



CHEMICAL HEALTH TREND CORNER:

Local Experts Share Reminders around Parent's Responsibilities when Hosting Parties with Alcohol

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Dear Parents:

It seems we are always in the midst of celebrating one thing or another – prom, graduation, end of the school year, summer, and more. This is good, but it can also be worrisome. We want to take this opportunity to remind you that as parents you have a particularly important role in shaping these events.

Please help keep your teen and his or her peers stay safe and alcohol-free.

Alcohol use is illegal by those in Minnesota who are under the age of 21 years. The only exception is that parents may provide alcohol to their own children in their own homes. Surveys of teens indicate that adults are teens' primary source of alcohol: at home, in bars and restaurants or on the street. To help reduce underage alcohol use, you can:

- Refuse to supply alcohol to underage young people when you host your own celebration. Do not buy a keg of beer for teens at a high school graduation or other party. This is illegal and it also invites young people to drink illegally. Teen alcohol use is **not** a rite of passage into adulthood. In fact, alcohol has kept too many teens from becoming adults.

- Make sure that alcohol is not available at events your teen attends. Talk with other parents and party hosts to ensure alcohol-free celebrations. Be proactive. When parents stand together on this issue, they present a united front to teens.

- All law enforcement agencies within McLeod County are participating in the Zero Adult Provider program (ZAP). With this program law enforcement agencies will be actively investigating and prosecuting adults who provide alcohol to underage drinkers. Please take an active role in assisting us in protecting your child.

Remember that as a parent, you play an important role in preventing underage alcohol use. In research studies, teens say that their number one reason for refusing to drink alcohol is centered on worrying about what their parents would think. That is a powerful statement about the importance of your message and role modeling.

Drug Trend: Cocaine McLeod teens are reporting:



“Cocaine is showing up more” and becoming more popular than in the past few years. Teen users are reporting “It is easy to find than weed and a local dealer is lacing it with meth.”

Mrs. Morrow-chemical Health Interventions Specialist HHS

Recent study by: [O'Malley PM](#), [Johnston LD](#), [Bachman JG](#).

Recent trends in cocaine use among America's adolescents and young adults have shown some interesting correlations. The authors have examined cross-time patterns of use, certain predictors of use, and some of the conditions of the social and physical environments which are associated with use.

Overall, we have found levels of use to be relatively stable for the past several years after a period of rapid increase between 1976 and 1979. We also found a strong age effect, with cocaine use increasing in the first few years after high school. The levels of use, though stable recently, are disturbingly high, particularly among young adults in their early to mid-twenties.

Perceived availability also has moved in tandem with these other measures. The great majority of today's seniors believe regular use to be dangerous, and 77% disapprove of even experimenting with cocaine. Use is found most frequently in the western and northeastern regions of the country, in more urban areas, among males, and among those who are not college-bound. Neither socioeconomic

status nor personal income are very strongly associated with use; but a history of truancy, going out frequently in the evenings, and having relatively low religious involvement are.

Cocaine users tend to use other illicit drugs (particularly marijuana) and to be cigarette smokers and heavy drinkers much more frequently than nonusers. Thus, there is little evidence that cocaine involves a separate drug-using syndrome. In fact, it is not uncommon for cocaine users to use marijuana or alcohol concurrently.

When taking cocaine, high school students most often snort it, though some (24% of recent users) smoke it while only 4% of the users inject it. It is almost always used with other people present, often at a party but more often with just one or two people present. Most use occurs in the evening, with very few young people using at school and a minority ever using at home or in a car. Among the reasons most often cited for using cocaine use are: "to see what it's like," "to get high," and "to have a good time with my friends."

Empowering parents and friends to keep our youth and community safe.

Report illegal activities

Underage drinking parties, adults hosting underage drinking gatherings, adult purchasing liquor for minors may be reported



anonymously to the police or sheriff department where they will disperse assistance. By reporting the date, time, and location of an underage drinking party or illegal activity it empowers parents and classmates in keeping McLeod County youth and community safe.

You Caught Your Teenager Drinking, Now What?

Mark Merrill "Helping Families Love Well
Dec.30th, 2016

You talked to your teen many times about drinking. Then you find out they've been drinking. What do you do?

Here are 5 steps to take in response to underage drinking.

1. Don't react in anger. With as few words as possible, let them know that you know about it. Then be silent. Give it a day for you to calm down and for your teen to think about it.
2. When you're calm, sit down with your teen and ask open-ended questions to determine why they were drinking. This is a heart issue and you need to understand what's going on inside. Maybe it was curiosity, peer pressure, a means of escape, an **identity or image** issue, or flat out rebellion. If your child doesn't want to talk, let them know that you'll just sit there with them until they discuss it with you.
3. Help your teenager develop right thinking about alcohol. Communicate to your teen that:

- Alcohol is a depressant and, if they are down or depressed about something, it will only make matters worse.

- It is illegal for anyone to buy or possess alcohol until 21 years of age. People who have been drinking while driving can have their driver's license suspended, be subjected to heavy fines, or have their car permanently taken away. If they hurt or kill someone else while being under the influence, they will live with it for the rest of their lives and may even be sent to prison.

- Alcohol use by teenagers is a strong predictor of pre-marital sexual activity which can lead to pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and emotional baggage. Teens that use alcohol have higher rates of both academic problems and poor performance than non-drinkers. Also, more than 67% of young people who start drinking before the age of 15 will try an illicit drug. Children who drink are more than 22 times more likely to use marijuana and 50 times more likely to use cocaine than children who never drink.

4. Talk about consequences and your future expectations. Now is the time to circle the wagons and bring your teen closer to you and closer to home. Start by letting them know the consequences of their actions. Those consequences might include things like losing the privilege of their phone or computer for anything other than school. Going out on weekends or revoking driving privileges may also be appropriate. And when they are at home, do your best to be there with them



to just hang out together. Also, share with your child that just as bad company corrupts good character, good company builds good character. Help your child understand that who they associate with is very, very important and that you expect them to start making wiser choices in that area.

5. Stay on top of it. This is not a one-time discussion; it's an ongoing dialogue. It's not simply handing out some consequences and then forgetting about it. When your child does leave the house, always make sure that you know who your child is with, where they are going, and what they are doing. You need to know their G.P.S. Have them check in with you on a regular basis. Your teen ultimately needs to understand that they have breached your trust and this is part of the process for them to earn your trust once again.

[Parenting Guide](#) in providing the **best protective parenting style so your child won't turn to drug abuse.**

Research shows that the risk for substance abuse and other adverse behaviors increases as the number of risk factors increases, and that protective factors may reduce the risk of youth engaging in substance use that can lead to substance abuse.

Risk and Protective Factors

Early aggressive behavior, lack of parental supervision, academic problems, undiagnosed mental health problems, peer substance use, drug availability, poverty, peer rejection, and child abuse or neglect are risk factors associated with increased likelihood of youth substance use and abuse. Risk factors that occur during early childhood further increase the risk of youth substance abuse. Risk factors of prolonged duration, for example, those that continue on from childhood through adolescence, are also associated with increased likelihood of youth substance abuse. Risk factors frequently associated with substance abuse are common across multiple disorders.

Not all youth will develop substance abuse problems, even if they have experienced these risk factors. Some individuals are exposed to protective factors that may keep them from using substances. The presence of multiple protective factors can lessen the impact of a few risk factors. For example, strong protection, such as parental support and involvement, could diminish the influence of strong risks, such as having peers who abuse substances. While risk and protective factors have been presented in different ways, the table below provides examples of risk and protective factors adapted from the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine.

[View Risk and Protective Factors by developmental period here](#)