

THE SCOOP

Lakes Student Services' Monthly Newsletter

Substance Use Prevention

I Have A
CHOICE

October is National Substance Abuse Awareness Month. It is a vital time to highlight the importance of prevention in individual and community health, to remember those that have lost their lives to substance abuse, to acknowledge those in recovery and to educate all on the risks and dangers that come with substance use.

- Studies show that the earlier an individual starts smoking, drinking or using other drugs, the greater the likelihood of developing addiction.
- 9 out of 10 people who abuse or are addicted to nicotine, alcohol or other drugs began using these substances before they were 18.
- People who began using addictive substances before age 15 are nearly 7 times likelier to develop a substance problem than those who delay first use until age 21 or older.
- Every year that substance use is delayed during the period of adolescent brain development, the risk of addiction and substance abuse decreases.



NATIONAL **HELPLINE**

SAMHSA's National Helpline – [1-800-662-HELP \(4357\)](tel:1-800-662-HELP)

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

Impacts on Learning

Adolescent substance abuse **increases** the potential for declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school. Alcohol and other drug use also result in **disturbed** sleep cycles, which impacts learning and memory.

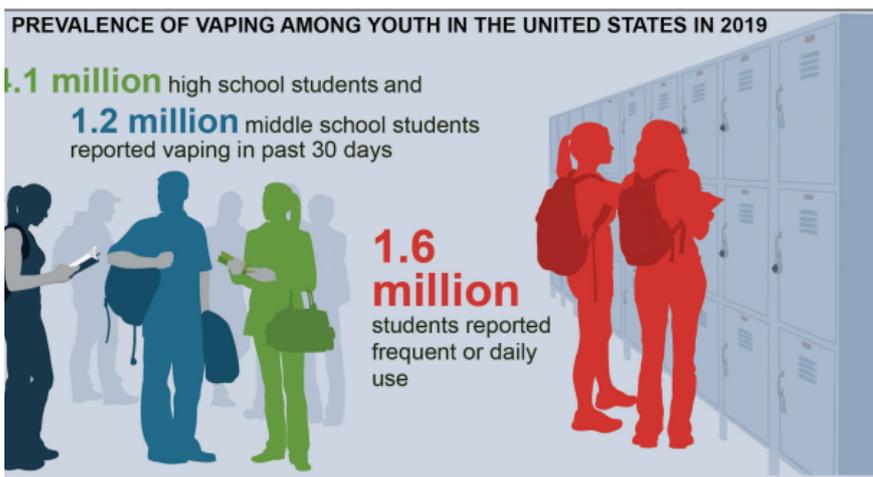
During adolescence the brain goes through rapid **development** and wiring changes. Your brain doesn't stop **growing** until about **age 25**. Adding substance use to the evolving adolescent brain can have devastating, long-lasting effects in and out of school. Substance use can **damage** parts of the brain that perform essential functions and can impact a student's learning and behavior in school and at home. These functions include:

- Memory: Impaired recollection and even blackouts can occur when substances have been consumed.
- Judgment and decision making: substance use can lead young people to engage in risky behaviors that can result in illness, injury and even death.
- Impulse control: use lowers inhibitions and increases the chances that a person will do something that they will regret when they are sober.
- Motor control: this includes the ability to walk or drive.

E-cigarettes and Vaping

In recent years, the use of e-cigarettes and other vaping devices has become more and more common. What's the bottom line on the risks of e-cigarettes for teens and young adults?

- The use of e-cigarettes/vapes is **unsafe**.
- Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine. Nicotine is **highly addictive** and can harm adolescent brain development.
- E-cigarettes can contain other **harmful substances** besides nicotine.
- Young people who use e-cigarettes may be more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.



Resources:

www.cdc.gov
www.niaaa.nih.gov
www.prevention.org
www.samhsa.gov