



Drug/Substance Misuse Prevention and Alcohol and New Drug Testing Policy

Hampden Charter School of Science East and West



What is Substance Misuse?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), substance misuse is a pattern of problematic use of substances leading to impairments in:

Health:

- Heart (attack, damage)
- Brain (Strokes, Seizures, memory, learning)
- Mental Health (psychosis, depression, anxiety)
- Damage to major organs (lungs, liver, kidneys)
- May affect weight (loss or gain)

Social Functioning:

- Lower levels of self-esteem
- Changes in school performance
- Poor judgement and impulse control issues
- Loss of friends who do not use
- Neglect in appearance

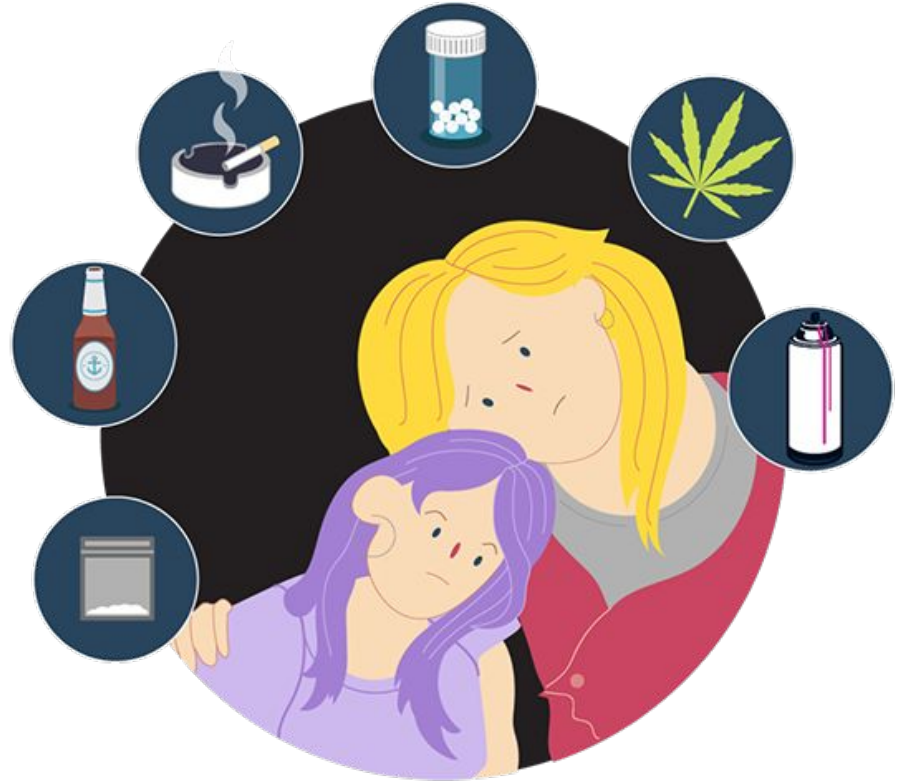
Control of Substance:

- Inability to stop taking the substance
- Unsafe practices while on substance
 - Sexual activity
 - Impaired driving

What is Substance Misuse? continued

Commonly Misused Substances by
Teens:

- Marijuana
- Nicotine (Vaping, cigarettes)
- Prescription Medications (stimulants)
- Opioids (depressants)
- Ecstasy
- Inhalants
- Alcohol
- Cocaine



Consequences to Substance Misuse



- Slows the development of the prefrontal cortex (decision making)
- Brain shrinkage, impaired abilities
- Increased impulsivity
- Damage in short term and long term memory
- Increased risk of addiction later in life
- Increased risk of STDS, teen pregnancy, sexual assault
- Increased risk of car related injuries or death (leading cause of death for teens)
- Increases severity of anxiety, depression, mood swings, suicidal thoughts, schizophrenia

Marijuana

“Marijuana is the most commonly used federally illegal drug used in the United States”. (CDC, 2023) Though it is legal in Massachusetts for individuals over the age of 21, it remains federally illegal.

