



TO YOUR HEALTH

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week[®] (March 22-28, 2021)

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE
PLUS GET THE FACTS

Grab your pencils and let's hit the books! We'll start off with an easy question to test your knowledge:

Q. Which drug do adolescents use the most? Is it alcohol, marijuana, nicotine (vaping) or none of them?

A. If you said alcohol, you would be right. Vaping is on the rise with older teens (14%), but the #1 drug of choice for seniors in high school in 2019 was alcohol. 52% compared to marijuana at 35%.

Talking about drugs and alcohol can be a tough challenge for any parent, guardian or educator. That is why the National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week[®] was launched in 2010. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) created this week-long event to connect students with scientists in the effort to “counteract the myths about drugs and alcohol that teens get from the internet, social media, TV, movies, music or from friends.”

Check with your school to see what events they are planning or visit: <https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week> to get an interactive toolkit for your teen.

Now it's time for your next question:

Q. ___% of people with oral cancer who survive beyond five years of diagnosis. Is it 10%, 25%, 55% or 62%?



A. If you guessed 62% you are correct! Cigarettes and chewing tobacco are considered to be drugs that contain chemicals, which when used, flood the mouth and throat, increasing the risk of oral cancers (vocal chords, esophagus, tongue, etc.)

Final question on this week's pop quiz:

Q. Lean or Sizzurp is the nickname for what type of drug that has become popular with teens? Is it heroin, synthetic marijuana, crystal meth or promethazine?

A. If you said promethazine or prescription cough medicine, you would be correct. It can easily be combined with soda and candy. A recent study found that half of the references to codeine on Instagram used this slang. Side effects of abusing codeine include, but are not limited to: nausea, dizziness, impaired vision, memory loss, hallucinations, increased blood pressure, and seizures. High doses of codeine can lead to overdose and death.

There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to why a teenager uses drugs and alcohol. From the feeling of just wanting to fit in, struggling with mental health issues, using it as a coping mechanism to deal with stress, using it to enhance academic or athletic performance, or chasing that first high they felt, it is a deeply personal issue for both the teen and their family.

APPS

Here are some free resources that can help you understand the pressures today's teens face and how to help empower them to make healthy choices for their future:

- » **This Is Quitting:** The Truth Initiative's text messaging program that helps young people (ages 13-24) quit vaping.
- » **PTSD Coach:** Created by the National Center for PTSD, these mobile apps provide self-help, education, and support following a trauma.
- » **Boys Town Your Life Your Voice App:** Geared towards teens and young adults to deal with situations like addiction, bullying, anxiety, anger, identity, depression, distorted thinking, suicidal thoughts, and what to do if they are worrying about a friend.

ORGANIZATIONS

Alateen: This is a free program that offers support for teens (ages 13 to 18) with parents, relatives or friends coping with alcoholism.

Narateen: Similar to Alateen but the focus is on drug addiction vs. alcoholism.

Get Smart About Drugs: A DEA Resource For Parents, Educators and Caregivers

Boys Town National Hotline: 1-800-448-3000. Text VOICE to 20121. Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS). Spanish-speaking counselors and translation services for more than 100 languages also are available 24-hours a day.

