

Together For Jackson County Kids

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Smokeless Tobacco: Popular with Young People and Just as Dangerous as Cigarettes

According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, since 1970, smokeless or chewing tobacco has gone from a product used primarily by older men to one used predominantly by young men and boys. This trend has occurred as smokeless tobacco promotions have increased dramatically and a new generation of smokeless tobacco products has hit the market. Far from being a “safe” alternative to cigarette smoking, smokeless tobacco use increases the risk of developing many health problems. Furthermore, evidence shows that adolescent boys who use smokeless tobacco products have a higher

risk of becoming cigarette smokers within four years. Despite some recent declines in youth chewing tobacco use, 13.4% of US high school boys and 2.3% of high school girls currently use smokeless tobacco products. In some states, smokeless tobacco use among high school boys is particularly high, including Kentucky (26.7%), Montana (20.3%), Oklahoma (24.8%), Tennessee (22.8%), West Virginia (27.0%), and Wyoming (21.3%). Smokeless tobacco use can lead to oral cancer, gum disease, and nicotine addiction; and it increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, including heart attacks. More specifically:

Smokeless tobacco causes leukoplakia, a disease of the mouth characterized by white patches and oral lesions on the cheeks, gums, and/or tongue. Seeing the downward trend in smoking rates and the increasing popularity of smokeless tobacco products, cigarette companies have released their own smokeless tobacco products that draw on the brand names of their popular cigarettes to attract new users. As concerned adults, it is our job to inform students of the harmful nature of these products and let them know that they are just as bad as smoking.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

March 3-Tobacco Free Coalition Meeting 11:30 at Black River Memorial Hospital

March 25– Town Hall Meeting

April 7– Tobacco Free Coalition Meeting 11:30am at Black River Memorial Hospital

April 16-TFJCK Quarterly Meeting

Safe Dates is a research-based adolescent dating violence prevention program. It has been identified as a Model Program in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) as well as many other federal- and foundation funded publications. The curriculum targets both middle and high school students who have never experienced dating violence as well as students who have experienced dating violence. Safe Dates focuses on the prevention of dating violence and strategies to stop violence in their dating relationships.

The Safe Dates program consists of five components: a nine-session curriculum, a play script, a poster contest, parent materials, and a teacher-training outline. The goals of the program are to:

- Raise students' awareness of what constitutes healthy and abusive dating relationships.
- Raise students' awareness of dating abuse and its causes and consequences.
- Equip students with the skills and resources to help themselves or friends in abusive dating relationships.
- Equip students with the skills to develop healthy dating relationships,

The Safe Dates nine-session curriculum targets

attitudes and behaviors associated with dating abuse and violence. Each session is approximately fifty minutes in length. The curriculum also has suggestions for a six-session or four-session program.

The curriculum sessions include:

Session 1: Defining Caring Relationships

Session 2: Defining Dating Abuse

Session 3: Why Do People Abuse?

Session 4: How To Help Friends

Session 5: Helping Friends

Session 6: Overcoming Gender Stereotypes

Session 7: Equal Power Through Communication

Session 8: How We Feel, How We Deal

Session 9: Preventing Sexual Assault

As part of the Safe Dates program, the curriculum includes a forty-five-minute play about dating abuse and violence, which was written by high school drama students. Along with a scripted play, the curriculum also includes a poster contest to reinforce the concepts learned in the curriculum. Other

Marijuana is Still the Most Abused Illicit Drug

With all the headlines about methamphetamine, prescription drugs and club drugs, it might be hard to believe that marijuana is still actually the most abused drug in America. Unfortunately, many people don't see marijuana as a "hard" drug, and many people seem to think it cannot lead to addiction. That's just not true. According to experts at the National Institutes of Health, long-term marijuana abuse can lead to addiction; that is, compulsive drug seeking and abuse despite its known harmful effects upon social functioning in the context of family, school, work, and recreational activities. Long-term marijuana abusers trying to quit report irritability, sleeplessness, decreased appetite, anxiety, and drug craving, all of which make it difficult to quit. These withdrawal symptoms begin within about one day following abstinence, peak at two–three days, and subside within one or two weeks following drug cessation.

