthy relationships
- 08. Social media safety
- 09. Healthy at-home activities for youth  
*(Special thanks to contributor Simone Chaney)*
- 10. Mental health awareness & help
- 11. Underage drinking, ages 8–18
- 12. Tobacco is changing: smoking & vaping
- 13. Preventing opioid harm
- 14. Cannabis
- 15. Delta-8
- 16. Meth & stimulants
- 17. Importance of talking early & often

## Partners:





oregon area  
**cares**  
COMMUNITY COALITION

383 Park St., Oregon, WI 53575  
info@oregoncarescoalition.org  
OregonAreaCares.org

# About Your Local Coalition

## Our Mission

Leading a concerted community effort to prevent risky behaviors and support health, alcohol- and drug-free choices for youth in the Oregon School District.

## Key Services & Programs

- Parenting Classes
- Supporting Oregon High School prevention clubs
- Building positive relationships between youth and law enforcement in our communities
- Video resource bank for parents
- Drug Take Back Days

## Resources

Visit [OregonAreaCares.org](http://OregonAreaCares.org) for all of our resources and latest information.



# Quick Facts About Risky Behaviors In Youth

Every two years a Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) is conducted as part of a national effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor health-risk behaviors of the nation's high school students.

Since the survey is completed by teenagers, it paints an accurate picture of teen life. Here's your chance to know the facts about virtually any issue related to your child or teenager, from bullying and mental health to traffic safety, sexual behaviors, and more.

## Mental Health:

Nearly one in two students reported anxiety (49.0%)—an increase from 39.9% of students in 2017

## Other YRBS Facts to Consider...

- **Bullying:** 22.3% of students report being bullied on school property and 17.4% of students report being bullied online, through social media or text
- **Suicide:** 15.7% seriously considered suicide
- **School Safety:** 9.6% of students "rarely" or "never" felt safe at school
- **Sexual & Dating Violence:** Nearly 1 in 5 students (19.9%) reported that at least once in their lives, someone had forced them "to do sexual things you did not want to do."
- **Vaping:** Close to half of students (45.5%) have tried vaping, and 1 in 5 (20.6%) has vaped in the past 30 days
- **Alcohol & Drugs:** Nearly 13.7% of high school students were offered drugs on school grounds.

[Click here to learn more about risky behaviors](#)

# Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic events that occur before a child reaches the age of 18. Such experiences can interfere with a person's health, opportunities and home/work stability.

## Examples of ACEs include:

- Experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect
- Witnessing violence in the home or community
- Having a family member attempt or die by suicide
- Growing up in a household with: substance use problems, mental health problems, instability due to parental separation, and instability due to parent, sibling or other household member being incarcerated.

The greater the number of ACEs, the greater the risk for negative outcomes. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance use problems in adulthood. ACEs can also negatively impact education, job opportunities, and earning potential.

## The good news is...ACEs can be prevented

Creating and sustaining safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for all children and families can prevent ACEs and help all children reach their full potential.

- About 61% of adults surveyed across 25 states reported that they had experienced at least one type of ACE
- Women and several racial/ethnic minority groups were at greater risk for having experienced 4 or more types of ACEs

[Click here to learn more about ACEs and prevention](#)

[Click here to take the ACE quiz and learn what it does and doesn't mean](#)

# How To Have Healthy Relationships

## Good News:

*Teens acknowledge the influence of parents, reporting in studies that their parents remain critically important as guides, mentors, sounding boards, and advocates.*

## The 5 Basics of Parenting Adolescents

[The Harvard Parenting Project](#), an intensive study of parent/adolescent relationships, found five important ways that parents contribute significantly to healthy adolescent development. You can do this!

**(1) Love and Connect:** Teens need parents to develop and maintain a relationship with them that offers support and acceptance, while accommodating and affirming the teen's increasing maturity.

*Where do you start?* Watch for moments when you feel and can express genuine affection, respect, and appreciation for your teen. Most things about their world are changing. Don't let your love be one of them.

**(2) Monitor and Observe:** Teens need parents to be aware of their activities, including school performance, work experiences, after-school activities, peer relationships, adult relationships, and recreation. And parents need to let teens know they know what's going on.

