

Increasing Student Wellness:

Info and Tips from Communities That Care of Lorain County

This Article is paid for by Communities That Care of Lorain County

Facts about Marijuana and Lorain County Youth

In 2016, Communities That Care of Lorain County surveyed 2231 students from 13 public school districts in Lorain County. Substance use is down, in Lorain County and nationally, for youth! Still concerning, however, is that the perception of risk for substances, especially marijuana, is decreasing. This finding means that less students feel that it is risky to use marijuana. The perception of risk drops significantly from 8th to 10th grade. Only half of 10th graders report perception that using marijuana is dangerous. In addition, only 86% of 10th graders perceive that their parents feel that marijuana use is a risk. When students are using marijuana, the survey finds that they are using at a friend's house on the weekends. Over 35% of 10th graders feels that marijuana is fairly easy or very easy to get.

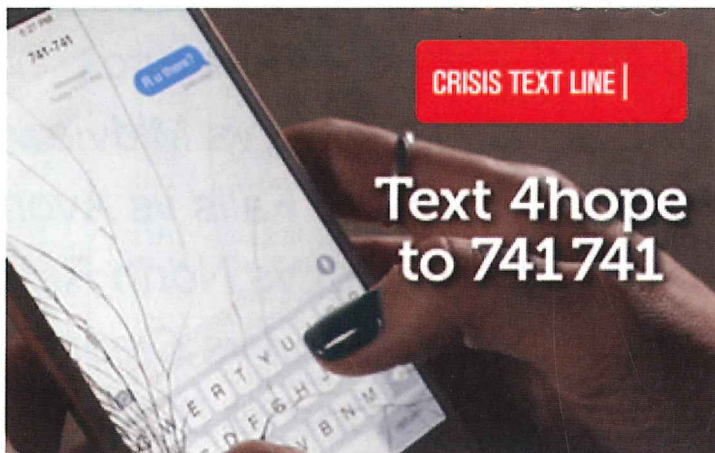
Tips for parents:

- Educate yourself on the risks of substance use for teens
- Talk with your kids about the dangers of using drugs and alcohol
- Set clear rules and expectations
- Encourage participation in school and community activities

Tips for Healthy Lorain County Kids:

Lorain County youth are spending an increased amount of time on electronic devices. Reports of screen time of five or more hours on a school day increase from 15% of 6th graders to over 30% for 10th graders. This screen time does not include school work. Examples include social media, video games, and streaming videos — all factors that can impact a young person's mental health. Screen time takes time away from engaging in physical activity, making good grades, school activities, and community engagement.

The good news is that the majority of Lorain County students are getting some physical activity throughout the week. Over half of 6th, 8th, and 10th graders are getting five or more days of physical activity a week, and less than 10% are getting zero days for all three grades. This is a great sign because physical activity is a protective factor for the overall wellness of the child. The positive factor of physical activity is



You are not alone

stable across all grades and is something that students are already highly engaged in.

Another measure of wellness is healthy eating behavior. We are seeing higher fruit and vegetable consumption in the younger students - almost 20% of 6th graders are reporting four or more fruit and vegetable servings a day. Unfortunately, consumption falls for both fruits and vegetables for 8th through 10th graders.

Tips:

- Limit screen time and encourage participation in school and community activities
- Encourage youth to find physical activities that they enjoy and can participate in regularly
- Offer fruits and vegetables as

snack choices. Older adolescents tend to grab what is easy. Help make the healthy choice the easy choice!

“Not my kid”: Protect your family from a suicide tragedy

Your child is active in sports. Healthy. Happy. Connected. When you see reports about youth suicide, you think, “Not my kid.” The truth is, many parents who have lost their children to suicide have thought the same thing.

With social media and TV shows that graphically depict suicide, our kids are thinking about, talking about, and even attempting suicide at younger ages. In Lorain County, 9% of sixth grade students reported attempting suicide in the last year. Kids are NOT talking to parents about this. Only 14.5% of sixth graders who reported feeling depressed or suicidal also said they discussed this with a parent, and that percentage gets lower the older a kid gets.

It is time for parents to be part of the suicide conversation. Asking about suicide does not “plant a seed.” Find out more about how to ask your son or daughter “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” and the reasons it is important by watching these videos:

Not My Kid: www.sptsusa.org/not-my-kid

It Doesn't Hurt to Ask: bit.ly/askvideo

Enter the free, confidential Crisis Text Line (741741) into your child's phone, and encourage them to use it when they need to talk to someone, but they don't feel comfortable talking to you.

Find local resources through the Lorain County Board of Mental Health at lcbmh.org or call 1-800-888-6161.

Communities That Care



of Lorain County