Research clearly demonstrates that marijuana has the potential to cause problems in daily life or make a person's existing problems worse. In one study, heavy marijuana abusers reported that the drug impaired several important measures of life achievement including physical and mental health, cognitive abilities, social life, and career status. Several studies associate workers' marijuana smoking with increased absences, tardiness, and other problems. Like other addictions, marijuana addiction requires treatment.

Victims of bullying face lingering health issues

David Goodman remembers the dread he felt as a kid getting ready to leave for school each morning. A chubby 12-year-old at the time, he knew he'd be taunted with his hated nickname, "Chunk," all through the day. He also knew that the harassment wouldn't be limited to name-calling. The neighborhood bullies would always be thinking up ingenious new ways to torment a quiet, sensitive kid — such as the time they stole his bike and tossed it up on top of a jungle gym.

Like many parents of her generation, Goodman's mom thought the solution was to tell him to learn to stick up for himself. That advice never helped. What ultimately brought an end to the bullying was a growth spurt — he shot up 6 inches in the eighth grade — and success on his junior high football team.

A 42-year-old state senator from Columbus, Ohio, Goodman now looks back and says he's found an upside to all that bullying: it made him tougher and at the same time more empathetic to the suffering of others. But, he says, "some 30 odd years later, it still hurts."

Although people like Goodman can sometimes find a positive outcome to the bullying they endured as children, there is now mounting evidence that many are left with scars — in terms of poorer mental and physical health — that can last a

Stressing the mind and body

When the brain senses a threat, it activates your fight-or-flight response. That sparks an increase in hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, priming your body for action. Your heart speeds up, your muscles tense, your blood vessels narrow and your digestive system slows down. When your body is kept on high alert for long periods of time, tense muscles can become painful, while your stomach can start to ache.

Carie Maeshiro, a 47-year-old administrator from Scottsdale, Ariz., says she has been battling for a year and a half to get her son's school to step in and protect 12-year-old Garrett from the group of boys that have been tormenting him.

Initially the bullying was limited to verbal abuse, says Maeshiro. But it's escalated over time. Some days the boys follow Garrett home and pelt him with dirt clods.

Recently the group's ringleader kicked Garrett and warned, "I'm going to bust you up."

Experts say there are some things parents can do to help their child while pushing the school to do more.

One strategy that won't work is telling your child to stand up for himself and fight back, says Alan E. Kazdin, a professor of psychology at Yale University and director of Yale's Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic. If you tell your child to stand up for himself, you're just going to make him feel more isolated and alone, Kazdin says. "It's one of the more insensitive responses, because you're telling the child to do something he knows he can't do."

Bullies are very sophisticated in their choice of who and where to bully, Kazdin says. "They choose the child who by nature is less likely to be able to fight back. They hit when they know the teachers can't see them."

What parents can do is to help develop their child's confidence, Kazdin says. The best way to do that is to encourage them to get good at something they're interested in, for instance, joining the school band or trying out for the cross-country team.

Parents also need to remember to help repair the damage that bullying does to a child's self-esteem, says Pollack. "You need to tell the child that this isn't happening because there's something wrong with him."

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/35020704/ns/health-kids_and_parenting/

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Our Mission

Together For Jackson County Kids, a countywide partnership of concerned citizens, is committed to enhancing community wellness by promoting positive values and choices and eliminating the negative impact of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, violence and related youth risk behaviors. We draw upon private, public, adult and youth resources.

News and Notes

We're on Facebook! Together For Jackson County Kids have recently made a group on the Facebook network. There are discussions and notices for members about what is happening for the coalition. Please contact Danielle if you are interested in joining the group. (You must be a Facebook member in order to join).

I'm interested in more information on Together for Jackson County Kids

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Agency/Organization _____

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