Dangers of underage marijuana use include:

- Difficulty thinking and problem-solving
- Problems with memory and learning
- Reduced coordination
- Difficulty maintaining attention
- Problems with school and social life



Early use of marijuana and other drugs increases the likelihood of substance use disorder later in life. Additionally, studies suggest that marijuana use in adolescence (especially repeated and/or heavy use) can lead to permanent physical changes in the brain. One study even found that heavy marijuana use as a teenager resulted in a loss of 8 IQ points between ages 13 and 38; adult use of marijuana did not share the same effect on IQ score.

<https://www.cdc.gov/marijuana/health-effects/teens.html>

<https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugfacts/cannabis-marijuana>

Vaping



Electronic cigarettes produce an aerosol by heating a liquid that typically contains nicotine, THC, flavorings, and other chemicals. The aerosol is then inhaled into the lungs. Use of an electronic cigarette is often called “vaping”.

Dangers of underage vaping

A 2022 study found that over 2 mil teens (middle & high school students) reported using vapes

Brains continue developing until around age 26

Vapes can impact the brain’s development in young people

Young people are more likely to get addicted

Risks associated with vaping products

Teens think vaping is less dangerous than smoking cigarettes

Nicotine is highly addictive

Cancer causing chemicals

Increase in anxiety/depression

Affects memory, focus, and concentration

Causes lung damage

Opioids



Definition of Opioids: According to The Department of Public Health, Opioids are powerful prescription painkillers. They are controlled substances. Examples include Oxycontin, Percocet, Vicodin and Fentanyl. While they are effective if used properly, they are highly addictive and can be misused leading to dangerous consequences.

Dangers and Effects of Opioids

- Accidents and/or injuries (lowers response/reaction time, causes drowsiness)
- Addiction (can lead to use of Heroin)
- Overdose and possible death (lowers heart rate and respiratory rate)
- Long term use damages liver

Know the Signs of Opioid use

- Pills or med bottles missing from your home(keep them locked)
- Taking meds in excess to how prescribed/needing refills too early (Monitor use)
- Dramatic mood changes
- Drastic financial changes
- Lower grades, changes in friends, changes in sleep, loss of interest in activities
- Loss of concern about appearance
- Fatigue, confusion, weight loss, slurred speech, dizziness, change in pupil size(constrict/pinpoint)



Immediate Effects of Drinking

- ## Long Term Effects of Drinking

- High blood pressure
- Stroke
- Seizures
- Heart-related diseases
- Liver disease
- Nerve damage
- Brain Damage
- Cancer: various types
- Coma
- Death

Risk Factors

- Being around family or friends who use drugs
- Not being involved in healthy activities
- Disengagement from school/education
- Difficult family situations:
 - Lack of rules, supervision (or too much)
 - Negative communication
- Mental health challenges





Unsupervised

**Peers using
drugs/alcohol**

**Drugs/alcohol
accessible at home**

**Access to commonly
misused prescription
drugs**

Peer pressure

**Lack of knowledge
about dangers of
substance use**

Identifying Risky Situations

WARNING SIGNS to look for

Behavioral

- Inability to focus
- Problems in school or with authority
- Lying and deceiving
- Mood swings and instability
- Hyperactivity or lethargy
- Loss of inhibitions
- Indifference to family or obligations
- Unexplained guilt
- Depression
- Decline of self-esteem
- Self-hatred, which may lead to self-mutilation

Physical

- Bloodshot eyes
- Flushed skin
- Track marks or abscesses
- Weight loss or gain
- Impaired speech or coordination
- Unusual smell in breath or clothing
- Inability to sleep
- Poor hygiene

Prevention Strategy: Communication

- ❖ **LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN:** Most important part of communication is listening. Children are more likely to be open if they feel heard, so make sure to pay close attention, ask for clarification, and reflect what they say to you during the conversation.
- ❖ **BE CLEAR AND SPECIFIC:** Make your rules and expectations easy to understand and concise. Do not be vague about what you're asking.
- ❖ **AVOID "DEMONIZING":** Avoid judging/vilifying drug usage if possible. If the child feels too judged, they may not open up, and may simply continue potential misuse behind your back.
- ❖ **BE FACTUAL:** A good way to avoid "demonization". Look up research and take an informative approach. Present the facts of drug misuse to the child, inform them of the likely consequences.
- ❖ **BE THE EXPERT:** You know your child best! Take all communication advice and use it in the context of your own child/parenting style. Own your expertise!

