

# Coalition for Healthy and Safe Communities

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## PARENTS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE



June/July 2016

### Join us for Some Family Fun

In July we will begin our annual Strengthening Families Program Family Fun Camp. This FREE program is for the whole family and provides meals, as well as great gift incentives. Parents connect with each other for support and discussion while children and teens have fun learning through various interactive games and activities. Also, free child care is provided for children under the age of 5. For more information please contact Natalie at 973-383-4787 ext. 235.



### Know! Your Summer Plan of Action

The school year is action-packed and quite frankly exhausting for many students and parents alike. So by the time June hits, most of us look forward to slowing things down and enjoying a laid back, commitment-free summer.

While this sounds like a good plan, it is actually in our children's best interest to keep up the pace a bit this summer. Researchers have found that June and July are the riskiest months of the year for first-time alcohol and other drug use among youth.



### Check out the stats:

- ◆ Each day during the school year about 8,000 adolescents take their first drink of alcohol; compared to a summer day where about 11,000 adolescents take their first drink of alcohol.
- ◆ Each day during the school year about 3,500 youth smoke cigarettes or marijuana for the first time; compared to a summer day where about 4,500 youth smoke cigarettes or marijuana for the first time.
- ◆ As for students who have already begun drinking and smoking, many are known to indulge often and more heavily during June and July.

Parents, there is no time to waste, get your summer plan of action ready:

- ◆ Make clear expectations for your children not to drink or use other drugs, regardless of the company they hold or the circumstance they are in. Share this message with your children often.
- ◆ Supervise tweens and even older teens as much as possible. Set house rules for who is allowed and not allowed to be in your home when you are not. Then check-in regularly.
- ◆ Know where your children are, who they are with and what their game-plan is at all times, and if any part of the plan changes along the way, make it a rule that they check-in to let you know.
- ◆ BEWARE of the summer parties and do not allow your children to attend where underage drinking is planned, even under the agreement that they will not partake. This is legally risky and peer pressure is sometimes too much for youth to handle.
- ◆ If youth are at a party and alcohol or other drugs appear, they must know to exit as quickly as possible and they must be able to count on calling you day or night for a safe getaway.
- ◆ Lead by example. Show your children that a fun, summer party does not have to include alcohol. And if you choose to have a drink at a gathering, drink in moderation and let your children see that you are not driving. For better or worse they are watching and learning.
- ◆ Get to know your children's friends and their parents. You may be surprised to learn that some families are not on the same page as you when it comes to preventing underage drinking and smoking.
- ◆ Help them create some structure to their days, whether it is getting a fun part-time summer job, volunteering, taking part in an educational class or workshop or enrolling in a camp. Help them discover what interests them!

Sure, a little rest and relaxation is well-deserved and much needed but too much downtime can be hazardous to your child's health.

\*<https://www.drugfreeactionalliance.org/know-your-summer-plan-of-action>

## BE THEIR ANCHOR



### Community Service Hours?

Does your child need to complete community service hours for school, Boy/Girl Scouts or another organization? We would love to have your child lend a hand! For more information call Jenn at 973-383-4787 ext. 256 or email [jenn@centerforprevention.org](mailto:jenn@centerforprevention.org)

## How to have a SLOW parenting summer:

# S

Sprinkler run, bubbles, pool time, pajama day, picnics, outdoor concert, playdates, lemonade, & popsicles.

# L

## ove:

Family time, connecting, taking care of others, being grateful, giving back.

# O

## utside:

Biking, hiking, swimming, reading, fishing & playing.

# W

## onder:

Ask a question. Explore. Create. Do.