
Parenting for Prevention

Student Assistance Services Corp., 660 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York, 10591, May, 2016

Safe Summer

Even though it is one of the most wonderful times of the year, there are issues related to summer safety for teenagers. First, there is the research that indicates that many teens experiment with drugs and alcohol for the first time during the summer. This is probably due to the fact that this is a more relaxed, less scheduled time of year. Teens may have more discretionary time to hang out and spend time with friends. In addition, teens spend more time outside, stay out later and gather in unsupervised settings far from the watchful eye of a parent or other responsible adults.

There are concerns about the use of alcohol and other drugs and teens driving a car or boat or participating in other activities such as skateboarding and swimming that require good judgement and coordination.

As in most issues, it is best for parents to have an honest and direct conversation with their teen about their expectations to remain drug free. Also discuss the consequences that will occur if they do not remain drug free.

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CMSW, CPP

Summer Safety Issues

Boats, Bikes, Skateboards and Cars

The risk factors associated with teens using alcohol or other drugs and then driving or being a passenger on a boat, riding a bicycle, skateboarding or driving a car are of great concern. Most of the data that is available is about the relationship between car crashes and the use of alcohol and other drugs. However, anything that impairs a teens ability to make good decisions or his physical coordination will also negatively impact a young person's ability to skateboard, swim, ride a bike or be on a boat. An added risk associated with being on a boat and using substances is the risk of drowning.

According the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the rate of motor vehicle crashes is higher among 16-19 years olds than among any other age group. Among teen drivers, those at especially high risk for motor vehicle crashes are:

- Males: whose rate of injury is almost two times that of their female counterparts.
- Teens driving with teen passengers: The presence of teen passengers increases the crash risk and the risk increases with the number of passengers.
- Driving at night between 9pm and 2am.
- Newly Licensed teens: Crash risk is particularly high during the first few month during the first few months a teen gets a license.
- A teen using alcohol or other drugs: At all levels of blood alcohol concentration, the risk of involvement in a crash is higher for teens than for older drivers

In a 2013 survey done by the CDC, 22% of teens reported that they had ridden with a driver who had been drinking alcohol.

In 2012, 71% of drivers aged 15-20 involved in a crash after drinking and driving were not wearing a seat belt.

In 2013, 51% of teen deaths from crashes occurred between the hours of 3pm and midnight and 54% occurred on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

There is also renewed concern about the impact of marijuana on teens as the perception of harm of this drug falls. Anecdotally, counselors report that there are teens who “claim” that marijuana makes them a safer driver. **In the meantime, states like Colorado and Washington are reporting an increase in vehicle crashes where the driver had marijuana in their system.**

A May, 2016 article in the Washington Times reported that in the state of Washington, according to a new study by the AAA Foundation for Traffic that the percentage of drivers who had used marijuana prior to a crash had doubled since the legalization of marijuana in that state during the period between 2013-2014.

Water safety is another concern for young people during the warm weather. Swimming, boating, jet skiing, and water skiing are some of the activities associated with summer, and pose special hazards to teens.

The highest drowning rates within any age group are found among teens and young adults; in the United States, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death among teens, and is especially prevalent among males.

The Central Connecticut Health District (CCHD) reports that when alcohol use is added to the picture, the combination of water activities and alcohol accounts for 25-50% of adolescent deaths from water recreation. Alcohol is a contributing factor in up to 50% of adolescent boy drownings.

Teens enjoy bike riding, skateboarding, inline skating, and using scooters, hoverboards and other recreational means of getting from one place to another. The CCHD reports Every year, approximately 26,000 people are treated in hospital emergency departments for skateboard related injuries, over 40,500 for scooter related injuries, 100,000 for inline skating injuries, and over 550,000 for bicycle injuries. Again, if alcohol and other

drugs are used before engaging in these activities, the possibility of injury increases.

Setting limits and expectations regarding the use of alcohol and other drugs with your teen is a very important to protect them from unintentional injury. In addition, enforcing consequences if your child uses alcohol or other drugs lets your child know that you are serious about your concern about their welfare and safety. Clear expectations and clear consequences are powerful deterrents to your child using alcohol and other drugs. The research is clear that when parents talk to their teens about their expectations for not using, teens are less likely to use. Go to powertotheparen.org for more information