Prevention Strategy: Refusal Skills & Peer Pressure



- ❖ Peer Pressure may not be avoidable, but it can be managed!
- ❖ **EXPLAIN:** Using a respectful, non judgmental tone on why you cannot participate. No matter the reason, make sure it's explained clearly.
- ❖ **PERSIST:** Should peers continue to push, remain firm and persistent. Repeat any explanations if necessary.
- ❖ **REDIRECT:** If possible (depending on the peer relationship), explore other options or suggest other activities to try.
- ❖ **EXIT:** Should all else fail, remove yourself from the situation entirely. If the peers cannot understand and continue to push, then leaving is always the best option. Evaluate the relationship if necessary.



Parental Role in Prevention of Substance Misuse

The parental role is a key factor in your child's decision not to use substances. There is no guarantee however, being active in your child's life by spending time together, providing guidance, clearly stating the rules, and not misusing substances yourself will help reduce your child's likelihood of using.

- ❖ Role of Parents
 - POWERFUL
 - Decrease chances of drug use
- ❖ Positive Relationship
 - Warm Conversations
 - Spending Time
 - Build Self-Esteem
- ❖ Expectation/Boundaries
 - State Clearly
 - Explain Why
 - Enable Independence



SEEKING HELP

DO NOT WAIT!

The sooner you get help for substance use the better the outcome. There are a variety of options available. It is best to speak with your child's doctor to determine the best treatment options.

Local Substance Use Programs

- Primary Care Doctor
- SAMHSA's National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- Behavioral Health Network, Inc. /Address: 417 Liberty St, Springfield, MA 01104 | Phone: (413) 747-0705
- Phoenix House Springfield /Address: 5 Madison Ave, Springfield, MA 01105 | Phone: (888) 671-9392
- CleanSlate Outpatient Addiction Medicine /Address: 900 Memorial Ave, West Springfield, MA 01089 | Phone: (413) 788-0100
- Springfield Comprehensive Treatment Center /Address: 511 E Columbus Ave, Springfield, MA 01105 | Phone: (413) 923-6747
- Right Choice Health Group LLC /Address: 125 Liberty St #205, Springfield, MA 01103 | Phone: (413) 271-7136
- AdCare Outpatient Facility, Springfield /Address: 117 Park Ave, West Springfield, MA 01089 | Phone: (866) 801-1592
- Hope Center Inpatient Services /Address: 35 Heywood St, Springfield, MA 01104 | Phone: (413) 747-0705

Hampden Charter School of Science

Mandatory Drug Testing Policy

- All members of the HCSS community contribute to helping every student reach their full potential in a safe and secure environment
- Drug and alcohol usage can have terrible results in teenage years
- Abstaining from drug use during adolescent years reduces likelihood of addiction later in life
- Collaborative effort with parents to combat drug and alcohol abuse among young people
- Helping parents ensure their children's safety
- Young people may lack the maturity to resist peer influence and say "No"
- Education/medical/health approach to help students decide not to use or abuse substances
- Teachers and counselors will educate students about substance use and abuse
- Atmosphere of knowledge, confidence, and trust will encourage students to seek help for substance abuse
- Comprehensive 6-12 health curriculum addresses substance abuse issue.



Mandatory Drug Testing Policy

Any evidence of, use, possession, or intent to sell, distribute, or transfer drugs or unlawful controlled substances, including marijuana, on the school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, shall warrant suspension or possible expulsion. M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H. Furthermore, any evidence of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol shall warrant suspension or possible expulsion pursuant to the Code of Conduct. M.G.L. Chapter 71 § 37H3/4.

In addition, any such evidence shall require the student to undergo Mandatory Drug Testing pursuant to this policy.

When and How?

