



Chesterfield County Youth Development Coalition

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The Chesterfield County Youth Development Coalition is a subcommittee of the Chesterfield County Coordinating Council and was established to address risky behaviors among our youth. We are committed to helping our young people develop the proper decision-making skills needed to prevent risky behaviors. We are students, parents, teachers, law enforcement officers, business leaders, state agencies, faith-based organizations, health care organizations and people from all walks of life working together to build a stronger future for our community.

The Youth Development Coalition will meet in the DSS Training room on the third Tuesday of every month at 3:30pm.

We invite those interested in helping the youth of our community to participate in our meetings. By offering your advice, expertise and suggestions you will help to strengthen the coalition while serving the community.

Upcoming Meetings:

- **March 20, 2018**
- **April 17, 2018**

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Show-Know and Tell

At some point in every kids life they have heard from their parents about the “good old days” and how life was different when we were younger. What we learned, who we played with and even how we acted in school and what was expected have changed drastically over the years. Back when I went to school we had show and tell. Every Friday the kids were encouraged to bring in an item or to talk about something that was important to us. We would then proceed to show the class and tell them what it was, how we got it and what it meant and what we used it for. BB-guns, pocket knives, bows, pets, pictures, cameras, dolls and all matter of kids items would be paraded through the class to the oohs and ahs of the other kids. At no point did we think this was a bad idea.

Nowadays, if a child brings anything that could be considered dangerous, even a butter knife, they are sent to the office with serious consequences to come. Kids didn’t tell on other kids because any bad behavior was usually caught by the teachers. We didn’t use profanity in school, we always showed respect to our elders and we only wore clothing that fit and was not provocative. And the only thing we prepared for in school was tornado’s and fire drills.

Today we teach our children about the importance of safety and : What to do if there is an active shooter in school.; How to avoid being taken by a stranger; How to handle bullying in school if you are the victim or just a bystander; along with the tried and true tornado and fire drills.

Over the years, we have advanced in technology so we can be socially connected in real time with a large number of people. We may have more contact with our fellow humans, but have we lost our humanity along the way? Not only do we want our children to become the judge of their friends actions, we want them to tell someone about the behaviors. We ask our kids to pay attention to who talks about guns and knives and hurting people so they can report to us or another adults, but are we helping our children to help their friends.

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SPRING BREAK - 6 TIPS TO PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING

Spring break is a time for teens to experience freedom from school and spend time with friends and family. However, extra free time and lenient rules can also increase underage drinking, specifically binge drinking, and other risky behaviors.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, one in seven high school students under the age of 18 take unsupervised trips during Spring Break. Studies show that students who vacation with friends during spring break dramatically increase their alcohol use. These teens are not the only ones at risk though. Teens who stay home unsupervised by parents who still have to work, or have more lenient rules even when they are home, are at an increased risk of experimenting with risky behaviors.

It is our job as parents and other caring adults to understand the importance of keeping our teens safe during a week when they are at a high risk to experiment with alcohol and engage in other risky behaviors.

1. Don't let your teen go on an unsupervised trip

Unsupervised teens are at a much higher risk of binge drinking. One of the greatest dangers of binge drinking is alcohol poisoning- this causes basic life-support functions to shut down and can lead to death if not properly treated. In addition to alcohol poisoning, binge drinking leads to other risky behaviors. Underage youth who engage in binge drinking are approximately 11 times more likely than other underage drinkers to engage in additional risky behaviors, such as tobacco and other drug use, physical violence and unsafe sexual behaviors, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The best way to protect our teens from the potentially deadly consequences of spring break binge drinking is to avoid unsupervised trips. The part of the brain that says "Wait, stop! This is a bad idea." isn't fully developed until the mid-twenties, so even with the best intentions, many teens can still fall into unhealthy behaviors.

2. Set firm rules against underage drinking

Be clear about a zero-tolerance policy against

underage drinking and explain the consequences for breaking the rules. A survey from Mothers Against Drunk Driving showed that teens whose parents tell them that underage drinking is completely unacceptable are more than 80 percent less likely to drink than teens whose parents give them other messages about underage drinking. Despite the fact that many parents think their teens don't listen to them, parental disapproval is still the number one reason teens choose not to drink alcohol.

3. Explain the risks

Talk to your teens about the dangers of underage drinking, including alcohol poisoning, violence, STIs, teen pregnancies, increased risk of physical and sexual assault and death.

4. Prepare your teen(s)

If your teen goes on a trip, talk to them about using the buddy system. Three or more is recommended. Walk through peer pressure scenarios and let your teens practice different ways to say no. It is important for them to feel confident in their answers.

5. Keep up communication and double check everything

Whether your teens are at home or on a trip, always check where they're going, who they're going with and that they have a fully charged phone that is always on. Network with their friends' parents and make sure they also have a zero-tolerance policy against underage drinking and drug use.

