Reasons and Resources for teen substance use

**THE PROBLEM**

Teens start using drugs or alcohol for many reasons. Whether it is happening at home, school, or elsewhere in the community, here are some important facts to know:

- Historically, substance misuse rates in Connecticut are higher than the national average.
- 40% will try alcohol by 8th grade.
- Nearly 30% of 9th graders reported using alcohol in the past month.
- Over 50% of 12th graders reported using alcohol in the past month.
- First use of tobacco and/or marijuana typically occurs by age 14.
- 60-75% of 12-17 year olds do not perceive drinking or smoking to be dangerous.

**RISK FACTORS**

Why do children use alcohol or drugs? Because of...

- Easy access.
- Peer pressure, the need to fit in.
- Belief that drugs are cool and harmless.
- Curiosity... the desire to experiment and/or alleviate boredom.
- Feeling overwhelmed by the challenges of growing up.
- Identification with celebrity/sports idols who misuse alcohol or drugs.
- Untreated mental health issues such as depression or anxiety.
- Inability to cope constructively with anger or unpleasant feelings.
- Other family members’ use of or permissive attitude toward drugs or alcohol.
- Exposure to traumatic events, including physical or sexual abuse.

**WARNING SIGNS**

How can I tell if my child is using drugs or alcohol? Because they might...

- Behave differently for no apparent reason.
- Change their peer group.
- Become careless with grooming.
- Experience a decline in academic performance.
- Miss class and/or skip school.
- Lose interest in favorite activities.
- Change eating and sleeping habits.
- Have deteriorating relationships.

Never assume it is just typical adolescent behavior changes. Check it out!
PREVENTION

How can I prevent my child from using drugs or alcohol?

YOU are the most important influence on your child’s behavior!
Educate yourself.
Talk openly with your child.
Stay involved in their lives.

SOLUTIONS

When teens who are using substances receive family-focused treatment, there are proven reductions in substance use, criminal activity, arrests, and family problems.

Consider assessing teens for substance use through the resources below.

Teens can benefit from an intervention even if they are not addicted to a drug.

On-going counseling / support.

HOW TO START

MULTI-SYSTEMIC THERAPY (MST) Intensive family therapy in your home to identify and address problems driving the substance mis-use. Meets several times per week.

BROUGHTON
Child & Family Guidance Center (203) 394-6298 www.nafict.org

CT

Connecticut Renaissance (203) 367-7370 www.cerenessance.com

DANBURY
Connecticut Junior Republic (203) 797-8575 www.cjryouth.org

HARTFORD/BRIDGEPORT
NAFI Connecticut (800) 459-6298 www.nafict.org
BRIDGEPORT: Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)

NAFI Connecticut (800) 459-6298 www.nafict.org

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL FAMILY THERAPY (MDFT) Intensive family and individual therapy in your home. MDFT examines all components of a teen’s life to address substance misuse and promote positive, long-term change. Meets several times per week.

BROUGHTON/NORWALK
Boys & Girls Village (203) 320-6790 www.bgvl.org

Connecticut Renaissance (203) 367-7370 www.cerenessance.com

DANBURY/TORRINGTON
Family & Children’s Aid (203) 748-5689 www.fcaweb.org

Connecticut Junior Republic (203) 358-7665 www.cjryouth.org

HARTFORD
Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Hartford (860) 522-8241 www.cch.org

Community Health Resources (877) 881-3271 www.chh.org

Hartford Behavioral Health (860) 644-2797 www.hbh.org

Hartford Addiction Treatment Services (HATS) (860) 522-8241 www.hats.org

The Village for Families & Children Hartford (860) 536-4511 www.villagefortchildren.org

Wheeler Clinic (888) 793-3500 www.wheelercare.org

WATERBURY
NAFI Connecticut (800) 459-6298 www.nafict.org

WATERBURY/DANBURY/ TARRYTOWN
Community Health Resources (860) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

NEW BRITAIN/PLAINVILLE
Community Health Resources (877) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

MIDDLETOWN/NOVALENCIA
Community Health Resources (877) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

WILLIAMANTIC/NEW LONDON
Community Health Resources (877) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

WILLIAMANTIC/Rockville
NAFI Connecticut (800) 459-6298 www.nafict.org

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WATERBURY/NORWALK
Community Health Resources (860) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

NEW HAVEN/MILFORD
Community Health Resources (877) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

STAMFORD
Community Health Resources (860) 822-4292 www.ucf.org

BRIDGEPORT/NORWALK/ STAMFORD
Community Health Resources (860) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

NEW HAVEN/MILFORD
Community Health Resources (877) 884-3571 www.chrhealth.org

HARTFORD/BRIDGEPORT
Community Health Resources (203) 394-6298 www.nafict.org

ALERT: If you are unsure which direction to go, CALL 2-1-1