

G N C Y

GLENVIEW NORTHBROOK COALITION FOR YOUTH

Keeping Teens Drug & Alcohol Free in Glenview and Northbrook



In this edition:

How To Recognize a Child is Asking for Help; How To Have a Conversation About Mental Health & Substance Use and How to Implement Health Habits, Encourage Self-Help or Reach Out for Professional Help.

Use these "How Tos" along with the National Prevention Week daily themes:

Monday, May 10: Preventing Prescription Drug and Opioid Misuse

Tuesday, May 11: Preventing Underage Drinking and Alcohol Misuse

Wednesday, May 12: Preventing Illicit Drug Use and Youth Marijuana Use

Thursday, May 13: Preventing Youth Tobacco Use (E-Cigarettes and Vaping)

Friday, May 14: Preventing Suicide

PREVENTION HAPPENS HERE

This is the theme for this year's National Prevention Week which focuses on substance use prevention and mental health promotion.

Glenbrook North and South students and staff have already been working on this over the past week to break through the stigma surrounding mental illness and substance use disorders. They are talking about it. Talking about it with peers, in class and with your help; with parents, families and the community.

In order to support our youth in their mental health and to prevent underage substance use, we need to talk about it and remove the stigma in our community.

We need to make sure that Prevention Happens Here; in Glenview and Northbrook.

If you aren't sure where to start, we are here to help. Check out our new "How Tos" in helping you address these very important topics.

Thank you for doing your part in making sure Prevention Happens Here.

HOW TO

recognize a child is asking for help



WHAT IS YOUR CHILD'S "NORMAL"?

Adolescence is full of transition, change, risk-taking and self-discovery. When changes in your child's behavior appear severe, dramatic and/or abrupt, this can be a sign of a mental health issue.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS*

Changes sleep patterns (excessive sleeping, insomnia or difficulty sleeping)

- Loss of Self-Esteem
- Loss of interest in hobbies or spending time with friends/family
- Change in academic performance and/or difficulty concentrating
- Changes in eating patterns; weight loss, loss of appetite or excessive eating
- Paranoia or excessive secrecy
- Physical symptoms; body aches and pains, headache, nausea
- Drug and/or alcohol use

1 IN 5 TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS LIVES WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.*



KEEP IN MIND,

just because there may be signs or symptoms DOES NOT NECESSARILY mean they have a disorder, the important thing to do is to ASK, SUPPORT and SEEK HELP as needed.



GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE

It's okay to not know where to start. These conversations are ongoing and meant to help you and your child have open communication. Even small conversations have an impact; impact isn't just the content of the talk, it's the talk itself. Think of it as sixty 1-minute talks NOT one 60-minute talk.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED; HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO START THE CONVERSATION:

"I've been worried about you. I've noticed you've (been drinking, seemed down lately, not sleeping, etc.). Can we talk about what's going on?"

"I want to be here for you. Do you want to talk about it?"

"It seems like you are going through a difficult time. Is there anything I can do to help?"

Use "I" statement: I feel...(emotion) when you...(observable behavior) because...

This allows you to share your observations in a non-judgmental way and let's your child know that you've noticed. Remember: its okay if your teen doesn't have the answers or does not disclose everything all at once.

TIPS ON ACTIVE AND NON-JUDGEMENTAL LISTENING

Teens want to be heard, understood and communicated with in a genuine and non-judgmental way.

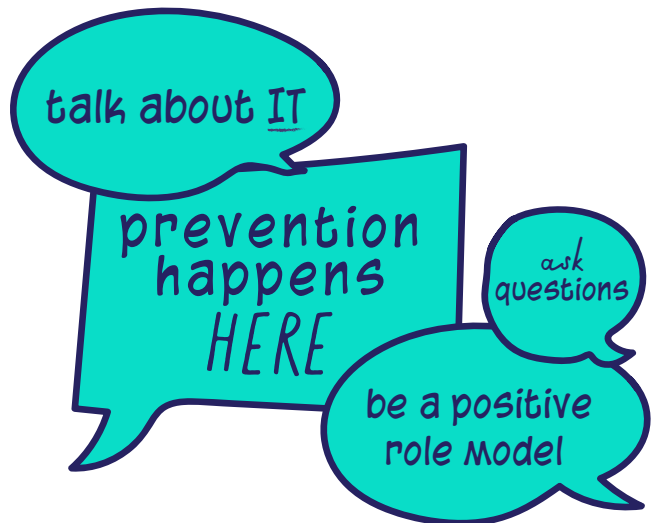
One way to do that is to focus on listening, not lecturing:

- Acknowledge their feelings
- Ask open-ended questions
- Thank them for their honesty and openness
- Sum up and reflect back what you hear
- Offer empathy and compassion
- Be gentle but persistent

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF -

talk to other adults (family, friends, therapist, etc.) about YOUR experience so you are not bringing it to the conversation with your child.





MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH ARE OFTEN CONNECTED.

When your child is not taking care of their basic physical health, their mental health can be impacted. For example:

- Dehydration causes brain functioning to slow down and not function properly*
- Lack of sleep can impact a teen's mood, ability to think, to react, to regulate their emotions, make healthy decisions and increase risk-taking behaviors such as substance use**.
- Movement and exercise helps teens reduce stress, alleviates depression and anxiety, improves self-confidence, sharpens memory and cognition, helps control addiction and increases overall energy and productivity.***

SO, HELP YOUR CHILD TAKE CARE OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH by also taking care of their basic needs; staying hydrated, getting enough sleep and movement.

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD to make small realistic goals for themselves.

- For example: Drink “x” ounces of water a day • Meditate for 5 minutes each day • Check-in with a friend once a week
- Breathing fresh air at least once a day

HELP THEM BE GENTLE WITH THEMSELVES if they don't meet goals or if they make mistakes. Set-backs may happen but it is helping them recover and try again.

ROLE MODEL HEALTHY HABITS for your teen in your own life such as going for a walk, eating nutritious foods, or taking a break when feeling stressed or overwhelmed. When you are able, invite your child to participate in those activities with you! It is equally as important to role model NOT engaging unhealthy coping strategies such as alcohol or other substance misuse, under or over-eating, or avoiding/procrastinating on responsibilities.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH OR SUBSTANCE USE, reach out to a professional such as a social worker, counselor, psychologist or other mental health professional. If you are unsure where to start, talk to with your pediatrician or check out these local resources: GNCY Community Resources & Crisis Hotlines.

gncy.org



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*Water, Depression, and Anxiety

**When Teens Don't Get Enough Sleep | Sleep Deprivation Effects

***Six Mental Health Benefits of Exercise in Teens