



Frenchtown Community Coalition

Working to create a healthy, engaged, and unified community for the youth of Frenchtown

Talk. They Hear You.

SAMHSA's **Talk. They Hear You.** campaign helps parents and caregivers start early, open, and ongoing conversations with their kids about alcohol and other drugs. Research shows that children who learn about the risks of substance use from their parents are up to **50% less likely** to try them (SAMHSA, 2023). The campaign offers free tools, conversation guides, and even an interactive mobile app that helps adults practice how to respond to tough questions in real time. This holiday season, take a few minutes to explore the **Talk. They Hear You.** resources and learn how a simple conversation can make a lifelong difference.

Scan the QR code or visit

www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you to get started!



The Protective Power of Engagement for Youth

As the holiday season approaches, families and communities come together to share meals, traditions, and laughter. Beyond the celebrations, these moments offer something even more powerful: *protection*. Research consistently shows that when young people feel connected to caring adults, they are significantly less likely to engage in underage drinking and substance use (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2024). The simple act of being present—asking about their day, eating dinner together, setting clear expectations—creates what prevention experts call *protective factors*. These are the everyday conditions that help youth thrive, even when faced with pressure or risk.

According to the CDC (2023), parental monitoring and involvement are among the strongest predictors of healthy decision-making in adolescents. When youth believe their parents disapprove of underage drinking, their likelihood of using alcohol is cut by nearly two-thirds (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2023). Family rituals, like gathering for Thanksgiving, can be a perfect time to strengthen these protective bonds. Turning off devices during dinner, sharing stories, and giving teens meaningful roles in the celebration can all foster trust and open communication. These interactions help youth feel valued and supported, which is linked to lower rates of substance use and improved emotional well-being (Conway & Jones, 2021).

As we move into the holiday season, it's important to remember that prevention doesn't always look like a lecture—it often looks like connection. Taking time to listen, showing up for school or extracurricular events, and spending intentional time together all send a clear message: *you matter, and your choices matter*. Whether it's carving a turkey, going for a walk, or talking about family traditions, these small, consistent efforts help build resilience. When adults stay involved, engaged, and emotionally available, our youth gain one of the strongest protective factors against underage drinking and substance use: a caring, connected relationship with you.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Youth Risk Behavior Survey data summary & trends report: 2013–2023*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/index.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024). *Substance use among youth: Reducing health risks*. <https://www.cdc.gov/youth-behavior/risk-behaviors/substance-use-among-youth.html>

Conway, K. P., & Jones, K. (2021). Family engagement and adolescent substance use prevention: Evidence from community-based interventions. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 68*(4), 682–689.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2023). *National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed tables*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data>

Find us on Facebook to get up-to-date info on Fall Fest, including costume contest categories!
@FrenchtownCommunityCoalition



If you have questions or would like to join the Frenchtown Community Coalition Please contact FTCC@ftsd.org or call 406-626-2772

