



SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION

WHAT WE CAN DO

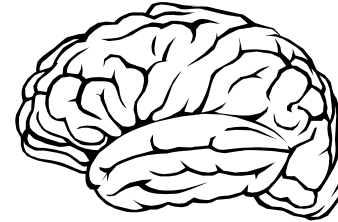
Parents doing all we can to keep our children from developing
substance use disorders



AGENDA

Questions we will answer

- What is a substance use disorder?
- What can we do as parents to protect our children from developing a substance use disorder?
- What are some signs that my child is using substances?
- What are the local resources available to help our family?



Fact

A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD) IS A MENTAL DISORDER THAT AFFECTS A PERSON'S BRAIN AND BEHAVIOR, LEADING TO A PERSON'S INABILITY TO CONTROL THEIR USE OF SUBSTANCES SUCH AS LEGAL OR ILLEGAL DRUGS, ALCOHOL, OR MEDICATIONS. SYMPTOMS CAN RANGE FROM MODERATE TO SEVERE, WITH ADDICTION BEING THE MOST SEVERE FORM OF SUDS.

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/substance-use-and-mental-health>

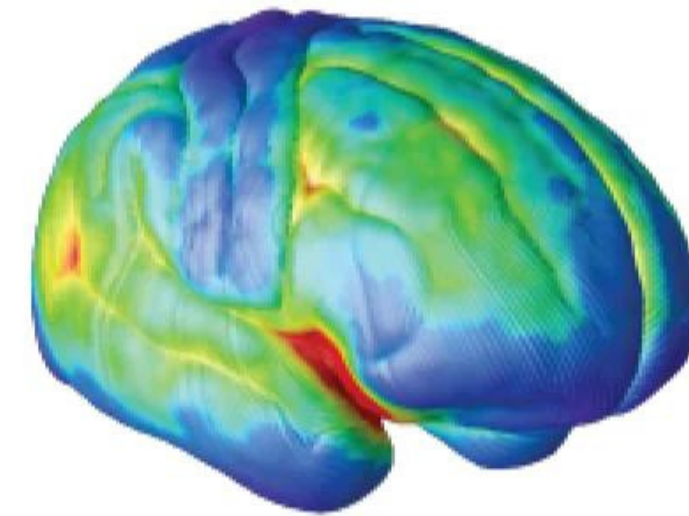
SUBSTANCES AND THE YOUTH BRAIN

The human brain continues to develop until about age 25

During adolescence, the reward-seeking side of the brain is fully developed. However, the part of the brain that inhibits potentially harmful activity is not fully developed.

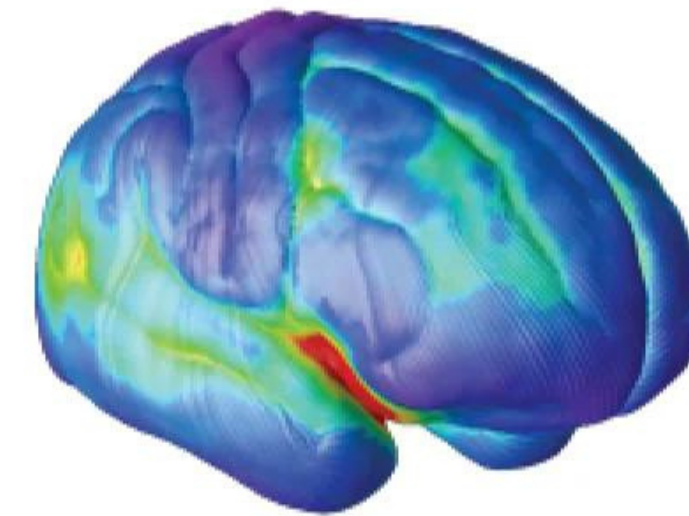
Use during adolescence releases serious amounts of dopamine. Dopamine helps form habits- healthy or unhealthy- because it connects the experience with the pleasure or reward.

Substance use during this time affects the prefrontal cortex of the brain. This leads to Substance Use Disorder.



