

CHAD



Charlestown Against Drugs

Awareness & Education

Newsletter: FALL 2004

Tips on How to Ensure your Child's School is Keeping Students Drug Free

Children have the best prospects for leading healthy, drug-free lives when schools support parents in their anti-drug message. There should be nothing confusing or contradictory in what children learn about drugs from the adults in their lives, and school policies need to reflect the same attitude toward alcohol and drugs that you express at home: Drug use is not acceptable. Drugs diminish a child's ability to concentrate and follow through on academic responsibilities, they cause absenteeism and loss of motivation, and students who use them can be disruptive and drain teachers' time and energy.

The best way to ensure that the anti-drug policies at your child's school are strong is to be involved. You can:

- Learn about the current policies regarding alcohol and other drugs at your child's school. If there is no anti-drug policy in place, attend parent volunteer or curriculum review meetings, or schedule an interview with the principal to help develop a policy. The policy should specify what constitutes an alcohol, tobacco or other drug offense, spell out the consequences for failing to follow the rules, and describe procedures for handling violations.
- Familiarize yourself with drug education in your child's school. Faculty members should be trained to teach about alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. Drug education should be taught in an age-appropriate way at each grade level throughout the year rather than only once during a special week. Drug education may be taught during health class, but all teachers should incorporate anti-drug information into their classes. There should be a parent education component. The school's program should be based on current research. Depending on the drug education conditions at your child's school, you may want to become more involved and inform the school administrators that there is a need for improvements in these areas.
- Immerse yourself in the school's drug education program at home. Ask your child to show you any materials distributed during or outside class and take the opportunity to review them together.
- Find out if your child's school conducts assessments of its drug problem and whether these results are used in the program.
- Ask what happens to those who are caught abusing drugs. Does the school offer a list of referrals for students who need treatment?

Charlestown Substance Abuse Coalition (CSAC) is Looking for Charlestown Resident Participation

The Charlestown Substance Abuse Coalition was established in the winter of 2004 and has been meeting once a month since its inception. The mission statement of CSAC is "we are a community-based coalition of residents, businesses, organizations, professionals, and advocates who work together to reduce substance abuse. Through a unified, collaborative approach, we utilize existing community resources, organize programs to identified needs, and harness the energy and commitment of all to provide a safe, healthy environment in Charlestown." The coalition has developed three sub-committees in an effort to devise a plan to reduce and eliminate substance abuse in Charlestown. The three committees are Education, Treatment, and Assessment. CHAD has been identified by the coalition as the education and awareness arm.

Also, MGH/Partners recently hired a coalition coordinator to organize the different residents, businesses, organizations, and agencies in Charlestown.

Presently, the coalition meets the third Friday of each month from 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., but it will be having meetings in the evening hours in the Fall of 2004. The coalition needs more Charlestown residents to participate in the forums.

In addition, CHAD is looking for volunteers to participate in CHAD programs and events. CHAD meets the first Monday of each month at 4 p.m.

Both CHAD and CSAC meetings take place at the MGH Bunker Hill Health Center in the second floor conference room.

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Parents & Community Information

Youth Smoking and Peer Pressure: The Connection

When it comes to smoking cigarettes, kids are clearly influenced by what their friends do. In fact, one study has found that if your child's friends smoke cigarettes, she is nine times more likely to try smoking than if her friends are non-smokers.

Another study asked 11-17-year-olds how many of their friends smoke. Of those who said all or most of their friends smoke, 44% smoke as well. This study also finds that positive peer influence is closely tied to not smoking – 99% of kids who said that none of their friends smokes don't either.

As your child grows into a teen, he may seem to tune out much of what you say. But research shows that parents are still the strongest influence on adolescents' big decisions, like whether to smoke, drink or have sex.

Teenagers who *don't* smoke say the main reason is their parents. Kids know and respect their parents' expectations – if their parents have stated them clearly and repeatedly.

Peers and pop culture will probably influence your child's choice of clothing, hairstyles, music and the like. That's OK. You might not like their music or the way they look, but if you let them make these relatively minor decisions, they are more likely to listen to you on the ones that really matter – like not smoking.

Your influence is real. You are in the best place to help guide your child as he struggles with peer pressure, examines his options, and gradually becomes a mature, independent thinker.

