

Wheeling School Based Health Program Newsletter January 2018 ISSUE 3

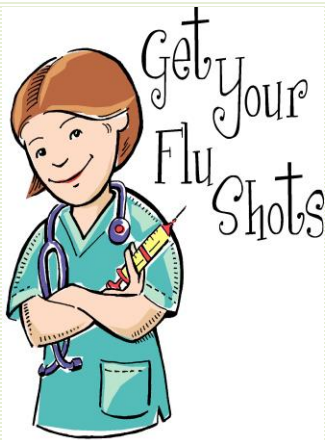
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It's Not Too Late



**The flu shot is
the best way to
protect
yourself and
your family
from the flu!**

How to Help Children Deal with Peer Pressure

We work hard to teach our children about right from wrong, moral values, and kindness. Most of the time, this leads to good choices being made.

However, adding in the presence of peers (who also may be very kind, positive, and have high moral values), can lead to poorer choices.

The pressure to conform can be powerful and hard to resist. Plus we need to remember that using alcohol or drugs increases the chances of giving in to peer pressure.

Tips to help your children deal with peer pressure:

- Teach them to listen to their gut
- Plan for possible pressure situations (i.e. They want to go to the party but they think there may be alcohol there, decide ahead of time what to do about that)
- Arrange a bail-out code you can call/text to your parents without losing face with your peers.
- Learn to feel comfortable saying no. You should never have to apologize or explain to true friends in peer pressure situations.
- Hang with people who feel the same way you do.
- Blame your parents (i.e. "my mom would be really mad at me if I did that.")
- Don't hesitate to get help if it is a dangerous situation

Resource: KidsHealth.org



Get Healthier Together

Hope everyone took advantage of the snow and ice to get active. I saw a lot of pictures of kid's ice skating, skiing, sled riding, and building snowmen. Many parents joined in the fun. Parents need to be role models. Your youngsters will copy your good and not-so-good behaviors. Telling your child to eat an orange while you munch on chips sends mixed messages. Using a tablet or looking at your phone while telling your child to go shoot hoops, is the wrong message to send. A better approach is to ask your child to help cut up apples for the snack and go play basketball together.

Don't talk about diets or foods to avoid. Instead think, of adding foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits, beans, nuts, seeds, whole grains and lean proteins.

Brainstorm with the family and put fitness ideas on the calendar. After dinner walks, bike rides or other activities that your family likes. Soon, it will become a healthy habit.

Ref. Nutrition Nuggets

Some of the Biggest *Health Threats* to Your Child at School

1. **Poor nutrition** - Do you really know what your child is eating? Too much sugar and other poor eating habits can lead to headache, stomach pain, irritability and poor grades.
2. **Physical inactivity** - Some kids equate physical activity with torture. We need to create a love for moving in ourselves and our children.
3. **Over packed schedules** - Too much homework and before and after school activities can interfere with the child's ability to learn.
4. **Poor Social Skills** - If you can "tweet it", why talk. If you can "emoji it" why smile. Texting can cause children to disengage from their real friends. Make a "no technology time" for the family to spend some quality time together each day.
5. **Stress** - Many of today's kids are young perfectionists. They want the best grades, and want to be the best athlete. Spend time with your kids modeling and teacher coping skills and problem solving.
6. **Concussion** - It doesn't have to be the football player that is risk for a concussion. All kids are active and can tumble off of swings or fall off of a bike. If you see any signs of a head injury like headache, sensitive to lights, memory loss, contact a health care professional.
7. **Asthma** - The number of kids with asthma is increasing. This can compromise sleep and those who suffer can miss many days of school. Be proactive with treating your child and contact your health care provider as needed.
8. **Cyberbullying** - Disagreements need to be left in the school yard. One third of children 11-15 years old have been cyberbullied. Listen to your child. Validate what they are saying. Reach out to the school or other professionals to ask for assistance.

Ref. Anna Medaris Miller US NEWS



Healthy Schools

Signs of Childhood Depression

It is very normal for all kids to feel sad, irritated, or in a bad mood every once in a while. When negative feelings last for a longer time and limit the child's ability to function as they normally would, they might be having depressive symptoms.

The main sign of depression is when kids are sad, discouraged, irritable, or overly angry for weeks, months, or even longer. Another sign is negative thinking (focusing on faults or problems, being critical, self-critical, and complaining a lot).

Depression symptoms can also be seen in changes in energy level, concentration, sleep, and appetite. Also, loss of interest in activities, withdrawal from family and friends, seeming overly tired, and giving up easily can be symptoms.

Severe depression can lead to thoughts about self-harm or suicidal thoughts.

As parents, it is hard to determine sometimes if your child/teen is experiencing normal moodiness that comes with adolescence and growing up, or depression.

Keep open lines of communication with your child.

As with all changes in our children, it is best to consult their doctor, talk to their teacher, and/or seek counseling. There are effective treatments and strategies. Remember you are not alone and working as a team with all the players in your child's life can lead to long term success.

Final thoughts: Be sure your child eats enough nutritious foods, gets enough sleep, and gets daily physical activity.