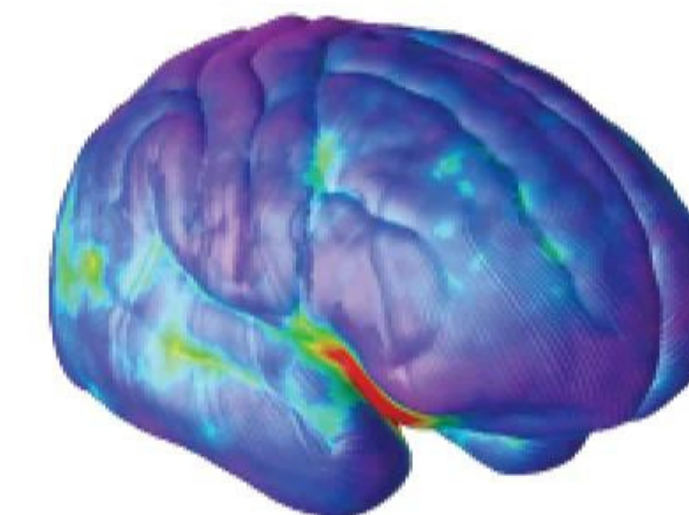
Age 12

During adolescence, the brain goes through a lot of changes. Gray matter diminishes as connections between neurons are cut back.



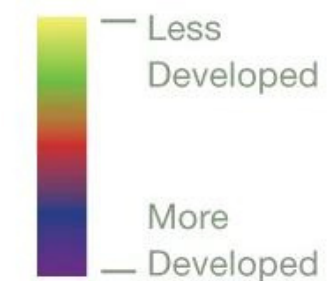
Age 16

Because the brain is still developing, it is more sensitive to the effects of drugs.



Age 20

By adulthood, the changes caused by beginning drug use are less likely to “stick” and become hardwired as addiction.



CONTINUUM OF CARE

Prevention comes *before* diagnosis

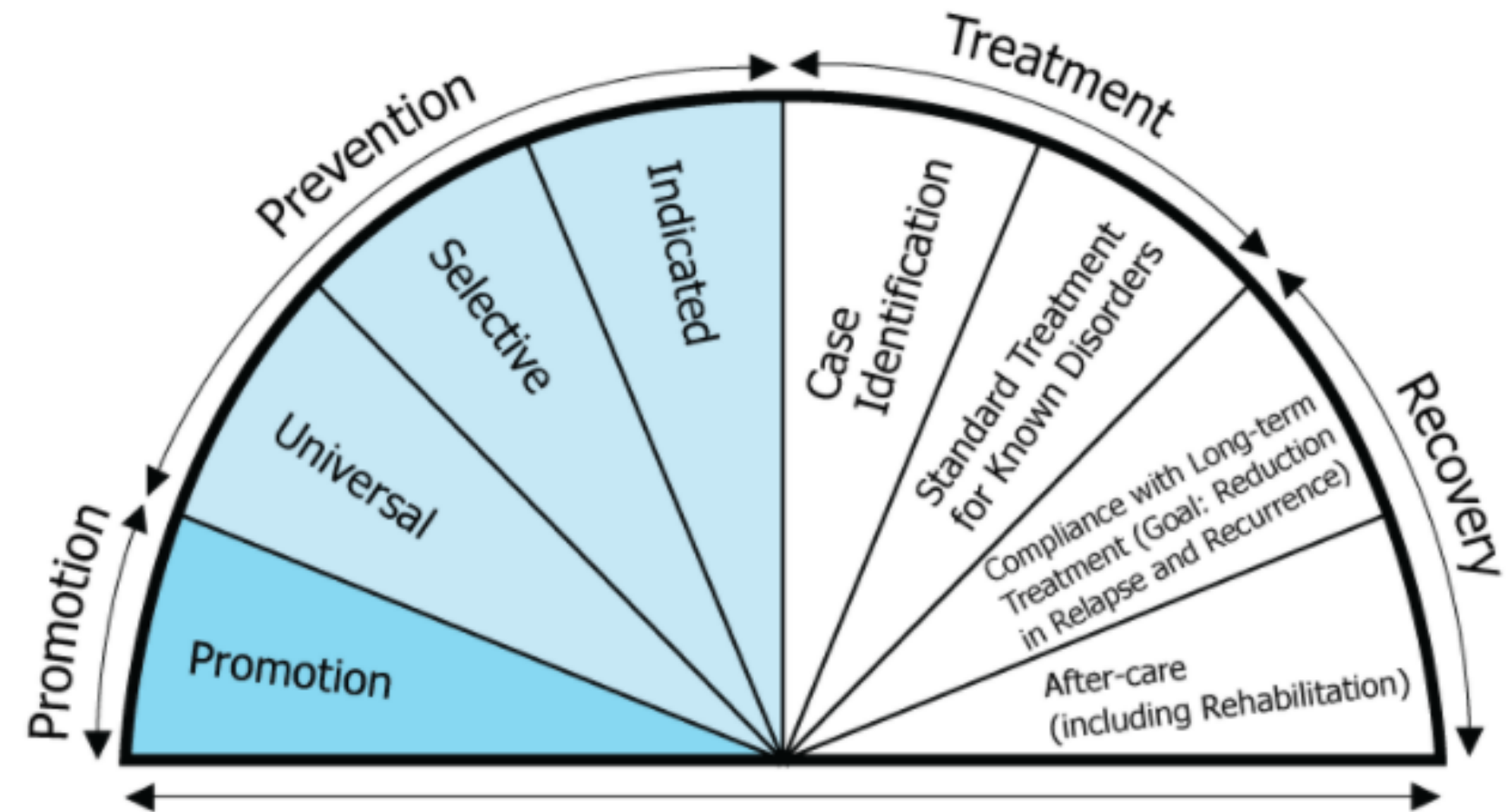
Once a person is diagnosed by a professional with a substance use disorder, their route for care is treatment and recovery.

