

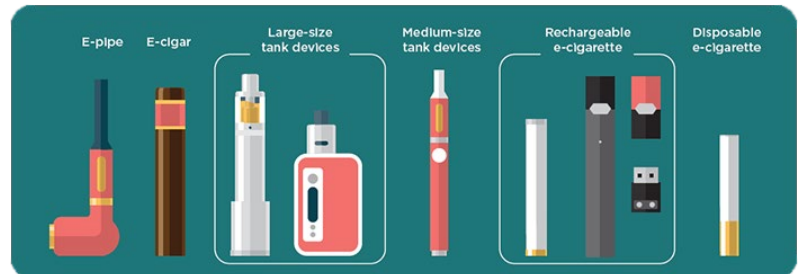
Silver Creek Central School District recently hosted virtual workshops regarding substance abuse with David Hymowitz from the global mental health movement **#SameHere**.

See below for workshop tips:

Substance Use Amongst Students

Trending Substances:

- electronic cigarettes aka vapes/juuls/hydes
- energy drinks
- synthetic (lab made) marijuana
- marijuana (plant)
- hallucinogens
- alcohol



Binge Drinking

- Consuming 4 or more drinks in less than 2 hours
- Research from 2022 shows children began drinking as young as 11-years-old (boys) and 13-years-old (girls)

Accessibility & Influence:

- Community and family events often involve substance use.
 - Examples: births, weddings, funerals, graduation parties, family reunions, sporting events, concerts
- Marketing - social media, television, billboards
 - create targeted ads towards children.



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Why do students self-medicate?

- #1 Health Concern of High School Students = Stress
- Other Possible Reasons:
 - Manage physical pain.
 - perform better
 - treat medical or emotional symptoms
 - feel better
 - relieve discomfort
 - cope with life
 - forget traumatic experiences





Connections between primary drug choice and emotions:

- "Most people have been taught that self-medicating is an action to make ourselves feel better, and although this may be true, we have started to notice there may be a connection between specific emotions and primary drug of choice."
 - Example #1 - People feeling depressed often turn to alcohol. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. Alcohol mirrors the feelings of depression instead of making them feel better.
 - #SameHere Theory - "People may not want to feel better. They may want to feel nothing at all. To make themselves numb, to escape whatever they are feeling."
 - To assist our students, it is important to start a conversation about "the numb." Why do they want to feel numb?

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How to Talk to Your Kids About Substance Use

- Talk to your kids not at your kids.
 - Make sure they know you are having an open, honest conversation with them.
- Try to listen and not lecture. 
- Engagement - establish honest communication with your kids.
 - Create a nonjudgmental space so they are comfortable sharing with you.
- Listen - encourage your child to talk to you, respect your child's viewpoint, use open-ended questions.
- Planning - How can they make the best choices? What would you do if....?
 - Friends are using substances.
 - Someone offers them substances.
 - Curious about substances
- Remember - have the conversation, it won't be perfect and that's okay 😊, but now your child knows they can talk with you have a problem arises.



Community Resources:

- **SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**
 - <https://www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources/why-you-should-talk-your-child>



- **2-1-1 WNY -**
 - Call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - All calls are confidential.
 - Talk to a trained information & referral specialist to find resources in your community.



- **NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports**
 - <https://oasas.ny.gov/>
 - Call the 24/7 HOPEline at 1-877-8-HOPENY or Text HOPENY (467369)



- **Smokefree.gov**
 - <https://teen.smokefree.gov/>
 - Text QUIT to 47848
 - Free quitSTART app (Product of smokefree.gov, a smoking cessation resource created by the Tobacco Control Research Branch at the National Cancer Institute in collaboration with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration)



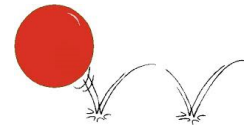
- **Prevention Works** - provides alcohol, substance use and gambling awareness, prevention education and intervention programs for individuals of all ages.
 - www.preventionworks.us
 - Dunkirk Office - (716) 366-4623
- **Silver Creek CSD**
 - School Psychologist - Nick Gerard (PK-12)
 - School Social Workers - Allyson Gardner (PK-5) & Beth Miller (9-12)
 - School Counselors - Alison Gondek (9-12), Mark Baldelli (9-12), Kelsey Wise (6-8), Caitlin Snyder (PK- 5)
 - School Nurses - Jennifer Johnson (RN, BSN), Diane Graf (LPN), Patricia Sternisha (LPN), Carol Woodward (LPN)

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Building Resilience in Our Children

- **Resiliency**
 - the ability to bounce back when we encounter difficult situations.
 - to learn how to problem solve.
 - to regulate our own emotions
 - to develop better decision making and coping skills.
- For some parents, it is difficult to teach our kids to be resilient because we were never formally taught how to do that.
- Resiliency **CAN** be taught 😊
 - allow our kids to try to figure out how to bounce back, and to learn from your role modeling of resiliency.
 - Protecting our kids from any form of distress almost stops them from becoming resilient.
 - Struggling through an issue many times leads to learning how to fix and grow.
- A parent's job should include:
 - showing our belief in them by allowing them to face life's issues **with** our support and compassion and love for them.
 - Many kids will find their way through if they know you're there to validate their efforts and strengths.



- The ingredients that make up resilience are:

- Having **HOPE**

- HOPE is actually a choice we make.
- An example of this would be that during the pandemic we could have embraced the fear and the worry, or we could embrace the hope that we are going to get through it.
- Resiliency is based on hope, not fear.



- Building **CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE**

- Having a sense of **PURPOSE**

- Learning how to **ADAPT** and be **FLEXIBLE**.

- **Resilience Activities:**



- Build and grow things, tell stories, do things for others, connect with others, family time (Listen), Gratitude and Inspiration, Pets, Music Dance... FUN

- Adaption to Change

- What have your kids adapted to so far in their lives and how did they do that? Because, **THESE** are the **SKILLS** they already have and become the foundation to build other skills.
- A very good technique is called "**Check-ins**".
 - check in with your kids to see how they are doing, give them invitations to share with you and practice those listening skills



- Help them to create, or create with them, small tasks and **goals** for themselves.

- Every small successful step increases their self-esteem and empowers them to take bigger steps.

- Reminders: Adapting takes time---Go slow and be patient.

- Help them keep perspective-what's important and matters to them. Believe in themselves.

Reframe challenge to **CHANCE/Opportunity**

- Overall, resiliency is another emotional and educational skill.
 - This is practice by applying firm support, and boundaries with patience.
- Resiliency is also something that happens within your communities.
 - Are they part of group and team efforts that give them a sense of belonging? That gives them other people to go to for support?
- And since most of our kids do what we do, not what we say, how you role model resiliency can also be seen by how you take care of yourself.
 - How many self-care practices do you have?
- Two of the tools that have been introduced into your school district can be found on our website: <https://samehereglobal.org/> and learn more about the #Same Here SCALE that creates a common language to start conversations and our STARR exercises, also known as "Gym for the Brain".
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SameHereGlobal>
 - https://www.instagram.com/samehere_global/
 - https://twitter.com/samehere_global