

Counselor Connection

Katie Smith, Counselor for Classes of 2021 & 2023

Heather Wilkin, Counselor for Classes of 2020 & 2022

Spotlight Topic of the Quarter "Teen Vaping"

Vaping rates have skyrocketed in recent years, especially among adolescents. Some 2.1 million middle and high school students were e-cigarette users in 2017. Adolescents can not only use nicotine, they are vaping marijuana at increasing rates as well. JUUL is a popular device that comes in fun flavors, looks like a flash drive & can be charged by USB.

Although vaping is advertised as a less harmful option for adult smokers, vaping isn't considered safe for teens and young adults. Especially since their brains are still developing. Nicotine exposure in teens is worrisome because youth's brains are undergoing massive changes during adolescence through mid-20's. Nicotine use may rewire the brain, making it easier to get hooked on other substances & contribute to problems with concentration, learning & impulse control.

What's new with Freshman??

Ms. Smith visited Freshman Academy classes October 22st through the 25th. Freshman students completed the "Career Interest Profiler" and the "Career Cluster Finder." Students started to research careers that might fit their personality types. Ask them what careers they are interested in!

Starting next semester, students will be looking into the future and completing their 4-year course plans. This helps students to think about their upcoming years in high school and what classes they want to take. Freshman students will begin registration for Sophomore year at the beginning of February. Your student will bring a course registration sheet home for your signature.

"Every Student, Every Day"



Upcoming Events

January 6

Students Return

February 20

RLC Accuplacer Testing for Juniors and Math students

February 28

Scholarship Applications DUE

How to Talk to Your Kids about Vaping

Experts advise parents to start by educating themselves. It is important parents take an inquisitive and curious approach to what their teen's experiences are. Look for opportunities to discuss vaping.

-Keep a dialogue. Declarative statements like "It's 'bad for you' just end the conversation. Instead, ask "What do you think about vaping?"

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Reminder---Freshman Academy progress reports come home every Monday. Students must have parent signature and return for full points.

What's new with Sophomores??

Ms. Wilkin visited Mr. Kellerman's US History classes. Classes discussed what the differences are between Trade Schools, Junior Colleges & Universities. Ms. Wilkin also reviewed what kind of certificates and degrees (associates, bachelors, masters, doctorate) you can earn at each type of college. Students completed a "Game Plan" survey on Naviance to start them thinking about post-secondary options. What do they want to accomplish after high school? What type of college? What characteristics are they looking for in a college/university? Sophomores will be registering near the end of January for their Junior year.

What's new with Juniors??

Juniors will be registering in mid-January when we return from break. It is important that they start thinking about what classes they want to take Senior year. There are many options available including Rend Lake College dual credit classes, school-to-work program and staying at school all day. Students interested in dual credit classes through RLC will have the opportunity to take the Accuplacer in February. Ms. Smith will sign them up during registration. Ms. Smith also met with the Juniors during Mr. Zmudzinski's Contemporary and Civics classes. Time was spent looking at different career paths and what type of education they might need to achieve that career. Students were encouraged to "save" careers and colleges in Naviance so they could revisit them at a later date. The SAT will be given on April 12, 2020.

What's new with Seniors??

S-C-H-O-L-A-R-S-H-I-P-S!!! Local Scholarships are active in Naviance. There are a variety of scholarships available for different educational fields and abilities. All scholarships will be due on February 28, 2020 by 3pm to Ms. Wilkin. Late applications and handwritten applications will not be accepted. Take advantage of the down time over break and start applying! If you are needing to complete the FAFSA, Ms. Wilkin is available to help. As Financial Aid award letters start rolling in, now is the time to compare and decide what is the best college fit for you.



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-Once the conversation is started, you can slowly work up to asking things like, "What is your experience with that? What are the flavors like?" Getting a sense of what the kids know (or think they know) about the product, gives parents an opening to start educating them.

-Set clear expectations. Express your understanding of the risks, but also why a person might vape. Share why you don't want your child vaping (i.e. concern about toxins, nicotine, marijuana, & unknown health risks.) If you choose to set consequences, be sure to follow through, while reinforcing healthier choices.

-For younger teens, role play refusal skills. Ask "What would you say if someone offered a vape?" Practice different responses and assertive body language.