



**Fayette County**  
Prevention Coalition

## PREVENTION COALITION

Heroin makes for heartbreaking and infuriating headlines. Overdose after overdose. Lives thrown away and families grieving. We wanted to step back and ask an important question: How did we get to this point? The Fayette County Prevention Coalition conducted a survey of 6, 8, and 10th graders in February 2017 to try to find out. The results are on the back of this sheet.

### TIPS FOR PARENTS

#### COMMUNICATION

Talking to your kids as early as elementary school & continuing the conversation has been shown to decrease drug/alcohol use by half!

#### EXPLAIN THE FACTS

Give honest feedback on what can happen from early drug and alcohol use. Do not use scare tactics. Talk about:

~45% of those that drink before the age of 14 become alcohol addicted compared to 10% that wait until 21.

~Early marijuana use decreases school performance, affects IQ, and impacts your memory.

#### BE INVOLVED

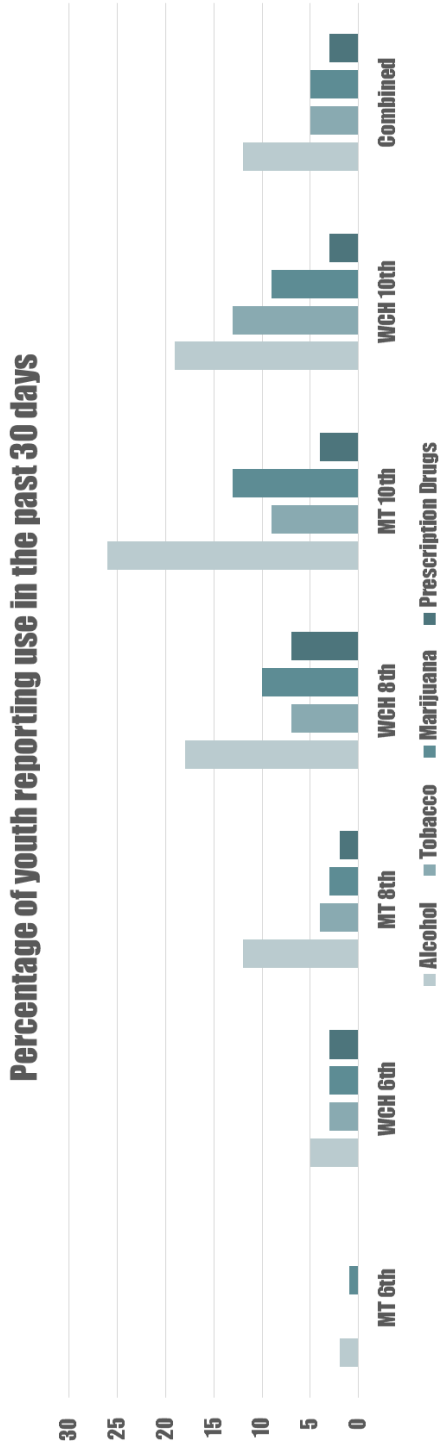
Get to know your children's friends and their parents, and don't hesitate to reach out to check on a gathering they're hosting or confirm plans of your children going somewhere together.

Alcohol is a mind-altering drug, and kids who are anxious and stressed sometimes turn to it to cope. But alcohol is a gateway drug for youth, leading to other drug use. The earlier a child starts experimenting with drugs, the greater the odds of brain damage and addiction.

Start talking to your children—in elementary school. Tell them no use of alcohol, marijuana, tobacco or others' prescriptions is healthy for young people. It also hurts their school performance. Start talking early, but don't assume kids have gotten the message. Keep the conversation going through high school! Be present and interested; listen with respect; and avoid negative emotions. Try to monitor and counter messages that glamorize alcohol and marijuana from friends and on social and other media.

Addiction is not an inevitable consequence of substance use. Whether an individual ever uses alcohol or another substance, and whether that initial use progresses to a substance use disorder of any severity, depends on a number of factors. These include: a person's genetic makeup and other individual biological factors; the age when use begins; psychological factors related to a person's unique history and personality; and environmental factors, such as the availability of drugs, family and peer dynamics, financial resources, cultural norms, exposure to stress, and access to social support. Some of these factors increase risk for substance use, misuse, and use disorders, whereas other factors provide buffers against those risks. Nonetheless, specific combinations of factors can drive the emergence and continuation of substance misuse and the progression to a disorder or an addiction.

# Local Data



## Perception of risk of harm