The student will be required to take drug/marijuana/alcohol testing in a school-approved lab(Quest Diagnostic Lab in Springfield),paid by school, within 24 hours if

- the student is found with drugs, or unlawful controlled substances, including marijuana or alcohol, in possession, among property, or if there is reasonable suspicion to give rise to a reasonable belief that the student has drugs, or unlawful controlled substances, including marijuana or alcohol, in their system **based on the school nurse, counselor, and school administrator's assessment.**

Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, among other things:

- conduct that indicates the presence of drugs or alcohol in an individual's system, including affected behavior, slurred speech, physical appearance (including eye abnormalities such as whether they are red, glassy, or bloodshot), physical coordination, or body odors; and
- other behavior or physical findings that would indicate that an individual is in other than a sober and reliable state, free from the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Testing may include hair samples, saliva samples, or other tests. The lab sends the results directly to the school, and parents will be notified.

A refusal to submit to or attempt to falsify a test required by the Policy or to be searched by the school administration will be deemed as a positive test and substance use violation with the accompanying consequences as set forth in the Policy.



Positive Result and First Offense

- Upon receipt of a positive test, the student may face the disciplinary consequences, including suspension or expulsion from the school and extra-curricular/co-curricular activities according to the school code of conduct and the state law, M.G.L. Chapter 71, §§37H and 37H3/4.
- The first positive test will result in
 - A meeting with the parent(s) or guardian(s), the affected student, and the Director or designee to discuss the drug/alcohol test findings.
 - The student will be required to undergo an immediate assessment by an alcohol/substance abuse professional or drug treatment center in Appendix A or approved by the Director to get a clearance.
 - The student will be required to complete a school-provided online course when they return to school.



Second Offense

- A second positive test will result in
 - a meeting with the parent(s) or guardian(s), the affected student, and the Director to discuss the drug test findings.
 - In addition, a second violation will require the student to undergo an assessment with follow-up treatment as recommended by a drug treatment center or drug counselor in Appendix A or approved by the Director.
 - This assessment and treatment must commence within 30 days of the discovery of the positive drug test finding. The substance abuse professional shall be required to advise the school if the student fails to follow the treatment plan, in which case the student will face disciplinary consequences.
 - The student may be asked to submit to follow-up testing, consisting of three mandatory tests. If the student shows evidence of continued use during this period, they will face further disciplinary consequences, including long-term suspension/expulsion.



Drug Counseling Programs

1. Behavioral Health Network, Inc. /Address: 417 Liberty St, Springfield, MA 01104 | Phone: (413) 747-0705
2. Phoenix House Springfield /Address: 5 Madison Ave, Springfield, MA 01105 | Phone: (888) 671-9392
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Questions?
Comments?

Resources

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/tween-and-teen-health/in-depth/teen-drug-abuse/art-20045921>

<https://www.cdc.gov/dotw/substance-use-disorders/index.html><https://www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/extension/publications/parents-role-substance-use-prevention-tips-talking-youth-all-ages#:~:text=Youth%20are%20less%20likely%20to,prevention%20of%20youth%20substance%20abuse.>

<https://casapalmera.com/blog/the-effects-of-drug-abuse-on-teens/>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/Drug-Abuse-Prevention-Starts-with-Parents.aspx>

<https://drugfree.org/article/6-practical-parenting-tips/>

<https://www.kflaph.ca/en/healthy-living/what-parents-can-do-about-teens-and-substance-use.aspx>

<https://www.accada-rap.org/blog/2021/11/02/drug-and-alcohol-prevention-tips-for-parents-of-teens>

<https://childmind.org/article/teen-vaping-what-you-need-to-know/>

<https://www.franciscanhealth.org/community/blog/why-vaping-is-dangerous-for-teens>

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

<https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets.htm>

<https://www.sfdr-cisd.org/media/Okkoxqxd/drugpowerpoint-without-date.pdf>

<https://www.drugfreeworld.org/drugfacts/alcohol/short-term-long-term-effects.html>

<https://www.mass.gov/stopaddiction>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/teens-and-drugs-5-tips-for-talking-with-your-kids-2018081614565>

<https://www.bayviewrecovery.com/rehab-blog/drug-refusal-skills/>