Until that diagnosis, prevention methods are what would address the issue.

This means, youth that have tried drugs, but not developed a substance use disorder, can be helped with prevention methods.

We will talk more about what "prevention" means.

Behavioral Health Continuum of Care Model





UPRIVER PARABLE

WE CAN GO UPRIVER

As a community, and as parents

There are many things we know and understand about prevention. Prevention is a science. It is all about knowing those things that make it *less* likely for a child to choose drugs (protective factors). We also need to know those things that make it *more* likely a child will choose drugs (risk factors).

If we learn these things as parents, we can have a big impact on the road our children walk.

Believe it or not, parents are the most important influence on their children where this is concerned.

There are absolutely things that we **can** do as parents that will make a big difference.

Let's talk about what that looks like.





Tip #1

TALK EARLY AND OFTEN

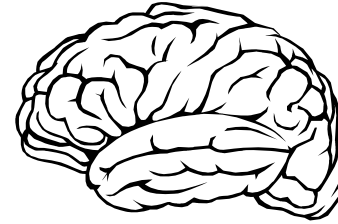
starttalkingnow.org/get-facts

In *Moses Lake*, **23%** of our students have started using some type of substances (cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana) by the time they are in 8th grade. That means, these conversations must begin much sooner than we would like. Often, parents feel like this topic is for "older kids," but the data shows us otherwise.

It's important that we learn all we can about why substances are harmful so we can teach our children at a young age not to use them while their brains are still developing.

The longer we can delay substance use, the better the chances they will not develop a substance use disorder.

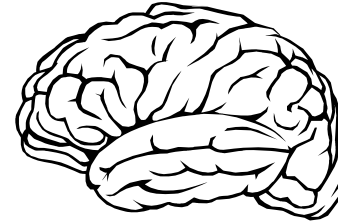
• Data from the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey



Fact

**MORE THAN 90% OF
PEOPLE WITH A
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER
BEGAN USING SUBSTANCES
BEFORE 18 YEARS OF AGE.**

addictioncenter.com



Fact

**DELAYING SUBSTANCE USE
TO AFTER AGE 21 REDUCES
CHANCES OF DEVELOPING
A SUBSTANCE USE
DISORDER TO 1 IN 25 (4%).**

addictioncenter.com



Tip #2

SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

starttalkingnow.org/parents

In *Moses Lake*, **38%** of our 8th graders said they did not think it was wrong to use substances and **47%** showed they do not understand the risk of use.

It is certain our children need us to set these types of boundaries. They do not naturally have an understanding of what risky behavior is.

We have to be very straightforward about the behavior we expect from them and make sure to have clear and consistent consequences. Remember, boundaries show we care.
Parents are the #1 influence in their children's lives.