Youth Smoking Facts:

Youth smoking is on the decline nationwide but is still a significant problem:

More than one in four high school students smoke cigarettes

More than one in five high school students say they smoked a cigarette before age 13

Almost two-thirds of 11-17-year-olds who smoke got their first cigarette from a friend

The younger people are when they start smoking, the more likely they are to become addicted to nicotine

Take the time to sit down and talk with your teen

As the parent of a teenager, thinking about talking to teens about the pressures and stresses in their lives can feel like a scary and overwhelming task. Many parents react by thinking that their teens have grown up enough to make their own decisions. And with the busy schedules of both parents and teenagers today, finding the time to sit down and talk with teens can be a challenge. But teenagers actually need their parents' support as much now as when they were young. Research shows that parents who take the time to sit down and talk with their children have teenagers who are more likely to think through decisions and make healthier choices. Better communication between parents and teenagers can be seen to decrease risk-taking behaviors such as truancy, early sexual behavior, and drug and alcohol use.

Improving communication with a teenager takes time, patience, and flexibility. Some of the important factors in talking with your teen include the following:

- **Listen first** – When talking with teenagers, some parents get the urge to lecture. Start out by asking open-ended questions such as “what do you like about your friends” or “how do you feel about drugs and alcohol.” By listening to their views and opinions, you'll get an idea of where they stand on issues and they will feel your respect for their opinions.
- **Focus on the positive** – “Catch” your teenager being good, and praise them for their efforts. Get to know your child's interests and try to share in those. Build on the positive aspects of your child so that your only conversations aren't about what they should be doing but how proud you are of their strengths.
- **Limit the rules** – Every rule can't be the most important. Separate your rules into three areas – essential: rules that are pertaining to safety and health (drug use), preferred: rules you feel you can compromise on with your teen (chores or curfew), and negotiable: rules that your teen can decide on for him or herself (room cleanliness).
- **Help them figure out the answers for themselves** – Ask more open-ended questions that help them express their own ideas, such as “How else could you have...?” Respect their opinions, even if they are different from your own. You can reinforce your own healthy values by sharing your experiences and how you have learned lessons regarding risk-taking behaviors such as drugs, alcohol, and sexual behaviors.
- **Know your teen's friends** – Invite your child's friends over to the house. Get to know them and create a safe space for teenagers to hang out so they are not hanging out on the street. Check in with them once in a while, but remember to give them space and privacy and not to discipline your teen in front of his or her friends.
- **Have fun with your teen** – Get out of the house together: take turns with your teen planning activities that you both decide on. Go to the movies, out to dinner, to the beach or a museum or park. Mark time for your teenager and show them you enjoy their company. This will improve any relationship and lead to open communication, trust, and respect.



KIDS PAGE



Drugs change the way you think, act and feel.
 Drugs that are bad for you can harm your body and your mind.
 Even if people you know take drugs that are bad for them – it's not OK!

Make the safe choice – do the puzzle below and find all the 911 words.

**A D D R E S S P K X E M W
 E N T E A M T O L F B C T
 M I Z D C P O L I C E R S
 E N O H P N P L E H D E P
 R E P O R T A F I R E K O
 G O L F M E C L A N T A T
 E N X J V S R G U S H T I
 N E C A L L I J Y B T L C
 C O S P B A M I V A M L E
 Y N L H Y R E S C U E A M
 R E S P O N S E W X Q C J
 H R E T H G I F E R I F B
 B H P E D Z A D I R E S S**