*What can you do?* Keep in touch with other adults who are willing and able to let you know of positive or negative trends in your teen's behavior. Connect with neighbors, family, religious and community leaders, shopkeepers, teachers, and other parents. [Click here to discover our Healthy Relationship Workbook.](#) Here's another great parenting resource <https://parentguidance.org>

**(3) Guide and Limit:** Teens need parents to uphold a clear but evolving set of boundaries, maintaining important family rules and values, but also encouraging increased competence and maturity.

*Where do you start?* Use discipline as a tool for teaching, not for venting or taking revenge. Choose your battles. Ignore smaller issues in favor of more important ones, such as drugs, school performance, and sexually responsible behavior. In other words, loosen up, but don't let go.

**(4) Model and Consult:** Teens need parents to provide ongoing information and support around decision making, values, skills, goals, and interpreting and navigating the larger world, teaching by example and ongoing dialogue. For instance, model the kind of adult relationships that you would like your teen to have.

*What can you do?* Set a good example around risk taking, health habits, and emotional control. Express personal positions about social, political, moral, and spiritual issues, including issues of ethnicity and gender. Remember, during the teen years parents still matter, and teens still do care.

**(5) Provide and Advocate:** Teens need parents to make available not only adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter, and health care, but also a supportive home environment and a network of caring adults. You can't control their world, but you can add good things and subtract the bad from it.

*What can you do?* Parents need to help youth mature by balancing between holding on and letting go, offering flexibility and maintaining limits, providing protection and fostering learning.

## More News:

- Most teens do not feel that they are valued by people in their community or that they have caring adults and role models around them
- Teens report that they neither need nor want their relationship with parents to become distant, but rather to become different, honoring and accommodating their new capabilities and responsibilities
- The strategies for supporting healthy adolescent development require continual balancing between holding on and letting go, offering flexibility and maintaining limits, providing protection and fostering new learning.



# Safe Social Media Practices

## Social media isn't all bad for kids

With social media, kids stay connected with friends and family and get involved with campaigns, nonprofits, or charities. It can help children enhance their creativity by sharing ideas, music and art, and allow them to meet and interact with kids who share similar interests. And social media allows youth to communicate with educators, fellow students, and their school.

## Social media and self image

Spending too much time on social media can be a downer for kids. They start comparing their life to the way others present their lives. They see how many "friends" others kids have. They see pictures of others kids having fun, which can make them feel bad about themselves, as though they don't measure up to their peers.

## A hub for cyberbullying and questionable activities

The flip side of social media isn't pretty. Kids can become an easy target for online predators or others who may mean them harm. And no wonder. Social media is familiar, maybe too familiar. Kids post photos of themselves online; use their real names; reveal their birthdays and interests; post their school name and town where they live.

## Social media and self image

- Be aware of what your kids do online but also know that snooping can alienate kids and damage the trust you've built together
- Help kids understand that you respect their privacy, but you also want to be sure they are safe.
- [Learn more about social media and your kids](#)



## Healthy Youth-At-Home Activity Guide

# Healthy At-Home Activities For Youth

### Ideas for teens, by teens

We asked one of our talented teens to develop activity ideas that teens can actually relate to and want to do. The result is a list of over 55 positive activities. To access the full list of ideas, [click here](#).

### Here is a sample of the ideas you'll find in our activity guide:

- Tips for solving a Rubik's Cube
- Guide to smartphone photography
- Step-by-step painting tutorials
- 5 relaxing meditation videos
- Online sudoku puzzles
- Creative writing prompts
- 40 recipes for every cook to master
- Tips for learning a language at home
- Growing a fruit/vegetable garden
- 10 easy tricks to teach your dog
- Job interview tips.

