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coalition news

Prevention news and information from the Tiverton Prevention Coalition

First Time Use of Alcohol and Marijuana by Teens Surges in Summer

Many substance abuse surveys have studied how old kids were when they first tried alcohol or marijuana but, for the first time, a recent national survey sought to determine the month of first-use. Results: Youths between the ages of 12 and 17 are far more likely to start using most substances during the summer than during other months of the year.

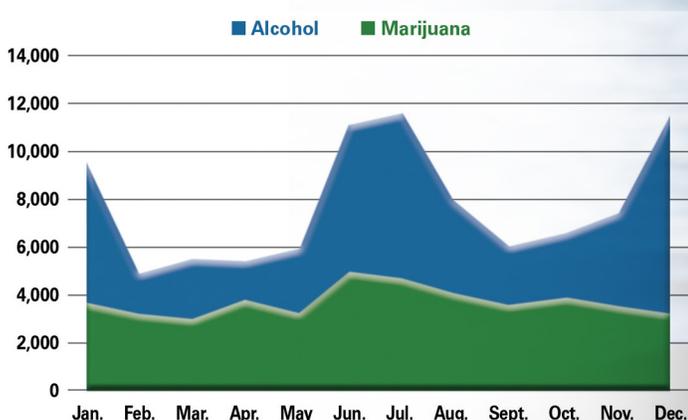
The [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#) of more than 231,000 youth under 18 reported that first-time use of most substances peaks during the summer months. On an average day in June or July:

- More than 11,000 youths used alcohol for the first time; in other months, the daily average ranged from about 5,000 to 8,000 new users per day
- More than 5,000 youths smoked cigarettes for the first time; in other months, the daily average ranged from about 3,000 to 4,000 new users per day
- More than 4,800 youths used marijuana for the first time, whereas the daily average ranged from about 3,000 to 4,000 in other months

Identifying periods of heightened risk for initiation, the survey report noted, could help parents, prevention providers, and communities take positive steps toward preventing use among their children.

“More free time and less adult supervision can make the summertime an exciting time for many young people, but it can also increase the likelihood of exposure to the dangers of substance abuse,” said SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde. “That is why it is critically important to take every opportunity we can throughout the year to talk to our young people about the real risks of substance abuse and effective measures for avoiding it, so they will be informed and capable of making the right decisions on their own.”

Adolescents Younger than 18 Using Alcohol or Marijuana for the First Time on an Average Day, by Month



Source: [National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2012](#)





REBECCA'S notes

Sometimes prevention is a numbers game. There is no shortage of excellent data, locally and nationwide, about teen substance use. The key to reducing and preventing teen substance use, though, is to use that data to design successful community-based programs. And we have a great opportunity to do that this summer.

The data is clear: Summer is a “high-risk” time of year for teens who have not yet tried alcohol or marijuana. More kids try alcohol and marijuana for the first time during June and July than in any other month of the year. Just as parents take extra precautions during cough, cold and flu seasons, we can also be on the alert during June and July and take extra precautions to prevent younger teens from the harms of drinking or smoking.

Please check out the resources in this issue of Coalition News. It all boils down to this: When teens are on their own, they need to know that you disapprove of underage drinking and marijuana use — and they need to know why. Express disapproval and communicate the risks. As the SAMHSA campaign says, Talk. They hear you.

*Wishing all of you a safe and healthy summer,
Rebecca*

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TOOLS FOR PARENTS: Help for Talking About Alcohol and Marijuana

Check out these resources to help you start and continue talking with your teens about the dangers of drinking alcohol at a young age. Parents and caregivers are the leading influence in a child’s decision not to drink . . . even if they don’t admit it!

[Action Plan](#)

[5 Conversation Goals](#)

[Help for Talking About Alcohol](#)

[Answering Your Child’s Tough Questions About Alcohol](#)

[Family Agreement Form: Avoiding Alcohol](#)



Marijuana: Facts Parents Need to Know

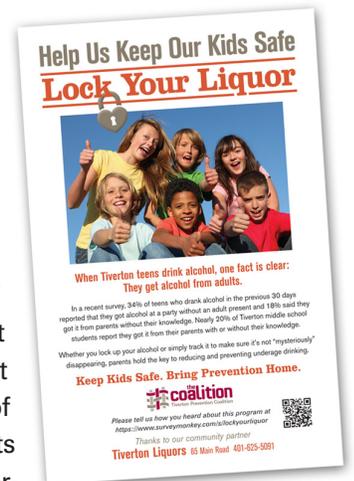
Science-based facts about marijuana for parents and tips for talking with children about the drug and its potential harmful effects. Easy to read. Q&A format. Read or download at TivertonPrevention.org

Tiverton Package Stores: Partners in Summer Prevention

Proprietors of all three Tiverton package stores — Crossroad Liquors, Stonebridge Liquors and Tiverton Liquors — will promote a summer prevention program designed to remind adults to make sure the alcohol they purchase doesn’t find its way into the hands of Tiverton teens.

Store owners will distribute “Lock Your Liquor” flyers provided by The Coalition throughout the summer. Though most adults do not give alcohol to minors, they are the ultimate “source.” In a recent survey, 18% of Tiverton teens said they got alcohol from parents without their knowledge. Nearly 20% of Tiverton middle school students report they got it from their parents with or without their knowledge. And 34% who drank alcohol in the previous 30 days reported that they got alcohol at a party without an adult present.

The message is a simple one: Whether you “lock up” your alcohol or simply track it carefully to make sure it’s not “mysteriously” disappearing: *Keep kids safe. Bring prevention home.*



Comments? Questions? Interests?

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