

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER BULLETIN

Safe and Sober Holidays

Holiday parties give people more chances to use drugs and alcohol. The result is an increase in drug- and alcohol-related tragedies. According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving, at least 50 percent of all deadly car crashes that take place during the holiday season involve alcohol.¹

These factors may mean that your child is more exposed to substance abuse—whether it's an uncle who drinks too much during your holiday dinner or a friend who offers your child pot at a New Year's Eve party. The incidence of alcohol poisoning of children is common during the holiday season.² So, during this time, it is especially important that parents keep their children safe and talk with them about staying away from drugs and alcohol.

Holiday Celebration Tips:

1. Let your child know what you expect. Tell your child that adults may be drinking during the holidays but under no circumstances is she allowed to drink alcohol.
2. At your holiday gatherings, offer plenty of non-alcoholic foods, drinks, and activities.
3. To lower the risk of alco-

hol poisoning, be sure to throw out partly empty alcoholic drinks. Children love to imitate adults, and if they have access to leftover drinks, they may taste the contents.

4. Have a plan in place about what you and your family will do if you are at a party where there are people who have had too much to drink.
5. Model responsible behavior by making sure that guests who have been drinking do not drive.

Why not create some substance-free holiday traditions for your family? It's a great way to show your child that you can have fun during the holidays without alcohol or drugs.

Alcohol-Free Holiday Tips:

1. Plan a nonalcoholic holiday party with your child so children learn that they can have fun without alcohol. Send out invitations with alcohol- and drug-free messages on them, and make sure the guests know that yours will be a substance-free event.
2. For your holiday meal, let your child help you prepare and serve tradi-

tional drinks without alcohol. You can make non-alcoholic cider, eggnog, or punch. Look for recipes for nonalcoholic beverages like the ones found in these party planning tips.

3. Make sure your holiday festivities involve lots of delicious—and nonalcoholic—food, which your child can help you make.
4. If your older child is going to a holiday event, call ahead to make sure that the event will be alcohol and drug free. Check in with the party planners to see what measures are in place to keep alcohol out.

If you have trouble controlling your own substance use during the holidays, you should seek help.

Explain to your potential gift-givers why you do not wish to receive holiday gifts of wine or other types of alcohol. This sets an example for your child. You are showing your child how to enjoy a safe, sober holiday season. The gift of an alcohol-free lifestyle lasts long after the holidays are over.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The NCADI Reporter. November 26, 2001.

Mark your CALENDAR



December

4

NC Parent Network Workshop: *Becoming the Person you Really Want to Be*
Winston-Salem, NC
Host: North-Central Center for Prevention Resources
Location: Unlimited Success

January

28

NC Parent Network Workshop: *Where Do I Turn?*
Charlotte, NC
Host: Western Center for Prevention Resources

February

March

25

NC Parent Network Workshop: *Where Do I Turn?*
Host: Eastern Center for Prevention Resources

April

21-22

5th Annual NC Parent Network Conference
Collaborating for Change: Better Tools, More Knowledge, Greater Power
Burlington, NC

HOW IN TUNE ARE YOU WITH YOUR TEEN'S WORLD?

1) According to urban legend, what do teens think niacin (vitamin B) can be used for?

- A Passing drug tests
- B Getting rid of "the munchies" from smoking marijuana
- C Snorting to get a burst of energy like speed
- D Both A and B

2) If your teen were to "ROTFL," what would she be doing?

- A Electronically recording a TV program
- B Text-messaging someone about her new boyfriend
- C Instant-messaging someone about something really funny
- D E-mailing a friend about something confusing

3) Which of the following video

game ratings may not be appropriate for your teen?

- A M
- B AO
- C E10
- D Both A and B

4) If a teen is "leaning," what might he be doing?

- A Snorting heroin and cold medicine
- B Getting ready to give someone a

- kiss
- C Drinking cough syrup and soda
- D Getting ready to fight

5) What are the most popular inhalants among teens?

- A Glue and shoe polish
- B Nitrous oxide "whippets"
- C Spray paints
- D Cleaning fluids

Source: www.theantidrug.com

Hookah Smoking...Safer than Cigarettes?

Hookah smoking is not safer than smoking cigarettes. The tobacco is no less toxic. Hookah smokers actually inhale considerably more tobacco smoke than cigarette smokers because of the large volume of smoke they inhale.

Hookah is a water pipe that has been used for centuries in the Middle East and Asia to smoke tobacco. Now, hookah bars and cafes are popping up across the United States because of the growing popularity of hookah smoking among teens and young adults.

Though many believe that the water in hookah filters out the harmful things in tobacco smoke, this isn't true. According to World Health Organization advisory, a typical one hour session

of hookah smoking exposes the user to 100 to 200 times the volume of smoke inhaled from a single cigarette. Even after passing through water, tobacco smoke still contains high levels of toxic compounds, including carbon monoxide, heavy metals and carcinogens. Hookah smoking also delivers significant levels of nicotine into the bloodstream, which is the addictive substance in tobacco.

This trend has health professionals and public health experts concerned because despite claims that hookah smoking is not as harmful, it is in deed as, if not more dangerous than smoking cigarettes.

Source: *Positive Moves, 2008, Volume 21 (1&2)*



ANSWERS

Many household products can be abused as inhalants. Among children age 12-17 using inhalants for the first time, glue and shoe polish are the most commonly abused. Chronic abuse of solvents can cause severe, long-term damage to the brain, the liver, and the kidneys; and highly concentrated amounts of the chemicals in inhalants can directly induce heart failure and death, a syndrome known as "sudden sniffing death."

Games with these ratings contain content such as violence, gore, and sexual content that may not be suitable for persons younger than 18, respectively.

4) C Drinking cough syrup and soda
 "Lean" is an illegal drug concoction of prescription cough syrup containing the painkiller codeine mixed with soda or another sweet beverage.

5) A Glue and shoe polish

ROTFL is instant-messenger and cell phone "text language" for "rolling on the floor laughing." Text language frequently uses acronyms to shorten longer sentences or phrases.

3) D Both A and B
 In the video game rating system, "M" stands for "mature" (aged 17 and older), and "AO" stands for "adults only" (aged 18 and older).

2) C Instant-messaging someone about something really funny

According to urban legend, niacin (vitamin B3) can be taken to cleanse the body of drugs to pass drug tests as well as counteract the intense hunger (commonly called "the munchies") brought on by marijuana use.

In high doses, niacin can cause nausea, vomiting, blood poisoning and liver failure.

1) D Both A and B
 How in Tune Are You With Your Kid's World?

Families in Action
 Prevention that works!

www.familiesinaction.org



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