



SCHOOL'S OUT: DON'T LET YOUR TEEN'S SUMMER GO TO POT

Summer can be a risky time for teens. More teens smoke marijuana for the first time in the summer months of June and July than any other time of the year. Every summer day, more than 5,800 teens try marijuana for the first time. This is equal to the enrollment of eight average-sized U.S. high schools.

Marijuana is more harmful than many parents think. It can lead to a host of health, social and behavioral problems at a crucial time in kids' lives when their bodies and brains are still developing. Marijuana can be addictive and more kids are in drug treatment for marijuana than for all other illicit drugs combined. Teens using marijuana are also more likely to take risks, such as having sex, engaging in violence, riding with someone who's driving high or using alcohol or other drugs.

So how can you stop your teen's summer from going to

pot? Here is a list of

S-U-M-M-E-R tips -- simple things parents (and adult influencers) can do and say to help prevent their teen from using marijuana this summer.

Set Rules

Let your child know that marijuana use is unacceptable. Two-thirds of kids say that upsetting their parents or losing the respect of family and friends is one of the main reasons they don't smoke marijuana or use other drugs. Set limits with clear consequences for breaking them. Praise and reward good behavior.

Understand and communicate

Take time to learn the facts about marijuana and talk to your teen about its harmful health, social, learning and mental effects on young users. The better YOU communicate, the more at



ease your child will feel about discussing drugs and other sensitive issues with you.

Monitor your kids activities and behaviors

Know where your teen will be and what they will be doing during unsupervised time. Research shows that teens with unsupervised time are three times more likely to use marijuana or other drugs. Unsupervised teens are also more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as underage drinking, sexual activity and cigarette smoking.

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10th Annual National HIV Testing Day

Each year, on June 27, the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) organizes National HIV Testing Day, in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resource and Services Administration, and other national and local

entities across the country. This unique and effective initiative sends the message to those at risk from those already living with HIV that there are powerful reasons for learning one's HIV status. Nearly one million Americans are living with HIV and more than 40 million

people around the world are infected. Scientific and public understanding of the disease has improved significantly. Better treatment and care options exist, and people living with HIV/AIDS are living longer than ever before.

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Make sure you stay involved in your teens life

Get to know your teen's friends and their parents by inviting them over for dinner or talking with them at your teen's social activities. Stay in touch with the adult supervisors of your child and have them inform you of any changes in your teen. Warning signs of drug use include distance from family and friends, hanging out with new friends, lack of interest in personal appearance, or changes in eating or sleeping habits.

Engage your teen in summer activities

Parents know their children best and are therefore in the best position to suggest healthy alternatives to doing drugs. Enroll your child in a supervised summer camp, educational program, or a summer sports league. Research shows that teens who are involved in constructive, adult-supervised activities are less likely to use drugs.



Reserve time for your family

Spend time together as a family regularly. The best way you can help your kids avoid destructive behavior is to spend time with them. Kids who are close to their parents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors.

For more tips on how you can keep your teen drug-free this summer, or for a list of fun family activities, visit the School's Out: Don't Let Your Kids Summer Go To Pot page at TheAntiDrug.com.

Harm Risk Reduction and Preventing Alcohol Misuse in Adolescence

On Friday June 16, 2006, Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services will be hosting a workshop on Harm Risk Reduction and Preventing Alcohol Misuse in Adolescence at the Child & Family Library, New London, CT from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Workshop Objectives :

1. Treatment must acknowledge and addressed.

2. A two-phase outpatient treatment, this approach combines group and individual sessions in an environment that is both comfortable and useful for the client.

3. Rather than using role-playing techniques to examine old behaviors, therapy is designed around storytelling activities.

It's important to recognize that drug and alcohol abusers are people like

you and me, and we as a society have to respect their individual dignity.

For more information or to register please call : 860-443-2896 ext. 1415 or email

pulaskir@CFapress.org.



What Parents Of Online Teens Need To Know

With the increasing popularity of social networking Web sites such as Myspace.com and Myyearbook.com, the Internet is flourishing as a virtual playground for teens. Parents commonly forbid their children from playing on real playgrounds without supervision; however, they aren't always as strict about the virtual equivalent.

MySpace claimed almost 5 million registered users in 2005, and that number has grown to exceed 70

million today. Though currently the most popular, MySpace is only one of a number of social networking sites online, and their attractiveness to teens and pre-teens has spawned worry over a growing Internet menace.

One in five kids ages 10 to 17 have received a sexual solicitation through the Internet, according to "Online Victimization: A Report on the Nation's Youth," a study conducted in 2000 by the National Cen-

ter for Missing and Exploited Children (NMCEC). In addition, almost half of the teens who use online chat systems have replied to messages from someone they didn't know, suggests a teen Internet survey conducted in March 2006. Continued search was funded by Cox Communications in partnership with NCMEC.

