

How to Prevent Substance Misuse

It's true, teens are more likely to listen to peers rather than their parents, it is part of this stage in development. When a baby is born, the brain's sole responsibility is focused on keeping them alive. As they grow into adolescence, finding their tribe becomes important. Think about your top three happiest memories up to this point in life. What were you doing? How did you feel? Who was there? Each of these memories was likely a shared experience with others. Likely you were laughing and smiling with loved ones, maybe food was involved. Now shift to think about your three worst memories. What was going on? How did you feel? Who was there? In each of these memories, you likely were alone or felt alone.

Substance use becomes a problem for some because they either are or feel alone. Connection is an important aspect in our everyday lives. Fairfax County's ["Three to Succeed"](#) describes protective factors to help youth achieve their higher selves. If a child has at least three of these protective factors, they are more likely to succeed in life. They include: having high personal integrity, trusted adults to talk to, performing community service, participating in extracurricular activities, teacher recognition of effort and good work, and parents availability for help. What is noticed is that five of the six protective factors involve connection with someone else, and the first protective factor describes connection with self.

Helpful Resources:

- [Knowing the Signs: Substance Abuse & Today's Youth](#)
- [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#)
- [Substance Use Prevention & Encouraging Healthy Brain Development](#)
- [REVIVE Training for Opioid Overdoses](#)
- [FCPS Substance Abuse Prevention Program](#)

For general questions about the FCPS Substance Abuse Prevention Program, please contact the Office of Student Safety & Wellness at: (571) 423-4270 and be sure to follow us on Twitter at @FCPSSAPS.

For further Information & support:
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