



# Maine Source

Mission: A collaborative community effort to increase overall community capacity for advocacy, education, guidance, and resources for families to promote drug- and alcohol-free youth

Spring 2008 Issue

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR 2008 MEETINGS

MARCH 20

APRIL 24

MAY 22

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

District 207 Admin. Board Room  
(at Maine South High School)  
1131 S. Dee Rd., Park Ridge

Member of:



## How Soon Is Too Late?

While most young teens' behavior conforms to parental values, it's not true for every young person. Even if your child is not interested in what we'd call risky behaviors yet, he or she is almost certainly around a few others who are. We like to think that middle-schoolers and high school freshmen are not exposed to such things, but the facts don't support that wish. For this

***"Drinking lowers inhibitions; more drinking means more risky behaviors."***

reason, it's important to give young teens the facts before, not after, they're faced with temptation. What may feel "too early" to devoted parents may be just in time for some teens. Parents need to be clear that that drinking lowers inhibitions; more drinking means more risky

behaviors. Effects of alcohol on the areas of the brain governing cause-and-effect thinking, risk assessment and other crucial functions are even greater in teens, because young brains are still works-in-progress. Compounding the problem, alcohol is used as a carrier for date-rape drugs, and alcohol

increases the effects of abused prescription and illegal drugs.

School is your ally in the struggle to keep kids safe,

but a lot depends on you. Tell your kids what you value, and do so early and often. Work with other parents to provide safe places for teen parties. And let your kids know you've got their back, come rain or come shine. It's never too early or too late for that.

## All-Stars Program Supports Good Decisions by Young Teens

All-Stars, the middle-school program that fosters good decision-making by focusing on the future, is coming to a school near you.

"All Stars Core is designed to delay the onset of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, as well as early sexual activity and violence," explains All-Stars program director and teacher Michele Biondo.

Offered through the Park Ridge Recreation & Park District in conjunction with the MaineStay Youth & Family Services, the popular 10-hour program will be held from 3 to 4 p.m. and runs April 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29; May 6, 13, 20 and 27; and June 3 in Room 20 at Lincoln Middle School, Park Ridge.

All-Stars reinforces the belief that risky behaviors are not normal or acceptable by the adolescent's peer group, and cultivates the belief that risky behaviors do not fit with the youth's personal ideals and future

aspirations. All-Stars creates strong, voluntary, personal, and public commitments to NOT participate in risky behaviors, and strengthens relationships between the adolescent, social institutions, and significant adults. The program helps parents and other significant adults to listen to their children, communicate clear, no-use expectations about alcohol and other drugs, and support their children in working towards positive life goals.

Research has shown that students who have participated in All-Stars have had a significantly improved commitment to avoiding high-risk behavior. Participants have also increased their bonding to school. All-Star students viewed high-risk behavior to be less accepted, and they continued to view their own lifestyle as incongruent with high-risk behaviors.

Registration will be through the Park Ridge Park District. For registration details, call the Park District at 847/692-5127. To learn more about All-Stars, visit us at [www.allstarsprevention.com](http://www.allstarsprevention.com).



## Clearing the Air: Smoking Is Not Cool With a Big Majority of Teens

Eighty-one percent (81%) of students in Maine Township high schools chose NOT to smoke, according to results of the 2007 MCYAF Student Use and Perception Survey of 4,634 students.

To reinforce that NOT smoking is what most teens are doing, posters and flyers using this positive statistic are placed where students will see them, says Tricia Williams of the Social Norms Marketing Project. You may have seen these posters around the community; they are also displayed in Maine Township high schools. In addition, "Food for Thought" flyers with the

information are displayed in the student cafeteria and Stall Street Journal flyers are displayed in the restrooms."

The latest issue relays the message that every year, more Illinois residents choose not to smoke. In 1997, 76.8 percent of residents were smoke-free; in 2006, that number had climbed to 79.5 percent, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2007, Maine Township students were doing even better, with 81 percent going smoke-free.

The Social Norms Marketing Project is a partnership of MCYAF and the Maine Township High Schools that collects information from students about their own use or non-use of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, as well as on what they perceive their peers' use or non-use is. For more information, contact Tricia Williams at [social-norms@sbcglobal.net](mailto:social-norms@sbcglobal.net) or 847/696-1570, x356.

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### Common Sense Tips for Keeping Kids Clean

Alcohol and tobacco are the drugs most often abused by youth, and cocaine and heroin may be the most feared by parents, but there are other substance abuse dangers out there. Warn older elementary school students and middle-schoolers never to inhale household product fumes, as even one time can cause severe brain damage or death.

Tell pre-teens as well as teens that smoking marijuana hurts schoolwork and physical performance because it harms memory, concentration and motor skills.

Tell kids of all ages that medicines are off-limits without your permission: Prescription drugs for pain, anxiety and attention-deficit disorder, as well as cold and cough medicines that you buy over-the-counter but sign for at the pharmacy, are frequently abused. (If they're not in your medicine cabinet, they're in the cabinet at a friend's house, and sharing or trading drugs

is a trend. Keep your own meds under control and ask the parents of your child's friends to do the same.)

If your child says a friend of his smokes marijuana, says he tried beer at a party, or asks what would happen if a person used somebody else's ADD or pain pills, don't react in a way that cuts off further conversation. Ask why, and listen to the answer. Explain the facts and suggest smarter alternatives. If he says defensively that he doesn't know anyone who uses drugs, ask why he thinks some people do use them. Listen to the answer, and suggest smarter alternatives. Most of all, make sure you yourself are modeling better alternatives to boredom, stress, disappointment and other normal human problems.

Remind kids that one in ten people has a greater-than-normal chance of becoming addicted, but that even without addiction, experimenting isn't worth the risk. One bad experience, such as being high and misjudging how long it takes to cross a busy street, can change or end a life forever. And that's a pretty long time.

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We appreciate your interest in the fight to protect our youth and provide them the quality of life they deserve. If you are interested in making a financial or in-kind donation or supporting our efforts by volunteering your time and talent, please contact us. You can visit us at [www.mcyaf.com](http://www.mcyaf.com).

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*Paid for in part by grants from the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Illinois Department of Human Services.*