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National Family Month

National Family Month is an important step toward building a nation of confident kids and growing stronger and healthier families. The celebration was created by KidsPeace to raise awareness and underscore the importance of family -- kids, mothers, fathers, relatives and caregivers -- and to encourage supporting one another. Child-development experts have described "family" as "someone who has a strong emotional attachment to another." National Family Month provides an opportunity for families to share special time together, to develop or renew relationships, identify or rediscover needs, to remind everyone of the importance of family involvement in raising healthy, confident kids for America's future.

Grass roots organizations, clubs, schools, day cares, libraries and other groups across the country are celebrating National Family Month in their communities, and families are finding ways to spend meaningful time with each other.

Clinical studies indicate that the weeks prior to summer is a significant time period for families, and often when crises occur as kids prepare to conclude the school year and families adjust to being together again more often. Celebrated annually from

Mother's Day to Father's Day, National Family Month was created by KidsPeace not merely as a national observance, but as a vital annual event to focus on family relationships during this critical period, providing a specific opportunity for parents, grandparents or caregivers to be involved in the lives of their children.

National Family Month encourages family relationships and focuses on developing healthy, confident kids while emphasizing these themes:

HOME
Week One

"There's no place like home" Giving kids a safe and secure environment.

TRUST
Week Two

"Creating relationships with people kids can trust" Giving kids assurance, confidence, and people they can trust.

LOVE
Week Three

"The gift of unconditional love" Giving kids love, acceptance, appreciation and value.

FREEDOM
Week Four

"Encouraging kids to learn and grow" Giving kids freedom to grow and empowerment to discover their talents.

HOPE
Week Five

"A commitment to building strong families and growing confident

kids". Giving kids hope for the future, and celebrating their successes.

Other ways to enjoy National Family Month:

- Promote Celebration in your Community...
- Encourage your school, religious group, and community organizations to celebrate National Family Month.
- Write to your district U.S. Congressman, local and state representatives of Governor to ask for their recognition of National Family Month.
- Call your local radio or television station requesting them to announce the holiday.
- Schedule activities with your family - spend meaningful time together.

For more information on how to celebrate in your home and in your community, or to request an activity kit call toll 1-800-25-PEACE.



10th Annual National HIV Testing Day Continued

And while still inadequate to the huge need, government and community based programs have helped develop and fund systems of care, prevention, research, housing and other essential services. The epidemic has changed over the past two decades HIV/AIDS has increasingly become a major health threat for African-Americans, the Latino/a community, women, youth and the poor and disenfranchised.

Founded in 1983, the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA-US) is the oldest coalition of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world and the oldest U.S. national AIDS organization. NAPWA advocates on behalf of all people living with HIV and AIDS in order to end the pandemic and human suffering caused by HIV/AIDS. HIV-positive people have a unique role to play in HIV prevention and promo-

tion of voluntary HIV counseling and testing.

For more information on National HIV Testing Day or to order campaign kits, posters and flyers for community groups and health departments, or to link to the CDC's database of voluntary HIV counseling and testing locations throughout the U.S. visit www.napwa.org.

Michael Jefferson

Executive Director

TyIsha Barnes

Prevention Specialist

230 Ashmun Street
New Haven, CT 06511

Phone: (203) 776-1981

Fax: (203) 776-1982

E-mail: sccrac@yahoo.com

Website: www.sccrac.org



Shining a light on prevention that works

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More than half of the teen survey participants with Internet access said they had placed their profiles on a social networking site, and half of that group reported posting their pictures.

Seeking Better Solutions

Media attention to MySpace has increased awareness of social networking and the problems that accompany it, but the only solution so far that seems to have gained broad support is education.

Banning the sites at school reduces school liability; however, keeping children safe -- period -- wherever they are, involves not the controlling of computers, or more staff at MySpace monitoring the content, but the education of children and families about safety.

Educating parents and providing information using diverse venues will help in the fight against online predators. Organizations like Web Wise Kids provide free programs to schools and police departments. The organization recently released Mirror Image, a computer game that teaches online safety to teens. NMCEC's NetSmartz Workshop provides interactive and educational resources on online safety. Some school districts, city officials and state representatives have held town halls and learning sessions on cyber safety to increase awareness.

Despite existing laws, it is common knowledge that underage kids find ways to get liquor and cigarettes quite easily. Access to social networking sites unquestionably is far more difficult to regulate than the sale of alcohol and

tobacco to minors. Kids can access the Internet using devices other than computers, too. Now that cell phones and handhelds are Internet-capable, students can easily use them to go anywhere online even if school or library computers have restricted access.

Parents are urged to talk with their children about sex, drugs, smoking and other potentially risky behaviors. Now, frank discussions about online safety should be added to this repertoire.

The bottom line is that the online predator issue comes down to a parent's responsibility. Those conversations now need to have an online perspective.