FIND & CIRCLE THESE 9-1-1 WORDS

**STOP A CRIME
 REPORT A FIRE
 SAVE A LIFE
 EMT
 AMBULANCE**

**RESCUE
 CALL
 HELP
 ADDRESS
 TEAM**

**PHONE
 FAST
 EMERGENCY
 RESPONSE**

**CALLTAKER
 POLICE
 FIREFIGHTER
 NINE ONE ONE**

Boston Police/Charlestown Community Resource Guide Sheet

Charlestown Boys & Girls Club	617-242-1775 (kid activities, 17 & under)
Charlestown Against Drugs (CHAD)	617-242-4032 (educational)
Charlestown Community Center	617-635-5169 (sports & education)
Dennis McLaughlin House	617-242-0251 (women in recovery)
Kennedy Family Service Center	617-242-8866 (substance abuse)
MGH Charlestown Healthcare Center	617-724-8200 (behavioral & care center counseling), 617-724-8160 (clinic)
Charlestown Alcoholics Anonymous	617-426-9444
Narcotics Anonymous	1-866-NA-HELP-U
Al-Anon	508-366-0556
Life Focus Center	617-242-3423 (special needs)
Boston Trauma Center	617-782-6460, 617-540-5400 (community emergency services)
Boston Police Youth Service Providers Network	617-343-5571 Rebecca Freedman
Emergency Food Aid	617-242-7856, 242-1750, 635-5169
Charlestown Chorale	617-241-9091
Celebrate Our Children	617-242-7578 (creative projects)
The Charlestown Working Theater	617-242-3285
Constitution Inn Fitness Center	617-242-8400 x3020
Charlestown Lacrosse & Learning Center	617-242-1813
Charlestown Youth Hockey Assoc.	617-242-2224
Courageous Sailing Center	617-242-3821 ext.12
Gym Hockey	617-242-3470
Charlestown Little League	617-242-6192
Charlestown Mens' Softball League	617-242-1909
Karate Inspires City Kids (K.I.C.K.)	617-557-KICK (5425)
St. Catherine's CYO Softball	617-635-7374
Pop Warner Cheerleading	617-241-2276
Pop Warner Football	617-241-7767
Community Center Tennis Camp	617-635-5374
Community Ctr Bball, Hockey and Vball Programs	617-635-5169
BFD Fire Hazards & Unsafe Conditions	617-343-2199
Charlestown District Court	617-242-5400
BPD District A-1 Community Service	617-343-4627 (youth/community needs)
BPD District A-1 Drug Unit	617-343-4879 (confidential drug line)
BPD District A-1 Detectives	617-343-4248 (investigations)
BPD District A-1 Station	617-343-4240
BPD District A-1 Sub-station	617-343-4888
Boston Housing Police	617-423-1212
Boston School Police	617-635-8000
Bunker Hill Community College Police	617-228-2164
Municipal Police	617-635-4844

Upcoming events

- Public Safety meeting – Third Tuesday of each month
- Read the Charlestown Patriot for information and details about CHAD's 1st annual holiday party for children

Alcoholics Anonymous

A mutual support group of recovering alcoholics. Meetings in Charlestown:

Daily	12 – 1 pm, St. Catherine's Rectory Basement
Monday	Young Peoples' Meeting, 7 – 8:30 pm, St. John's, 27 Devens St. Women's Meeting, 7:15 – 8:15 pm, Constitution Inn, Navy Yard
Tuesday	Men's Meeting, 7 – 8:30 pm, DAT Club, 314 Main St.
Wednesday	Beginners' Meeting, 7 – 8 pm, Harvard Kent Cafeteria, 50 Bunker Hill St.
Wednesday	Women's Meeting, 7 – 8 pm, St. Catherine's Rectory Basement
Thursday	Open Meeting, 7 – 8:30 pm, Harvard Kent Cafeteria, 50 Bunker Hill St.
Friday	Discussion Meeting, 7 – 8:30 pm, DAT Club, 314 Main St.
Saturday	Women's Meeting, 10 – 11:30 am, MGH Clinic, High St.
Saturday	Open Meeting, 7 – 8:30 pm, DAT Club, 314 Main St.

Al-Anon

A fellowship that helps family members and friends recover from the effects of someone else's alcoholism.

Tuesday	7 pm, Mary Colbert Apartments (side entrance), 20 Devens St.
Thursday	7 pm, Knights of Columbus Hall, 3rd Floor, 75 West School St.



Charlestown Against Drugs, Peter Looney, Chairman. CHAD is a coalition of numerous Charlestown youth-serving organizations that has been in existence for 20 years. CHAD's programs aim to prevent or reduce substance abuse in the community through educational initiatives, which teach about the dangers of substance abuse and other health risk behaviors. These programs promote healthy growth and development of youth, families, and community, through drug avoidance, and supporting activities that encourage teamwork, cooperation, trust, self-reliance, and self esteem.

Information

If you have any questions or comments about the newsletter, or would like to volunteer with CHAD, please contact Officer Michael Charbonnier at the Community Service Office, 617-343-4627.

Acknowledgments

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