

## Alcohol and Drug Abuse Resources

The New Richmond School District hosted a drug education and community forum on Wednesday, February 26, 2014. See the article at the link below from the *New Richmond News* for details.

<http://www.newrichmond-news.com/content/heroin-forum-starts-community-conversation>

**Below are some links to resources:**

<http://www.drugfree.org>

<http://www.hazelden.org>

**Alcohol and other drug abuse services:**

[http://www.co.saint-croix.wi.us/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC=%7BC612B794-1D6B-49CC-93A1-A629841F95ED%7D](http://www.co.saint-croix.wi.us/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7BC612B794-1D6B-49CC-93A1-A629841F95ED%7D)

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

**The video on overdosing that was shown at the community forum can be seen at:**

[http://youtu.be/Xwo3Qc6\\_tiE](http://youtu.be/Xwo3Qc6_tiE)

**Below are some warning signs, tips for parents, and information on school programming:**

*What are some of the warning signs of drug use?* (This can be difficult as these can be typical teen behaviors or also indicate mental health issues.)

- Changes in dress and grooming
- Changes in choice of friends
- Frequent arguments and sudden mood changes
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Loss of interest in usual activities or hobbies
- School or job problems, such as declining or failing grades, poor attendance, and recent discipline problems
- Disappears, runs away, and delinquent behavior
- Depressed mood or talk about depression or suicide; suicide attempts
- Using over-the-counter products to reduce eye reddening (like Visine), nasal irritation, or bad breath
- Breaks curfew
- Goes through money and cannot account for it
- Possessions or money get lost or go missing
- Reckless driving or accidents
- Avoids eye contact

- More secretive than usual—locking doors, doesn't want you to overhear phone calls, is evasive or lies about going out and who they are with, etc.
- Going out every night
- Change in relationships with family or friends
- Lying, stealing, and manipulating. They get good at it.
- Decreased motivation
- Makes endless excuses
- Health issues or sick more than usual: nosebleeds, runny nose, vomiting, cotton mouth, sudden weight loss or gain, headaches
- Missing alcohol or prescription drugs
- Explain their friends are all doing it or everyone is doing it. It is not true.

***What is the impact on our students?***

- Decision making is impaired
- Family relationships suffer and break down
- Set bad examples for their siblings
- Health problems
- Brain damage
- Destroys your reputation
- Lost time or future plans
- Impaired driving
- Hurt others
- Sexual activity
- Criminal record
- Overdose/death

***What can parents do? Do not forget, you are the most influential and important people in your child's life.***

- Emphasize reading—once students struggle in school it opens them up to all kinds of risk factors such as lack of confidence, drug use or depression; overwhelming evidence of how important reading is; gaps by age three.
  - 1) Read to them every day
  - 2) Regular bed time
- Know your family history and genetics. Addiction is part genetics, part environment. If there is a family history of alcohol or drug abuse, be proactive about addressing it.
- Establish and maintain good communication. The better you know your children, the easier it will be to guide them towards positive activities and relationships. Ask questions they can't answer with a yes or no. Talk to them every day. Most kids today need more interaction with adults and authority figures, not less.

- Get involved in your child's life. Use Family Access to check their grades and attendance. Contact teachers when you have a question or concern. Know who they are hanging out with, where and what they are doing. Encourage involvement in positive group activities.
- Dads matter. Many struggling teens we work with lack a strong, involved male authority figure. Both sons and daughters need their dads—to be strict, lead, guide, role model, protect and love them. Stand up and fight for your kids by setting boundaries. They want to know that they are worth it.
- Make clear rules and enforce them consistently. It is okay to demand that your kids please you and follow your rules. Make decisions for them. Brain research is telling us that most teens do not have the emotional or reasoning development and experience to make wise decisions. They need you.
- Limit screen time. TV, texting, internet, Facebook, gaming, music, etc. Monitor this private world to see what your child is doing, saying, listening to, and how they present themselves. Do not trust popular culture to set a positive example or teach your kids the right values.
- Be a positive role model. Kids will imitate you and follow your lead.
- Talk to your children about drugs. If you've noticed changes related to substance abuse, ask your son or daughter direct questions like, "Have you been offered drugs?" If yes, "What did you do?" or "Have you been drinking or using drugs?" Help them figure out how to cope and resist. Be prepared for a yes answer and, keep in mind, a no answer doesn't mean they're telling you the truth.
- Last, and probably the hardest one for parents, when you are in denial realize you are enabling and not helping your son or daughter face their use or addiction.

***What is the Middle School doing?***

- Health and drug-free education at all three levels
- Opportunities to get involved in activities, clubs, and sports
- Counseling services
- Connections and referrals to local counselors and treatment facilities
- Work with students and families to setup assessments, treatments or resources
- Homeroom/Advisory time to build positive relationships with peers and staff
- Academic support for struggling students
- Clear rules and consequences
- Work closely with local police and law enforcement agencies