### The benefits of constructive activity and parental involvement:

- Improved social skills and behavior
- Increased academic achievement, self-esteem and self-efficacy
- Less risky behavior.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

[Click here to discover Youth Empowerment Programs](#) and other sources of healthy activities for young people

# Mental Health Awareness & Help

## Did you know...?

- Suicidal ideation was reported by approximately 1 in 6 Wisconsin public high school students
- Females ages 15–17 had the highest rates of emergency department visits and hospitalization stays with self-harm injuries
- Half of LGBT youth in Wisconsin public high schools reported depression

Source: Suicide in Wisconsin Impact and Response, September 2020

Resilient Wisconsin is a treasure chest of helpful learning and understanding for anyone who lives with, cares for, or cares about someone with a mental health condition. Mental illness issues affect the whole family, sometimes creating a cycle of adversity and "inherited" trauma that can affect families for generations.

**The resulting stress of mental illness can overwhelm a family's ability to cope. Resilient WI can help.**

## Know the three types of stress in children's lives

- Positive stress: while every child experiences stress differently, a little stress is a normal part of healthy child development.
- Tolerable stress: turns a child's body's alert system up higher and for longer.
- Toxic stress: when the stress children feel is strong, frequent or prolonged, it can disrupt healthy brain growth.

[Click here to learn more](#)

[Visit Resilient Wisconsin's Website to checkout more resources that can help prevent death by suicide](#)



How WI Prevents  
Underage Drinking

# Underage Drinking, Ages 8–18

## Did you know...?

- 2 out of 3 Wisconsin teens don't see underage drinking as a risk
- Underage drinking is associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide
- Around 90% of underage drinking is binge drinking

## Young people try alcohol much earlier than you think, and in larger amounts

Binge drinking is consuming more than five drinks in one sitting for men; and, more than four drinks for women— Wisconsin Department of Health Services

[Learn More](#)

**Having lots of Small Talks (even do-overs) is crucial, because every attempt to talk shows that you care.**

Research shows that conversations between young people and trusted adults about challenging topics can be very effective. Small Talks is a statewide campaign that guides parents and grandparents on how to talk with children and teenagers about underage drinking.

[Click here to get talk tips, facts and more](#)

[Click here to learn how to keep the conversation going, beyond alcohol](#)

# **TOBACCO IS CHANGING**

An initiative created by the



## **Tobacco Is Changing: Smoking & Vaping**

To start protecting your kids, [watch a video from our “Tobacco Is Changing” YouTube channel](#)

### **Did you know...?**

- E-cigarettes are more popular than conventional cigarettes among Wisconsin teens
- 4 out of 5 kids who've used tobacco tried a flavored product first
- Nicotine can cause memory and attention problems in a child's growing brain

**There's no such thing as a safe tobacco product,  
and tobacco is getting tougher to recognize**

### **Do you know the signs of tobacco usage? Here's what to look for:**

- Colorful disposable e-cigs that look like slim highlighters or high-tech cigarettes
- Sweet scents, like bubble gum, or chocolate cake, that don't have a clear source
- Small bags, boxes, and tins that look like packaging for candy, gum or breath mints

**We help teachers and parents learn what to look  
for and how to talk about the risks**

- [Click here to learn more about smoking, tobacco use and vaping](#)
- **Parents and educators:** [download our helpful “Know the Products” fact sheet](#) that gives an overview of the tobacco industry's latest, dangerous, teen-tempting products
- **Educators:** [click here to learn more about our initiatives and resources](#)



# Preventing Opioid Harm

## Did you know...?

- An estimated 11% of youth in Wisconsin have misused prescription drugs
- Each day, more than 1,000 people are treated in emergency departments for not using prescription opioids as directed
- Deaths from opioid-related overdoses now outpace car accident fatalities

**More than 4 of 10 teens who misused a prescription drug obtained it from their parent's medicine cabinet.**

## Lock up the meds you need

And dispose of medications (even opioids) that you don't need. You can dispose of prescription and other medications at hundreds of locations throughout Wisconsin—all year round. No questions asked.

**Visit [doseofrealitywi.gov](http://doseofrealitywi.gov) to learn about preventing opioid harm in your community.**

## The more you learn, the more you can protect your kids:

- Never borrow someone else's medications to treat yourself
- It is your parental right and responsibility to check a teenager's or child's room and backpack, in order to ensure their well-being

[Click here to find a drug drop box location near you](#)

# Cannabis

## Did you know...?

Approximately 1 in 10 people who use cannabis will become addicted. When youth start before age 18, the rate of addiction rises to 1 in 6.



