

Dear Families,

This notice is to inform you about a program at the Westborough Public Schools that will support your child with making healthy choices. Students in grade 7 and 9 will participate in an interview based screening related to the use of alcohol, marijuana and other substances. Our goal is to let students know that we are available to talk about healthy decisions and to assist them in obtaining help if needed for substance use related problems.

MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey data consistently demonstrates that a small number of our middle school students try alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, and by the end of high school, many more students report substance use. Research shows that our brains are not fully developed during adolescence and substance use in the early years substantially alters brain functioning for a lifetime.

The Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program has been incorporated into our annual state mandated screenings which are required by law. We will utilize the CRAFFT screening tool, a commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents. Student screenings will be brief (5-10 minutes) and conducted confidentially in private, one-on-one sessions by the school nurse or counseling staff. We anticipate that the majority of our students are making healthy decisions and will receive positive reinforcement for their choices. For those students indicating unhealthy choices, an assessment of readiness to change their behavior will occur and assistance with a plan for success will be offered. Results of the conversation will not be included in your child's school record and no disciplinary action is involved.

As with any school screening, you have the right to opt your child out of this screening. ***Please contact your child's school nurse in writing if you wish to do so.*** Additionally, screening is voluntary and students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions. **Screenings will be conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. .**

We encourage you to talk with your child about your family's thoughts and expectations regarding substance use. For ideas on how to begin these conversations, please visit the links below. Together schools and parents CAN make a difference for our youth in Westborough.

Respectfully,

Westborough High School Nurses:

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Sharon Connors, RN, BSN, NSCN, [connorss@westboroughk12.org](mailto:connorss@westboroughk12.org) 508-836-7720 X3193

Gibbons Middle School Nurse:

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## Resources

### **Family Checkup Positive Parenting Prevents Drug Abuse**

[https://nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/familycheckup\\_8\\_15.pdf](https://nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/familycheckup_8_15.pdf)

### **7 Ways to Protect Your Teen from Alcohol and Other Drugs**

[what every parent needs to know about teens, alcohol, and other drugs](#)

### **Talking to Your Middle School-aged Child about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs**

[Talking to Your Middle School-Aged Child about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs](#)

### **Preventing Substance Abuse Starts at Home: Safeguarding Your Children**

[Preventing Substance Use Starts at Home](#)

### **Tips for Protecting Your Kids from Addiction**

<http://files.hria.org/files/SA3534.pdf>