UNITED WAY OF ADDISON COUNTY PREVENTION

TALK. COMBO

BECAUSE PARENTING CAN BE IN-TENTS.

A GUIDE TO AN IMPORTANT CONVERSATION
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TALK
C.A.M.P.
HOW TO SET UP A SUCCESSFUL CONVERSATION

BY REMEMBERING THESE 4 STEPS, YOU CAN SET UP A CONVERSATION ANYWHERE!

BEING/FEELING READY TO TALK

FACTS/INFO TO SUPPORT YOUR CONVERSATION

UNDERSTANDING WHO WE ARE, WHO OUR KIDS ARE AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

ASSESSING THE OUTCOMES AND ADAPTING

C.A.M.P.
CALM
AWARE
MINDFUL
POSITIVE

TALK. IT'S IMPORTANT.
CONTENTS

CALM— 1
AWARE— 2-5
MINDFUL— 6-10
POSITIVE— 11-12
RESOURCES— 13-14
Remember it's a conversation, not a lecture.

Setting up the conversation about substance use with your child can be tricky. Here's some kindling to help start your campfire conversation:

- Avoid approaching with anger or panic.
- Being calm makes it easier to be clear.
- Make sure you're in a quiet comfortable space.
- Be patient, starting small is okay.
- Remember it's a conversation, not a lecture.
Fact: Only 21% of Addison County High School students think people greatly risk harming themselves if they use marijuana/cannabis regularly. -2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Have facts and information to support the conversation.

Here's what Addison County parents told us they wanted to know when talking to their kids about substance use:

- 40% - How to respond if your child admits to using substances
- 39% - Getting child to share experiences
- 25% - What % of children your child’s age use substances
- 24% - How to respond to questions about past personal use
- 24% - Risk facts of using various substances
- 18% - How and when to start these conversations
OF STUDENTS YOUR CHILD’S AGE WHO REPORTED SUBSTANCE USE
2019 YRBS Results:

ALCOHOL

CANNABIS

VAPE/E-CIG

Grade Level

Grade Level

Grade Level
In our recent 2020 Parent Survey, we asked Addison County parents if they knew or suspected substance use among their children. 87.9% said...

“I don’t think my child has used any substances.”

Looking a little closer...

We noticed a significant gap in what parents think and what students are reporting. Simply talking with your child will open up a conversation and close this communication gap.

Not only that, children who have a strong, open relationship with their parents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors.
Here are some substance specific facts to support your conversation. Remember, these are facts to reinforce your position. Reciting a bunch of stand-alone facts might feel like a lecture.

**ALCOHOL**
- Impairs coordination
- Slows reaction time
- Impairs vision
- Impairs clear thinking, and judgment

**CANNABIS**
- Effects on judgement and coordination are responsible for many injuries and even death.
- The likelihood of getting into an accident is more than doubled while under the influence of marijuana/cannabis

**E-CIG/VAPE**
- Just as addictive as cigarettes
- Bad for your heart and lungs
- Can lead to nicotine addiction and use of other substances
Many factors influence our likelihood to use substances. Let's take a look at some risk and protective factors to check your packs for...

**RISK FACTOR:**
Individual, Family, Community characteristics associated with *higher likelihood* of behavioral health problems

**PROTECTIVE FACTOR:**
Individual, Family, Community characteristics associated with *lower likelihood* of behavioral health problems
RISK FACTORS: (NEGATIVE THINGS)

INDIVIDUAL:
- Difficult temperament
- Antisocial behavior
- Poor impulse control
- Aggressiveness
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Disengagement
- Coping (giving up)
- Apathetic temperament

FAMILY:
- Parent drug/alcohol use
- Marital conflict of divorce
- Inadequate supervision
- Parent-child conflict
- Lack of discipline
- Loss
- Child misuse/maltreatment
- Rejection

COMMUNITY (SCHOOL):
- Poor academic performance
- Peer rejection
- Peer attitudes towards drugs
- Aggression towards peers
- Alienation
- Lack of participation in extracurricular activities
- Stressful events within community
- Permissive norms about drugs and alcohol

28% of Addison County students reported they felt sad or hopeless in the past 30 days -2019 YRBS
**PROTECTIVE FACTORS:**
*(POSITIVE THINGS)*

