

What's Inside?

April is Alcohol Awareness Month! This edition of the Burlington Partnership for a Healthy Community's "In Our Hands" Newsletter has a special focus on talking with your teen about alcohol and invites parents & guardians to support each other through our new YouParent program.

And there's more! Inside You'll Find:



Page 2: Support for talking to your teen about alcohol
Sign up for more information and resources at
youparent.info



Page 3: Information about our efforts to reduce
secondhand smoke exposure in Burlington



Page 3: Information about the upcoming National
Prescription Take-Back Day on April 27



Page 3: An invitation to hear a National speaker on
raising happy, successful kids in a digital world
on April 15th AND to our Roots of Prevention
Award Celebration on May 15th



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first Volunteer Spotlight



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can help make Burlington a healthier place

When is the right time to talk with my kids about alcohol use?

If you haven't had a conversation with your child about drinking and drug use yet there is no time like right now! Or you can look for what people sometimes refer to as "teachable moments". A teachable moment is an unplanned opportunity that makes an issue more relevant for a child because it can be related to a current situation; something in the news, an advertisement on TV, something happening in school. Using that moment when a child is directly relating to that situation can be extremely effective. It helps them to grasp the concept in a real situation in real time, rather than during an abstract conversation. Repetition is also important. Talk early and often.

Here are a few examples of "teachable moments" coming up in the near future:

- April is National Alcohol Awareness Month—use this month to do something to support or recognize people struggling with the disease of alcoholism. Make a pledge as a family to join in the national Alcohol Free Weekend on April 5-7th and remove all alcohol from your home for these three days.
- April 25th is Prevention Day at the VT Statehouse—join other Vermonters from 10-2pm to support substance abuse prevention initiatives in VT.
- When you see an advertisement for alcohol on TV or in a magazine or hear one on the radio, while with your teen.
- Prom and graduation season are just around the corner – this time for celebration and recognition is also a time teens are more likely to experiment with alcohol and make other risky decisions.

The human brain is not fully developed until the mid-20's, which helps explain why teens are more prone to engage in risky behaviors. Meaning, teens and adults do not think the same way. Adults make decisions using the frontal cortex region of the brain, the part that controls rational functions. The frontal cortex of a teen's brain is not yet developed. In fact, it is the last part of the brain to develop. Teens rely

most heavily on the back part of their brains, which controls instinctual and emotional functions. This helps explain why teens often act impulsively and with strong emotions. It is important to let your teens know that you respect and love them, and because their brain is still developing you will support them by setting expectations and rules to help enforce healthy behavior.

In adolescence and young adult life, there is a "pruning phase" whereby as much as 50% of the neural connections in some regions of the brain are lost. We create neural pathways by using certain parts of the brain—those that get used the most grow stronger, while those connections that don't get used grow weaker and die off. Why does this matter? Risky behavior during adolescence can create unhealthy neural responses that last a lifetime—for example, becoming dependant on alcohol or drugs to deal with stress or to alter mood. Children who begin drinking alcohol before the age of 15 are 5 times more likely than those who start after 21 to develop alcohol problems.

If you are worried your teen is struggling with healthy decision making or want to learn more about how to support your developing child and prepare for their high school years, our new support system through YouParent for Burlington middle school parents and caregivers can help. Use the QR code at the bottom of the page or go to youparent.info to sign up to receive tips and resources electronically or by postal mail.

YouParent Tip: Set Clear Expectations & Hold Your Ground – And just so you know "everyone else's parents" are NOT letting them [insert forbidden behavior]! 72% of Burlington teens in grades 9-12 report they did *not* drink in the past 30 days (based on 2011 Burlington School District Youth Risk Behavior Survey data).

The annual National "Monitoring the Future" survey consistently finds the key reason kids give for not drinking is they do not want to disappoint their parents.

Your opinion, values and behavior do matter – so make sure your kids know where you stand!

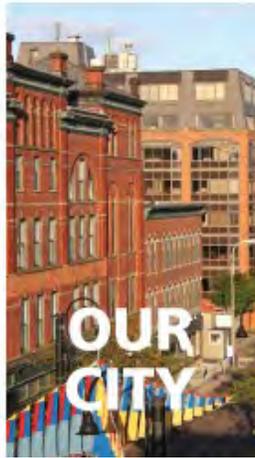


It's hard to know what to say and do during the challenging years of middle and high school...



