



Research shared by MADD® shows that **75% of teens** report parents are the leading influence on their decisions about drugs, including alcohol.

And that children begin to consider the pros and cons of drinking alcohol **at age 8**.

Having clearly stated parental values and clear family rules and consequences is proven to reduce the amount of risk teens take.

Your kids are listening.

Parent/Teen Agreement

Family Rules on Vaping

Family Rules on Alcohol

Family Rules on Marijuana

Consequences for breaking a family rule:

I promise to live according to our family rules.

Sign here.

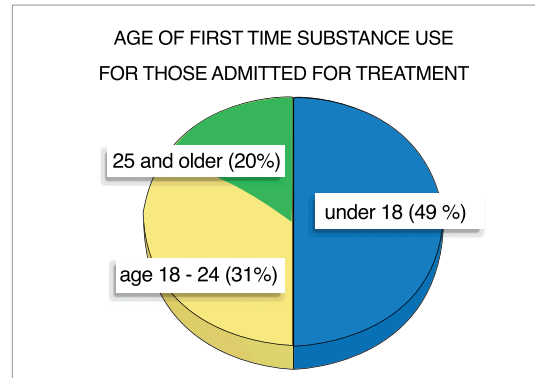
Need more space? Go ahead and grab another paper.



Want to prevent dependence on substances?

Waiting a few years greatly reduces the likelihood of dependence on alcohol and other addictive substances.

Eighty percent (80%) of all people in treatment for substance use began using addictive substances before age 25 (when human brains are fully developed). Almost half started before age 18.

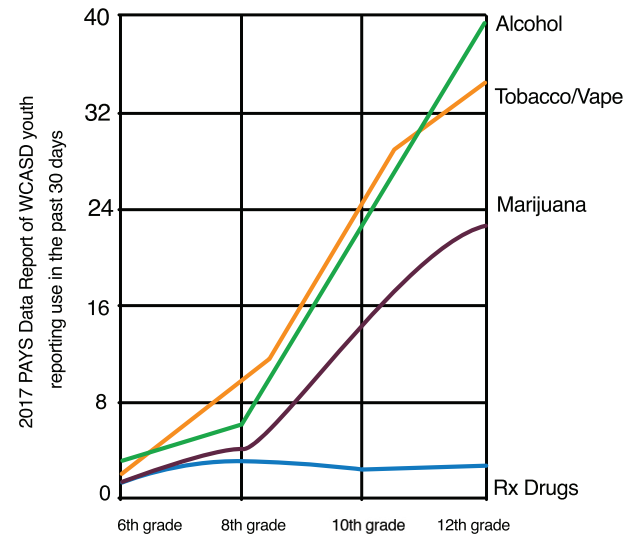


Source: SAMHSA 2017 Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS)

Want to LEARN more or DO more?

- Help youth find their natural highs. Run, jump, climb, go outside, cook, draw, write, create anything, act, sing, dance, be in nature. Try one or try them all.
- Visit us on Facebook for facts, myths and handy tips on raising kids to be resilient. [facebook.com/WestChesterAreaCommunitiesthatCare](https://www.facebook.com/WestChesterAreaCommunitiesthatCare)
- Stay engaged with your children, even through years when you think they've stopped listening. Contact us at mobilizer@wcctc.org to schedule a Power of Parents® presentation for your local group.
- Help teens develop grit and resilience through the Youth Mentoring Project. youthmp.org
- Strengthen your whole family. Contact us at mobilizer@wcctc.org to learn about local youth, parent and whole family programs.
- Visit parentingwisely.com for parenting tips.

YOUTH BEHAVIOR TRENDS



The Good News

Flip the statistics above to see that **76%** of 10th graders are not regularly drinking or using nicotine products. Remind your kids of the facts. Not everyone is doing it.

About the Research

The PA Youth Survey (PAYS) is a statewide survey given every two years to students in 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades with the intent to provide targeted data for communities to design and implement prevention strategies best suited to their own community's needs.

Using PAYS data, the Communities that Care (CTC) model was implemented in partnership with West Chester Area School District in 1998. This relationship allows CTC to study trends among youth in behavior and perceptions around alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, prescription drugs and some mental health topics.

This snapshot of the PAYS statistics offers valuable information with which to have ongoing, intentional conversations with youth about substance use. Contact us for more information on CTC or the PAYS Data.

wcctc.org
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484-266-1232

West Chester Area Communities that Care is made possible through grants from Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol and CCRES.

What are your children doing?

**It
 PAYS
 to
 KNOW**

A Parents' Guide to Prevent Teen Substance Use





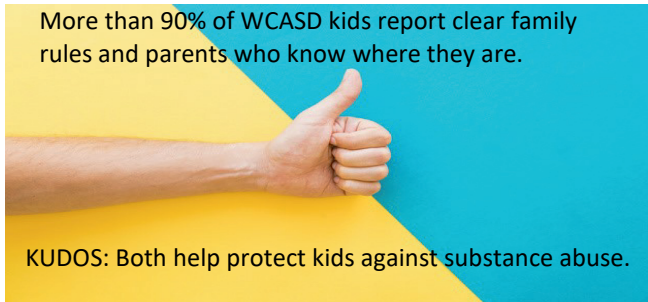
West Chester Statistics...