6. Never provide alcohol to minors and lock up alcohol in your house

This applies to everyone, not just parents. Whether you're a parent, aunt, uncle, cousin, older sibling or family friend, never provide alcohol to minors and make sure you lock up the alcohol in your house. Many adults opt to host parties on their private residencies for minors because they feel like it's a safer environment- however, the dangers of underage drinking are much more than drinking and driving. (Other reasons include impaired brain development, increased risk of addiction, increased risky sexual behaviors, alcohol poisoning, death and more.)



Know & Tell continued from page 1

Show and tell was all about bringing new items and ideas to people that we knew so they could learn and share.

In today's society and school environment we have learned that our children are the keepers of a lot of personal information about a lot of other students. Rumors that used to take weeks to spread through school are now spread in seconds. No one is safe from the prying eyes of youth and their smartphones. Instant pictures of embarrassing events spread like wildfire on social media. If couples break up, their heartache and tears are splattered across the phones of hundreds in their school. Memes are made to embarrass and tell the world how we think and feel. Are we raising a generation of youth that find everything funny and should be made fun of? Do we encourage this behavior by not monitoring their social media content? Have we taught our children that not all information should be shared and what information is very important to share? Do they know what is and isn't appropriate simply by having access to the technology or do we need to be more knowledgeable about their world?

So what do kids know, and what to they need to tell?

Being a snitch has never been the way to make friends. We need to help our children including our teens and young adults to understand that sometimes telling is not a bad thing. That not everything should be shared. But perhaps we need to set up a plan to help them understand the differences in situations so they know what to share and who to share with.

Set some rules for **KNOW AND TELL**:

TOP 5 THINGS TO TELL

1. If you think someone may hurt you, themselves or anyone else
2. If you see someone hurt themselves, someone else or animals
3. If someone is making threats to hurt you or someone (not in a joking manner)
4. If someone is threatening to do damage to someone's property or to the school and you think they are not joking
5. If you hear that someone you may not know is planning anything listed above and you have heard this more than once

WHEN TO TELL— Sooner is always better than later. Immediately is not always an option for kids, teens and young adults, especially if they are in school or at a social event where they can't get away from other kids. If they feel the situation is real, they should trust their instincts and tell right away.

WHO TO TELL—

1. If at home and you get the information always tell your Parents/guardian or a responsible adult you trust in the home or even an older sibling.
2. If at school or event — Not all kids have trust in all the adults that they are around daily, so they may need to find the correct person to speak with. In school, younger children should tell their teacher at the time it happens. Young teens should tell a teacher, SRO or someone in administration.
3. After the fact, always tell your parents.

As a parent we need to let our children know that all of their concerns matter to us and that we can help them determine the serious nature of the problem. We don't want to teach our children to just tell stories on everyone just to be the person to tell first, we need to teach them the importance of understanding a situation and knowing when it is time to get some real help. We need to teach them how to show concern for others and how to help them find the help they may need. We need to make sure that the technology they have can be used for more than music and videos and social media. If you type it in you can find the help on the internet.

Mission: A coalition of citizens and organizations working together to change community attitudes by providing support, assistance and guidance needed to prevent risky behaviors among all youth in Chesterfield County.

Vision: To create a healthy environment in order for our youth to become productive citizens

“Talk They Hear You”

It’s never too early for parents to talk to their kids about the dangers of underage drinking – 10% of 9- to 10-year-olds have already tried alcohol, and about one fifth of underage drinkers begin before they are 13 years old. But parents have a significant influence on whether their kids drink, and can help prevent underage drinking by talking to their kids early and often about the dangers of alcohol.

As part of its “Talk. They Hear You.” campaign, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is encouraging parents, caregivers, and other adult role



models to have ongoing conversations with kids about underage drinking, and then share their experiences on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram using the hashtag #WeTalked. Using #WeTalked spreads the message about underage drinking prevention, and encourages other parents to have these important conversations too. You can also check out SAMHSA’s [underage drinking prevention website](#) for resources to help guide the conversation, including the interactive “Talk. They Hear You.” app that helps you practice for some of the most important conversations you may ever have.

National Poison Prevention Week

In celebration of National Poison Prevention Week (NPPW), March 18-24, 2018, individuals, organizations, and institutions around the country will come together to raise poison prevention awareness and advocate for the nation’s poison control system.

Celebrated during the third full week of March each year, NPPW is nationally designated to highlight poisoning dangers and how to prevent them. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), poisoning is the leading cause of injury death in the United States.

In 2016, the 55 U.S. poison control centers provided telephone guidance for nearly 2.159 million human poison exposures. That’s about:

- * 6.6 poison exposures/1000 population,
- * 41.3 poison exposures in children younger than 6 years/1000 children,
- * 1 poison exposure reported to U.S. poison control centers every 14.6 seconds.

While young children (younger than 6 years) comprise a disproportionate percentage of the cases, poisoning affects ALL age groups, from infants to seniors. Peak poisoning frequency occurs in one and two year olds, but poisonings in teens and adults are more serious. A greater proportion of males in poison exposures occur in children younger than 13 years and then switches to a female predominance in teens and adults.

Call 1-800-222-1222 to reach Poison Control anywhere in the United States.