• Data from the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey

Tip #3

SUPPORT HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

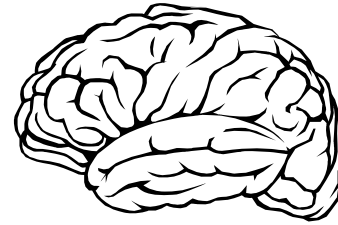
starttalkingnow.org/parents



In *Moses Lake*, **52%** of our 8th graders are familiar with activities in the community they can participate in. Being involved in healthy activities will reduce the likeliness of your child using substances because it brings a sense of belonging. Some activities here in Moses Lake include:

- Boys and Girls Club (young child to teens)
- Boy Scouts
- School Sports
- School Clubs
- Youth Dynamics
- Recreation Department Activities/Classes
- Choir/Band
- Local theater
- Skate Park/ City Parks

• Data from the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey



Fact

**BENEFITS OF TEENS GETTING INVOLVED IN
EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:**

- **IMPROVED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**
- **HIGHER SELF-ESTEEM**
- **ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS**
- **SOCIAL SKILLS**
- **ELEVATED MENTAL HEALTH**
- **BETTER COLLEGE/CAREER RESUMES**

crimsoneducation.org



Tip #4

PAY ATTENTION AND STAY INVOLVED

starttalkingnow.org/parents

In *Moses Lake*, **62%** of our 8th graders indicate their parents are involved in their day-to-day activities enough to know if they are participating in risky behavior.

It is important to *always* know what your children are doing, where they are going, and who they will be spending time with. Remember to ask these 5 questions:

- Where are you going?
- What will you be doing?
- Who will be with you?
- When will you be home?
- Will there be alcohol or drugs?



Tip #5

PRACTICE REFUSAL SKILLS

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In *Moses Lake*, **over half** of our 8th graders indicate they get the substances they use from friends. Being able to refuse offers for drugs and drug use is a great skill. Just like anything else, practice makes that skill more effective. Here are some ways your child could use refusal skills:

- Say "no thanks" (It seems too easy, but it can be effective)
- Give a reason, fact, or excuse- let them use you as an excuse, for example, "my mom just texted me, I have to go," or "my parents would ground me for life."
- Change the subject- "No, but let's go play Xbox."
- Use humor- "I need all the brain cells I can get. No thanks."
- Avoid the situation
- Strength in numbers- **surround yourself with friends that make good choices**

• [Data from the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey](#)



Tip #6

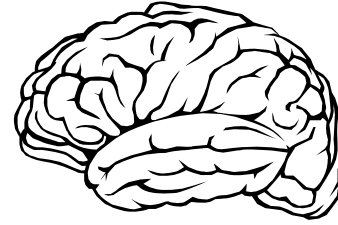
CREATE AN ESCAPE PLAN OR CODE

starttalkingnow.org/parents

In *Moses Lake*, **59%** of 8th graders feel like they have a trusting relationship with their parents. One way parents can support their children through these years where they might find themselves in risky situations, is by being their escape. When teens know that parents and other trusted adults will be there for them, they can make better decisions.

Come up with some type of text code your teen could send to you to let you know they need an escape route. Let them put the blame on you if need be. Let them know that you will be their getaway driver if they need you to.

• Data from the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey



Fact

SECURE ATTACHMENT IS WHERE A CHILD FEELS COMFORTED BY THE PRESENCE OF THEIR CAREGIVER. SECURELY ATTACHED CHILDREN FEEL PROTECTED AND THAT THEY HAVE SOMEONE TO RELY ON. RESEARCH SHOWS THAT THERE IS A LINK BETWEEN AN INSECURE ATTACHMENT AND SUBSTANCE USE.

