

## Youth Summit 2019

### Topic: Substance Use Disorder

#### Main issues?

(Adult scribes)

- Vaping
  - Use is common at most schools. Belief that they aren't as bad as cigarettes.
  - Easily accessible at parties.
  - Pressure to do it from peers.
  - In rural areas, more common because there's nothing to do.
  - Not a cigarette, so thought is that it's not as bad so they think it's OK. Alcohol is another major issues in schools.
  - Eliminate fruit flavors for vapes.
- Use of cigarettes, chewing tobacco.
- Marijuana use is common:
  - Because it's legal in some places, like Canada, people ignore it. There's a social status around it.
  - People show up to school high.
  - Not perceived to be dangerous, "better than alcohol," but everything becomes an issue if you do too much.
  - Need a holistic solution and culture shift to co-identify values i.e. church so people have many role models outside & parents.
- Drugs, pills (opioids, benzos), students have witnessed drug deals in the halls.
- Administrators need to take the issue more seriously. If administration says not to do something than it's attractive to some.
- Punishment does not help addiction. Students are concerned about being forthcoming because of the consequences (like not being able to participate in sports). And for some, it's fun to break the law.
- Parents can be the problem – buying for their children.
- Take back drug movements didn't work because if you take the supply away and there is still a demand, the supply will come back.
- Students don't trust the administration that they won't get in trouble if they go to them to get help.
- Preventative measures don't help.
- Can't put everyone in a box. You don't know how different substances are going to affect different people.
- Need more education on how to be nice to people and how to treat people.
- The more they tell you not to, the more they want to do it.
- Vaping tastes good, so it's more appealing.

#### Resources the students mention for getting help, both informal and formal around this issue.

(Adult scribes)

- Social media
- Peer pressure

- Subliminal messaging
- Looking for help
- Peer-to-peer resources help students struggling with addiction/mental health.
- Find a way to fill a void depression, boredom, i.e. sports help.
- Discuss consequences early and often.
- Educating parents to be involved, but allow for some autonomy
- Use of K9s in school seem to be effective.
- Tax vapes in the same way we tax alcohol.
- Change age to purchase tobacco products to over 18 so they are not in high schools.
- Don't put doors on student bathrooms (privacy wall).
- Develop programs to help find other ways to cope with stresses.
- Administration should take it seriously.
- Talk about the use of substances early on.
- Offer help, don't punish (provide treatment and peer-to-peer programs).
- Hearing real life stories from 'celebrities' helps the kids understand downstream impact of misuse.
- Three-day challenge – visual representation of impact substance misuse has on others.
- Need more resources at school to help since many are influenced negatively at home.
- Vaping training – train the trainer.
- Need more assemblies or more likely small group discussions to help the kids understand – not by administrators.
- Peer support is critical.
- Change the home room/advisory period – use as a small peer group.

(Student scribes)

- Need student assistant program.
- Need counselors.

### **How they cope with this issue.**

(Adult scribes)

- Drugs help with my depression.
- Drugs used as a way to relieve stress, like academic stress.
- Use different drugs for different reasons, such as marijuana.
- Surround yourself with the right people.
- Try to understand other's situations.

(Student scribes)

- Drawing
- Meditation
- Breathing
- Asking for help
- Including families to get help
- Music
- Stay with people who are a good influence
- Talk about it
- Sit down, play video games

- Involving peers
- Chemical free or straight-edge activities

### **What they wish it was like.**

(Adult scribes)

