



Peer Pressure: Drugs, Alcohol, and Vaping - Students

Statistics

- 9 out of 10 smokers start smoking before they turn 18.- *US Department of Health and Human Services*
- Many students start using tobacco by age 11 and are addicted by age 14. By the 8th grade, most students think that using alcohol is okay, and by age 13 students are using illegal drugs or abusing prescription pain medications.
- 30.7% of e-cig users start smoking within 6 months- *National Institute on Drug Abuse*
- Between 2011 and 2018, the number of high school teens who started vaping, increased from 220,000 (1.5 percent) to just over 3 million (20.8 percent). – *CDC*
- According to the Mayo Clinic, exposing an adolescent brain, which is still developing to addictive substances like nicotine can permanently alter brain chemistry.
- Excessive drinking is responsible for more than 4,300 deaths among underage youth each year, and cost the US \$24 billion in economic costs in 2010.- *CDC*
- Although drinking by persons under the age of 21 is illegal, people aged 12 to 20 years drink 11% of all alcohol consumed in the United States.4 More than 90% of this alcohol is consumed in the form of binge drinks. -*CDC*

Examples

- Luka Kinard of High Point, NC became addicted to vaping. He was spending \$150 a week on vape pods. His grades plummeted. He became angry and aggressive. Finally, the nicotine in his body led to a seizure. That's when his parents woke up to the problem- he was admitted for 40 days into a rehabilitation facility, treated as a substance abuse issue.
- Austin Donovan Hall was just 17 when he left an underage drinking party in Maryland with two passengers. Driving 119 mph in a 35 mph zone, he crashed into a tree and a light pole. One of his passengers was killed, one had life-threatening injuries, and Austin himself was condemned to 18 months in prison. This incident changed forever the lives of three teens.
- Jeremy Traylor was a high school student who became addicted to the frequent prescription pain medication Oxycontin. Despite his addiction, Jeremy sought help and got clean. He remained clean for 80 days, long enough to graduate high school in 2009. However, his drug addiction came back to haunt him, and he decided to try oxycontin just one more time. One week after his momentous graduation from high school, Jeremy died from his final indulgence.



TBG Solutions Inc.
Change Thinking - Change Behavior - Manage Risk

Plan of Action Needed

Students spend a much larger percentage of their waking hours in school than they do at home. The teenage brain remains under-developed and vulnerable to peer pressure and the frequent exposure to drugs, alcohol, vaping, and e-cigs. The unfortunate reality is that schools are the first line of defense that we can really reach and reinforce. Is your school taking that role seriously?

Preventing your students from becoming a statistic or another heart-breaking blog story requires more than a simple “Say No to Drugs” adage posted on the school wall. It requires a culture change. The statistics show that smoking has decreased over the last forty years, but it is still a problem. The statistics show that not only are e-cigs and vaping just as dangerous, they can actually be more so, and they lead to higher percentages of smokers. Alcohol and drug abuse have been a problem for far too long. The culture of the teenage world is that drinking and using drugs are “cool.” As a culture, we MUST change this image. We must have the difficult conversations with our students, and we must care enough about them to fight for change.

Common sense is not common knowledge. So many students know the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and of vaping, but they have an invincibility fallacy that “it would never happen to me.” We cannot prevent students from doing these things, but we can step up to effect a culture change through personal stories and emotional hooks to engage the students so that they walk away with their beliefs challenged and new ideas to consider.

The following items have been specifically designed by our company to facilitate a culture shift for your district as you seek to address these issues.

TBG Solutions Inc. will provide:

- **Student Assembly**
 - Recognize how peer pressure is affecting their lives.
 - Identify with stories where presenter gave in to peer pressure and compare that to an event in their life.
 - Internalize the knowledge that they have the strength to fight peer pressure.
 - Recognize the dangers/risks of drugs, alcohol and vaping as well as the uncertainty behind vaping.
 - Engage with tools needed to avoid/deny peer pressure in the moment.

Implementation

Training lasts approximately 45-60 minutes. To accommodate your organization’s needs, several presentations of various numbers of students can be scheduled.

Additionally, new student training and refresher courses are recommended.

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