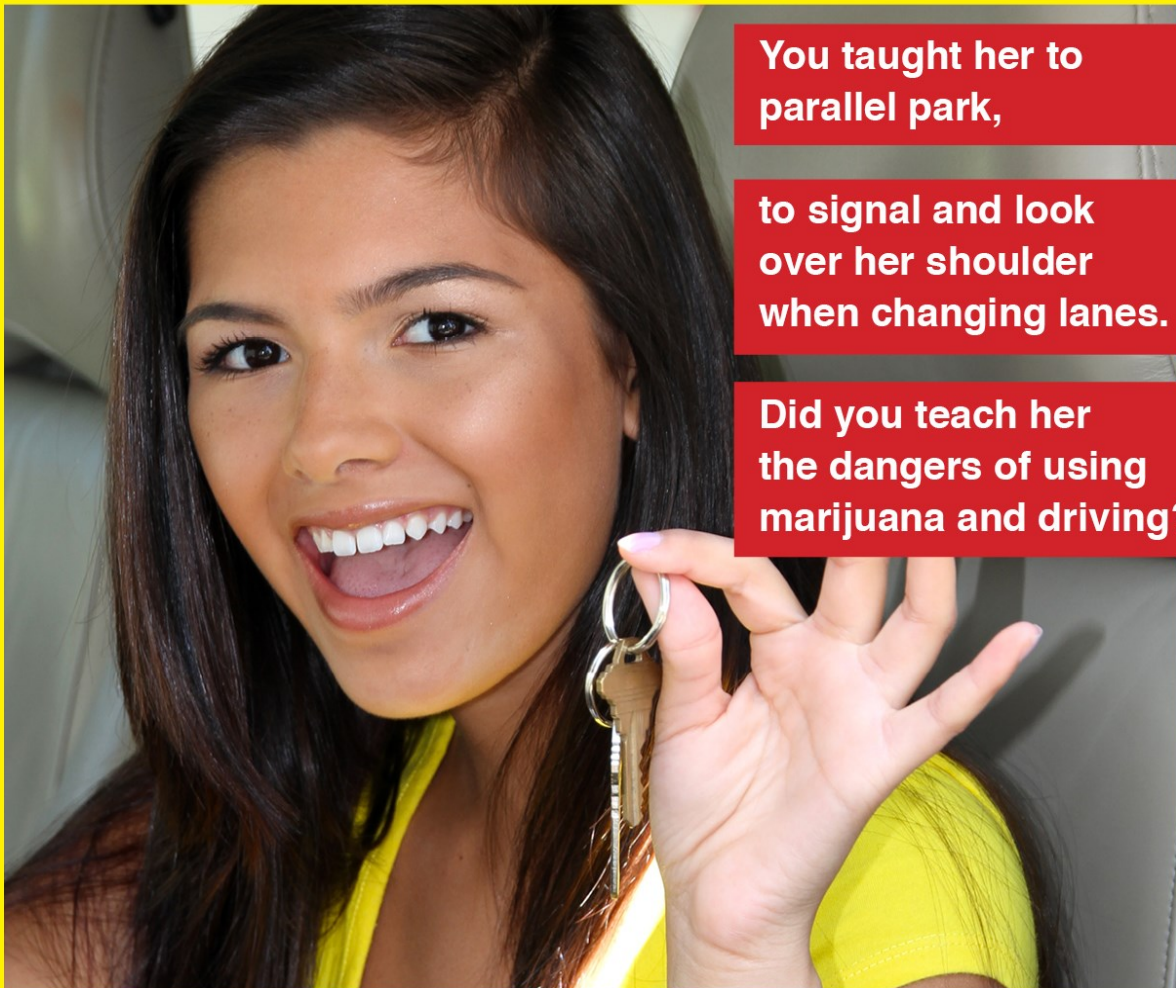


On the Center for Disease Control website there is a three-page *Parent Teen Driving Agreement* that covers many of the issues that are of concern to parents and their children related to driving. This is a very useful tool to get parents and teens on the same page and to have a meaningful conversation about ways to keep your teen safe. Below is the section that addresses the use of drugs and alcohol.

I promise that I will respect laws about drugs and alcohol.

Drive only when I am alcohol and drug free

Never allow any alcohol or illegal drugs in the car



You taught her to parallel park,

to signal and look over her shoulder when changing lanes.

Did you teach her the dangers of using marijuana and driving?

Everyone knows that drinking and driving don't mix. But word on the street is, not everyone knows that using marijuana and driving are a combination for destruction. In fact, **marijuana is the most common illegal drug found in drivers who die in crashes.**

Why? Because marijuana makes it hard to judge distances and to react to signals and sounds on the road. Marijuana impacts driver alertness, concentration, coordination and reaction time.

Parents, set clear non drug-use expectations with your young driver.

Westchester parents, get facts, resources and tips from **PowerToTheParent.org**



It's Just A Vape Pen, Right?

Electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes are sometimes referred to as vape pens. However, vape pens are also used for other substances. I am sure many people are noticing a person standing outside a restaurant or in another public place, using a vape pen. Vape pens are sweeping the country and there is some confusion about what the person is smoking in that pen. There are no absolutes when you consider a vape pen or e-cigarette. There are vapes that work for nicotine, oils, marijuana and synthetic drugs. Someone could be vaping marijuana in front of you and you would not know that.

Jermaine Galloway, a national authority on drug paraphernalia gave a compelling presentation in April to law enforcement officials and coalition leaders about this new phenomena and pointed out that marijuana concentrates and vape pens are “a perfect marriage.” Drug concentrates come in oil, wax and crystal form and the current version of vape pens can work with all three. One cannot look at a vape pen and know what is inside and what the person is inhaling.

One may assume that a teen is using nicotine, but the reality is that the teen could actually be taking a hit from a drug and no one around that teen might even suspect drug use. Another caution for a parent. The use of a vape pen by teens can also lead to nicotine addiction and the use of cigarette and chewing tobacco.

According to Bloomberg News. cigarette smoking rates are falling, and the number of Americans who vape is on the rise. While the long-term public health effects aren't certain, the impact on state budgets is clearer. After peaking at \$17.1 billion in 2011, state cigarette tax receipts fell to \$16.3 billion in 2014, according to a report from the Orzechowski & Walker market research firm posted by the Federation of Tax Administrators. Four states have already approved levies on e-cigarettes and related products, and the West Virginia legislature is considering its own tax. From a regulatory standpoint, e-cigarettes are coming of age. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration brought electronic cigarettes and vape products under its control earlier this month, mandating that the majority of manufacturers seek FDA permission to remain on store shelves. That may have given states the justification they need to begin taxing the products.

Summer Reading Suggestions

Buzzed

The Straight Facts about the Most Used And Abused Drugs from Alcohol to Ecstasy
Kuhn, Swartzwelder, and Wilson
Duke University

How To Raise A Drug Free Kid

Joseph Califiano, Jr

Parenting Teenagers; Systematic Training for Effective

Don Dinkmeyer

Parenting for Prevention: How To Raise A Child to Say No to Alcohol/Drugs

David J Wilmes

SAVE THE DATE

In Defense of the Teen Brain

Bertha K. Madrass, Ph D
September, 27
7 to 8:30pm