You Parent
BURLINGTON
Real. Parenting. Support.

P R O T E C T



National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is April 27

Do you have unused, unwanted prescription drugs taking up space in your medicine cabinet? Help us protect our lake, our kids, and our city by bringing them in to the Burlington Police Department on **Saturday, April 27, 2013** from **10:00 AM to 2:00 PM** as part of the US Drug Enforcement Administration's 6th National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. Doing so will make your home (and Burlington!) a safer place to live! For more information and a full list of take back locations, visit www.dea.gov.



FREE COMMUNITY EVENT! **Is There an App for That?** **Raising Happy, Successful Kids in the Digital World**

Monday, April 15th 6:30-8:30pm
Edmund's Middle School Gym
Light dinner provided: 6-6:30pm
No pre-registration required

The Burlington Partnership for a Healthy Community is sponsoring national speaker, Erin Walsh, from Mind Positive Parenting, for this open community event.

Using brain science, stories, and humor, Erin Walsh will explain how technology is changing the ways that kids grow up, socialize, and make decisions. Erin will help parents understand the key ingredients for raising thriving kids in the digital age and provide practical tools and strategies that help families build on their strengths. Erin will answer important questions like:

- Are video games and Facebook connecting us or disconnecting us?
- Are young people really good multi-taskers?
- How can we help our kids become good, caring digital citizens?
- What can parents do to guide their kids through a wired world?

Questions about this event can be directed to:
Mariah Sanderson:

(802)324-3867 or mariah@burlingtonpartnership.org

To learn more about Erin Walsh or Mind Positive Parenting visit their website at: drdavewalsh.com



Our Coordinator, Mariah Sanderson and BHS student Sequoia Ponzio-Young were recently highlighted on WCAX's The :30 spot regarding our efforts to educate Burlington about the harmful effects of exposure to secondhand smoke. Learn more at burlingtonpartnership.com/SmokeFreeNearMe.html



Save the Date!

Please join us in celebrating some of Burlington's quiet community leaders at our **5th Annual Roots of Prevention Award Celebration** on **Wednesday, May 15th** from **8:00-10:00 AM** at the **ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center!**

For more information or to register for the event visit www.burlingtonpartnership.org

OR contact Michael Casarico: (802)863-4105
mcasarico@burlingtonlabs.com

The Burlington Partnership for a Healthy Community

is a coalition of Burlington residents, businesses, schools and college representatives, parents, youth, medical professionals, students, social service representatives, law enforcement officials, court representatives and more, who recognize that the damages of drugs, alcohol abuse, and tobacco effect us all. We are working together to create a healthier environment in Burlington by addressing the causes and consequences of substance abuse.

We welcome anyone interested in our mission to join our partnership!

For more information or to get involved, check us out online at www.burlingtonpartnership.org or contact Mariah Sanderson at 802-324-3867 or mariah@burlingtonpartnership.org

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We Love Our Volunteers!

So many great people support our work and we truly could not do what we do without them! We would like to thank the following volunteers for their extra effort in the last 6 months:

Judy Contompasis	Joseph Kilch	Nicole Mulheron
Amy Malinowski	Mike Malinowski	Miral Patel
Bob Petersen	Kevin Pelletier	Adam Roberts
Darcy Santiman	Jessica Simon	Tyler Sweeten
	Casey Wilson	

Volunteer Spotlight!



Eddie DeMott has passionately assisted and supported our efforts in Burlington. He got chalky while helping to spread our prevention messages about the effects of secondhand smoke with chalk stencils and he connected with local businesses to share our "Smoke Free Near Me" window decals. Eddie provides contributions that go far beyond the above efforts, and we want to thank him for the positive energy he brings to our coalition and welcome him as the newest member of our board!

STAFF NEWS!



The Burlington Partnership's Project Coordinator/Administrative Assistant, **Ryan Mitofsky** (left), accepted a position as the Prevention Consultant in the VT Dept. of Health Burlington District Office. We appreciate the dedication, thoughtfulness, and passion Ryan brought to our team and we want to publicly thank him for his work and wish him the best of luck in his new position. We also recently said goodbye to our high school student staff member, **Sequoia Ponzio-Young** (right, top), as she left for a semester adventure in Wisconsin and welcomed **Tian Berry** (right, bottom) as her replacement!



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