

# SUBSTANCE USE

# Integrated Health Pathway



## Fast Facts About Substance Use

### How does substance use affect teen brains?

- Teen brains are still developing and all drugs harm brain development.
- Teen brains are more likely to become dependent on drugs than adult brains.
- Drugs make it harder for teen brains to learn new things and remember what they've learned.

### What am I risking?

- Legal problems
- School problems
- Family problems
- Money problems
- Health problems
- Accidents
- Regrets
- Addiction
- **What else can you think of?**

### How does substance use affect mental health?

- In the short term, it can seem like using drugs will help us feel less anxious, less sad, less fearful, and help us forget about our problems.
- In reality, using drugs causes our brains to feel MORE anxious, sad, and fearful after the high wears off.
- Drugs can interfere with meds you may be taking like antidepressants

### What about vaping?

- When you vape, you are using nicotine, the same drug found in cigarettes.
- Nicotine is highly addictive, especially for teens. It can happen quickly and can be really difficult to quit.
- We do not know what the long-term effects of vaping might be.



### QUESTIONS?

Scan this QR code to see more links to facts for teens

### CRISIS?

If you need help, don't wait.  
Talk to a safe adult or call 988.

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### Healthy ways to cope with stress

#### Exercise

- Get outside if possible
- Get your heartrate up
- Stretch before and after
- Exercise with a friend to boost the fun and crush even more stress

#### Friends and Family

- Spend time with people you love and let them know you care about them
- Do something kind for someone else

#### Mindfulness

- Look up mindfulness practices on YouTube
- Practice noticing your thoughts and staying present
- Allow your breathing to slow and notice where you're holding tension

#### Limit social media

- Set app limits on your phone or delete your accounts

#### Gratitude

- Keep a gratitude journal daily
- Look for 3 things to be grateful for every day
- Spread gratitude around... let others know you're grateful for them!

#### Creativity

- Draw, build, paint, craft
- Sing, act, dance, make a video

### What else can help me feel better?

#### Reduce use

- Longer times between use
- Use less each time

#### Get support

- Having a partner makes change easier

#### Coping with cravings

- Remember that cravings are always temporary
- Make a plan to ride it out

#### Plan your distractions

- What can you use to distract yourself from using?

#### Invest in good friends

- Work at building friendships that make you stronger
- Spend time with people who want you to succeed



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