## Cannabis Facts

- **Brain health:** Cannabis can cause permanent IQ loss of as much as 8 points when people start using it at a young age. These IQ points do not come back, even after quitting cannabis
- **Mental health:** Studies link cannabis use to depression, anxiety, suicide planning, and psychotic episodes. It is not known, however, if cannabis use is the cause of these conditions
- **Athletic Performance:** Research shows that cannabis affects timing, movement, and coordination, which can harm athletic performance
- **Driving:** People who drive under the influence of cannabis can experience dangerous effects: slower reactions, lane weaving, decreased coordination, and difficulty reacting to signals and sounds on the road.

[Click here to learn more about the risks of cannabis misuse](#)

## Delta-8

# Help me understand Delta-8 and similar products

Delta-8 is one of over 100 cannabinoids produced naturally by the cannabis plant, and it's the latest fad in 'legal' cannabis products—but don't confuse 'legal' with being safe for your child. **Delta-8** is a psychoactive substance found in the **Cannabis sativa** plant, of which marijuana and hemp are two varieties.

Concentrated amounts of psychoactive Delta-8 **THC** (tetrahydrocannabinol) are typically manufactured from hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD). The more commonly known **CBD** is non-psychoactive but to be clear, Delta-8 is psychoactive.

### Did you know...?

Delta-8 is not banned in 29 states, and Wisconsin is one of them.

### Is that a gummy bear or Delta-8?

Manufacturers are finding ways to package psychoactive products as if they are harmless cookies, chocolates and candies, thus making these products appealing to children. These products may be purchased online or from a variety of retailers, where age limits to purchase are not enforced

### Why Delta-8 is concerning:

Most of these products need/should to be taken in small quantities, yet most youth do not consume only 1 gummy or only 1/16th of a chocolate bar; this can lead to negative consequences—even overdose.

- Delta-8 THC products have neither been evaluated nor approved by the FDA for safe use and may be marketed in ways that put the public health at risk
- Delta-8 THC has psychoactive and intoxicating effects
- Delta-8 THC products often contain harmful contaminants or by-products

[Click here to learn more about Delta-8](#)

# Meth / Stimulants

## Did you know?

About 2 million people aged 12 years or older use meth in any given year, while about 500 people each day try meth for the first time.

## What is Meth?

Meth is a bitter-tasting, crystalline powder that dissolves easily in water or alcohol.

- Meth can be made from common household items, such as: batteries, clear, screw-top plastic bottles, drain cleaner, fertilizer, nail polish remover, paint thinner and Pseudoephedrine (found in cold medicine).

## How can you tell if a friend is using meth?

It may not be easy to tell, but symptoms of methamphetamine use may include:

- Inability to sleep or unusual sleep patterns
- Psychotic behaviors such as paranoia and hallucinations
- Mood swings or increased aggression
- Nervous obsessive activities, such as scratching
- Irritability, anxiety, or confusion
- Extreme anorexia
- Changes in physical appearance, including deteriorating skin and teeth
- Presence of injecting paraphernalia, such as syringes, burnt spoons, or surgical tubing.

[Click here to learn more about how to talk to kids about meth/stimulants](#)





# The Importance of Talking Early & Often

## The good news is...talking helps

Parents are the biggest influence in a teen's life. Talking early and often helps create a strong bond from the beginning. As a child grows and you feel your child pulling away and eager for more independence, deep down they still want you involved. The bond developed early is especially needed during the teen years, which will help reduce the chances of them engaging in unhealthy behavior and helps set the stage for preventing nicotine, alcohol and drug use.

## Risk factors that make kids more vulnerable to addiction:

- Mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety and/or ADHD
- Family history of substance use disorders or other addictions related to gambling, food, sex, etc.,
- Past trauma, such as a family death; divorce; or emotional, physical or sexual abuse
- An "addictive personality" is a term used by many parents to describe a child who often acts without concern for consequences, has difficulty following or obeying rules, and is engaged in other risky behaviors.

## Need tools and resources to help guide your response to your child's drug use?

---

## Want to assess whether or not drugs are the real problem with your child?

[Click here to learn more about the power of talking and taking action early.](#)