...About ALCOHOL

- **57%** of kids know adults who have gotten drunk or high.
- Home access to drugs and alcohol accounts for **2/3** of all teenage use.
- # of middle school binge drinkers is low (2%), but has doubled since 2015.

Why We Care

- The younger a person starts drinking, the more problems they are likely to have with alcohol later in life.
- Research in the US and Europe shows that introduction of alcohol in the home increases the likelihood of alcohol use and related problems in later years.



More than 90% of WCASD kids report clear family rules and parents who know where they are.

KUDOS: Both help protect kids against substance abuse.

Pro Tips

- Guard your language. Phrases like: "I need/deserve a drink." suggest that alcohol solves a problem.
- Find healthy ways to celebrate special occasions.
- Keep track of and/or lock up your alcohol.
- Model responsible behavior. Adult actions influence teen behavior. Period.
- Remind your kids that the majority of West Chester area teens are NOT drinking alcohol.
- In lieu of tracking apps, discuss plans directly with your teen and other parents. This way they'll see your commitment to them in action.

...About VAPING

- **43%** of kids who vape are now vaping nicotine as compared to 20% in 2015.
- **16%** of WCASD youth users are vaping marijuana.

Why We Care

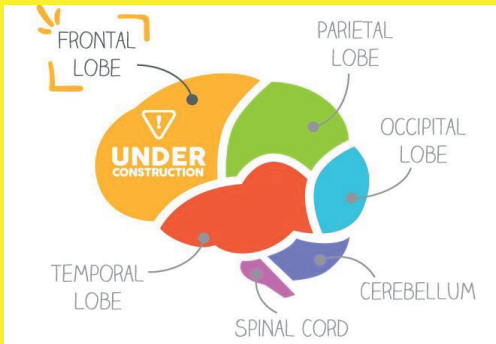
- The signature puff of all vapes comes from chemicals that our lungs are not made to handle.
- The most popular vape pen, the JUUL, holds 50mg of nicotine, an amount equal to an entire pack of cigarettes.
- Unsuspecting teens are being sold drug laced cartridges, increasing their exposure to other drugs and addiction.

Pro Tips

- Monitor online purchases. Teens often use family accounts to purchase vape products.
- Remind teens that:
 - Vape companies are in the business of selling nicotine.
 - Nicotine is addictive.
 - Vape pens, also known as Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) remain unregulated.
 - Vape companies often target youth to gain lifelong customers.

The Teen Brain

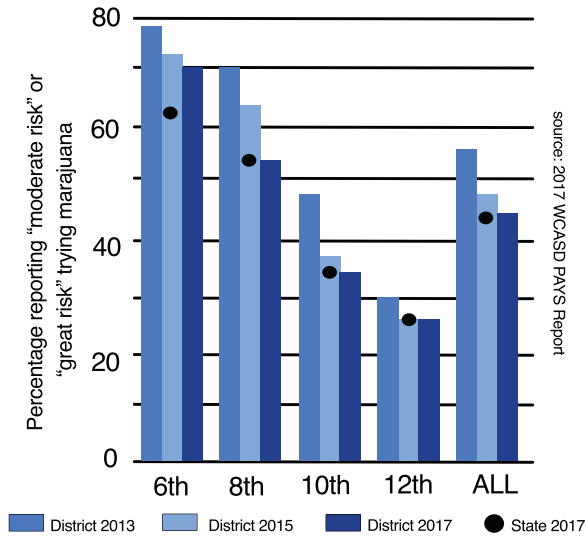
Under construction until the mid-20s



Young brains are more susceptible to addiction.

...About MARIJUANA

- WCASD 12th graders are **3x** more likely to drive after marijuana use than alcohol.
- The amount of risk WCASD youth associate with marijuana use has dropped **11%** in just four years.



Why We Care

- Legalization makes marijuana use seem less risky. However, it is still incredibly risky for teens.
- Addictive THC in marijuana is sometimes confused with non-addictive CBD, also from the cannabis plant.
- Studies from CA and CO prove that social acceptance leads to increased use and increased related problem behaviors.
- Social acceptance reduces the chance that kids will seek help for themselves or others.

Pro Tips

- Include marijuana in your discussions about impaired driving.
- Distinguish between non-addictive CBD and addictive THC components of marijuana.
- Remind teens that all addictive substances are harmful for developing brains.

...About PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

- **KUDOS:** Over the last two years recreational Rx drug use has gone down in all grade levels.
- **100%** of 6th graders who do try Rx drugs recreationally, get them from home.

Why We Care

- The rate of recreational Rx drug use, including opioids, goes up considerably in ages 18-24.

Pro Tips

- Lock up or dispose of Rx medications.
- Visit www.chesco.org/2673/Medication-Drop-Off to find a nearby place for safe disposal.

...About MENTAL HEALTH

- WCASD teens' level of depression is **10% below** the state average.
- Still, **27%** of WCASD teens feel sad or depressed most days.



Why We Care

- According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 6 in 10 substance abusers also have a mental health disorder.
- Substance use can be a warning sign of underlying anxiety or depression.

Pro Tips

- Use kind words and validation every day. It's a great way to help fabulous teens through difficult years.
- Introduce your teens to healthy coping strategies like spending time outdoors, journaling, exercise and mindfulness.
- Teach consistent gratitude. It's shown to have a direct link to overall life satisfaction.