Borhani, 2013



Tip #7

INTERVENE EARLY

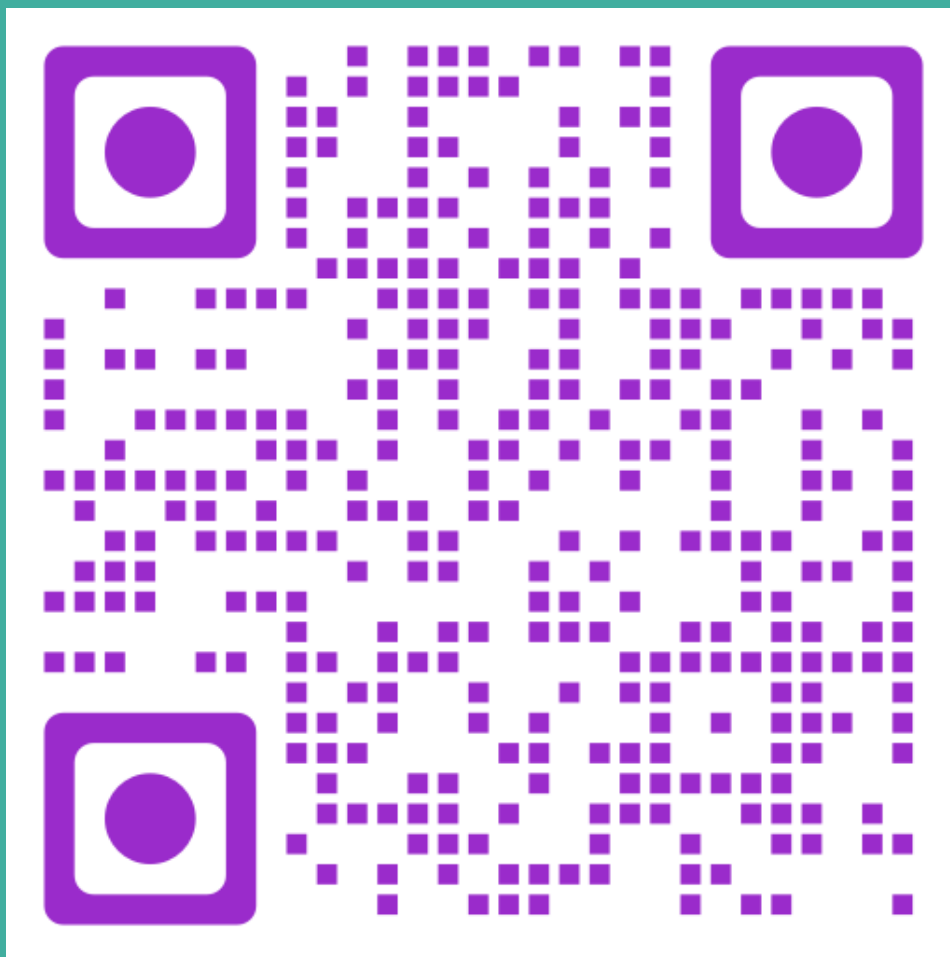
<https://drugfree.org/article/signs-of-drug-use-in-teens/>

In order to intervene right away if your child begins using substances, you have to know what to be on the lookout for. Here are some things to watch for:

Withdrawn, sullen, depressed
Unable to focus
Silent, uncommunicative
Hostile, angry, uncooperative
Change in relationships with family or friends
Loss of interest in school, work, other activities
Disappears for long periods of time
Secretive with their phone
Sores, spots around mouth
Sudden weight loss or gain
Grinding jaw

Less motivated
Avoids eye contact
Hyperactive
Making excuses
Unusually tired
Nosebleeds
Frequent sweating
Deceitful
Change in friends
Jittery/ anxious
Isolating

Remember, the earlier the person is treated, the better the outcomes.



Assessing my child for risk

PARTNERSHIP TO END ADDICTION

<https://drugfree.org/substance-use-risk-assessment/>

Survey: 5 - 6 minutes to complete

This risk assessment is designed to help you better understand the risks your child may face related to mental health, well-being, personality, family history, and their environment.

You can take actions to reduce the chances your child will use substances or experience problems with them based on your results.

The results will show you all of the risk factors your child is facing and give you ample resources and tips as to how to address each one.

LOCAL RESOURCES

Where to get help if I suspect my child is using drugs and how to learn more

- School Counselors/ Student Assistance Professional
- Renew Behavioral Health and Wellness: **call (509) 765-9239**
- Private Counselors
- Teen Link: **call** or **text** to: **866-833-6546**
- StartTalkingNow.org
- YouCanWa.org
- Drugabuse.gov
- Recovery Navigator Program- AdvanceNW.org
- Drugfree.org
- Moses Lake Community Coalition Facebook page