- Not have electronic smoking devices.
- That people understood why someone is taking drugs.
- That someone wasn't labeled a "druggie" because they are taking drugs.
- People be able to get help without getting arrested.
- End the stigma around substance use
- Have a culture where the use of substances isn't normal for coping with stress.
- Parents model not using substances to cope with stress.
- A movement to treat substance use as a disease.
- Use social media to voice chemical-free activities.
- Incorporate parent/home life when they aren't at school.
- Teach life skills.
- More accessibility to counseling.
- Understanding how addiction evolves.
- Eliminate fruit flavors for vapes.
- Kids in too deep that they don't care.
- Have programs that will get kids help.
- Might be a problem if administration gets too much involved.
- Peer-to-peer interaction better than coming from administration.
- Bigger the consequences, less likely to do it.
- Maybe have jail time if they get caught.
- Look to fill the void of boredom of social stresses in ways other than substance abuse.
- Educate younger kids not just about drugs but vaping too.
- Start to get rid of vaping fruity flavors.
- Find a way to tax vapes or e-cigarettes or make them more expensive
- Change age restrictions to higher age so it is harder for high school students to get it.
- Have in school suspension for getting caught.
- Instead of suspension get help.
- Students need to develop relationships with administration. Not seen as enemy, but how they can be helpful.
- Regular 'wellness' initiatives to improve the 'toxic' environment
- Need to better educate/understand negative impact of vaping. Kids don't think "it is that big of a deal."
- Need to better understand why kids are using and how can we help them.
- More support needed to educate on negative impact of vaping (from more than just the teachers).
- How can we get the parents more involved?
- More education needed about what these substance do to their body.
- Health classes/schools
  - Awareness
  - More curriculum to educate
  - Educate others
  -

(Student scribes)

- Raising tobacco age limit to 21.
- Stop punishing kids instead of helping them get help.
- Acknowledge that it is disease.
- Talk about what's going right now not wrong.
- Peer involvement.
- Teach more life skills.

## **Other feedback**

(Adult scribe)

- Develop social media campaigns similar to the non-smoking cigarette campaigns 10 years ago.
- Find the root of the issues and address it there.
- The more administration gets involved the more it's the fact that kids want to go against the rules.
- Vaping is newer so kids don't see the long-term consequences
- Less kids know about it the more they are curious and the more likely to do it.
- Parents are buying drugs, alcohol and vapes for their children,
- Parents doing drugs leads to kids doing drugs, which leads to the kids friends doing them.
- Over involved parents can also can backfire, kids will want to the opposite of what the parents say.
- Parents need to find balance between too much pressure and not enough.
- Having unexpected k-9 visits cuts down on use.
- Get people to have values, like maybe better role models.
- Shame people that do bad things like vaping to get the idea that vaping is bad.
- Sports get kids involved in drugs.
- Teachers are unaware of Juuls and vapes.
- Punishment in school should be more intense.
- Kids are afraid of asking for help because they are getting in trouble for it.
- Program where kids are receiving help from outside of school should be more intense.
- Creating a ppt and an outline that goes with it. Geared to six graders. To make them aware of it.
- Kids can get their hands on any drugs.
- Dab pens
- Vaping marijuana
- Recent increase in LSD
- Alcohol is still an issue
- If not using themselves - go home to family members using.
- Acid - and not much attention being paid to this.
- Shutting down bathrooms doesn't help.
- School denying there is a problem.
- Parental issue as well - ease of access to drugs.
- Kids finding solace outside of school with marijuana.
- Doors off the bathrooms - doesn't help either.
- Marijuana more so at home than at school.
- Disciplinary actions doesn't help - need more focus on prevention and support
- Suspension doesn't have an impact to the students - just a day off from school - more harm than good. In-school suspension with more resources would be better

- Administration doesn't know about how the kids are being impacted and seen as the enemy.
- Legalization of marijuana not good from the kids perspective (after seeing impact on family members).
- Don't feel like the school administration cares (particularly in very small schools).
- Small group leaders / peer led to meet with kids.
- Schools need more support from government or experts.

(Student scribe)

- Shaming/scaring may work for a given solution.
- If you get rid of the supply, it won't get rid of the demand.
- Fix the issues that are making people do drugs.
- Drugs do help with depression.
- Establishing more connections with counselors.
- The opposite of addiction isn't always sobriety it's connection and acceptance.