**INDIVIDUAL:**
- Responsible
- Getting along with peers
- Rational thinking
- Self-esteem
- Self-regulation
- Motivated

**FAMILY:**
- Boundaries and Curfews
- Supportive relationships
- Inclusion
- Positive social norms
  *(expectations and values)*
- Adequate nutrition, child care, safe housing
- Affection
- Higher parental education

**COMMUNITY (SCHOOL):**
- Positive teacher relationships
- Positive partnership between school and family
- Supportive peer relationships
- Physical and Mental safety
- Appropriate Structure *(rules)*

79% of Addison County students described their grades in school as mostly A’s and B’s  
-2019 YRBS
Guiding Their Moral Compass

Understanding Their Understanding.

Asking your child what they know about substances and why they are harmful can help you guide the conversation.

With perception of harm decreasing in Addison County, talking about the risks of substance use is vital. Understanding how your child feels about drugs and alcohol helps you to understand what to teach them.

High School YRBS Data

- Think it’s wrong or very wrong for someone their age to drink alcohol:
  - AC: 50%
  - VT: 53%

- Think it’s wrong or very wrong for someone their age to use marijuana/cannabis:
  - AC: 49%
  - VT: 51%

Middle School YRBS Data

- Think people greatly risk harming themselves if they have five or more drinks of alcohol once or twice each weekend:
  - AC: 44%
  - VT: 45%

- Think people greatly risk harming themselves if they use marijuana/cannabis regularly:
  - AC: 50%
  - VT: 49%
**BIGFOOT!!**

**MYTHS AND FOLKLORE**

Make sure to SQUATCH these common misconceptions:

**FALSE**
- Natural drugs are healthier than synthetic ones
- It's safe to drive after using cannabis
- If a doctor prescribed it, it must be safe
- Cannabis calms you down
- Alcohol is safe for kids to try in small amounts
- Alcohol and cannabis are less harmful drugs

**TRUE**
- Any impairing substance can cause unhealthy outcomes.
- Cannabis affects reaction time, vision, and the ability to make sound decisions.
- Any illicit or illegal drug misuse is risky.
- Cannabis increases heart rate and blood pressure.
- Consumption of alcohol under the age of 21 is illegal for health and safety reasons.
- The drug being misused is the most harmful drug to the person misusing it.

*If my kids are drinking at home, it's safe...*

**VT Liability Law**

"...A social host who knowingly furnishes alcoholic beverages to a minor may be held liable under this section if the social host knew, or a reasonable person in the same circumstances would have known, that the person who received the alcoholic beverages was a minor..."
Remember it’s never too early to talk to your child about substance use. In their younger years, kids are more receptive to your advice. With younger children, encourage them to ask questions and talk to you about substance use.

Feel like you missed something? Don’t worry, it’s important to keep this an ongoing conversation and continue to check-in with your child. Take mental notes of what worked and what didn’t.

WHAT WERE THE POSITIVE TAKE-AWAYS?
HOW DID THEY RESPOND?
WERE YOU CLEAR IN YOUR EXPECTATIONS REGARDING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL?
WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU’D LIKE TO BRING UP NEXT TIME?
You may not think they listen well, but they hear your concerns. Children are less likely to engage in risky behaviors when they have a positive open relationship with their parents. Remember, they’re also watching your behaviors. It may seem like they’re ignoring you, but they’re actually learning from your actions. Be a good example by living a healthy active lifestyle.

Encourage your kids to keep doing the positive things that they already know and do (Sports, music, theater, baking, hiking, etc.)

26% of AC students spend 10 or more hours a week participating in after-school activities.

By engaging in positive activities, they are significantly less likely to engage in risky ones.
United Way of Addison County
Prevention
Parent Up Vermont
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration- SAMHSA
SAMHSA- Risk and Protective Factors
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America- CADCA
Vermont Legislature
Youth Risk Behavior Survey- YRBS
RESOURCES

The Bristol Hub

Bristol Recreation Department

Addison Central Teens

Middlebury Recreation Department

Boys and Girls Club Vergennes

Vergennes Recreation Department
Talk. It's important.

TALK. CAMP

Because parenting can be in-tents.

What you do matters

P.E.E.P.S.

Partners Educating & Empowering Prevention for Success

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