



TIPS & TRENDS

For Parents

OCTOBER 2020



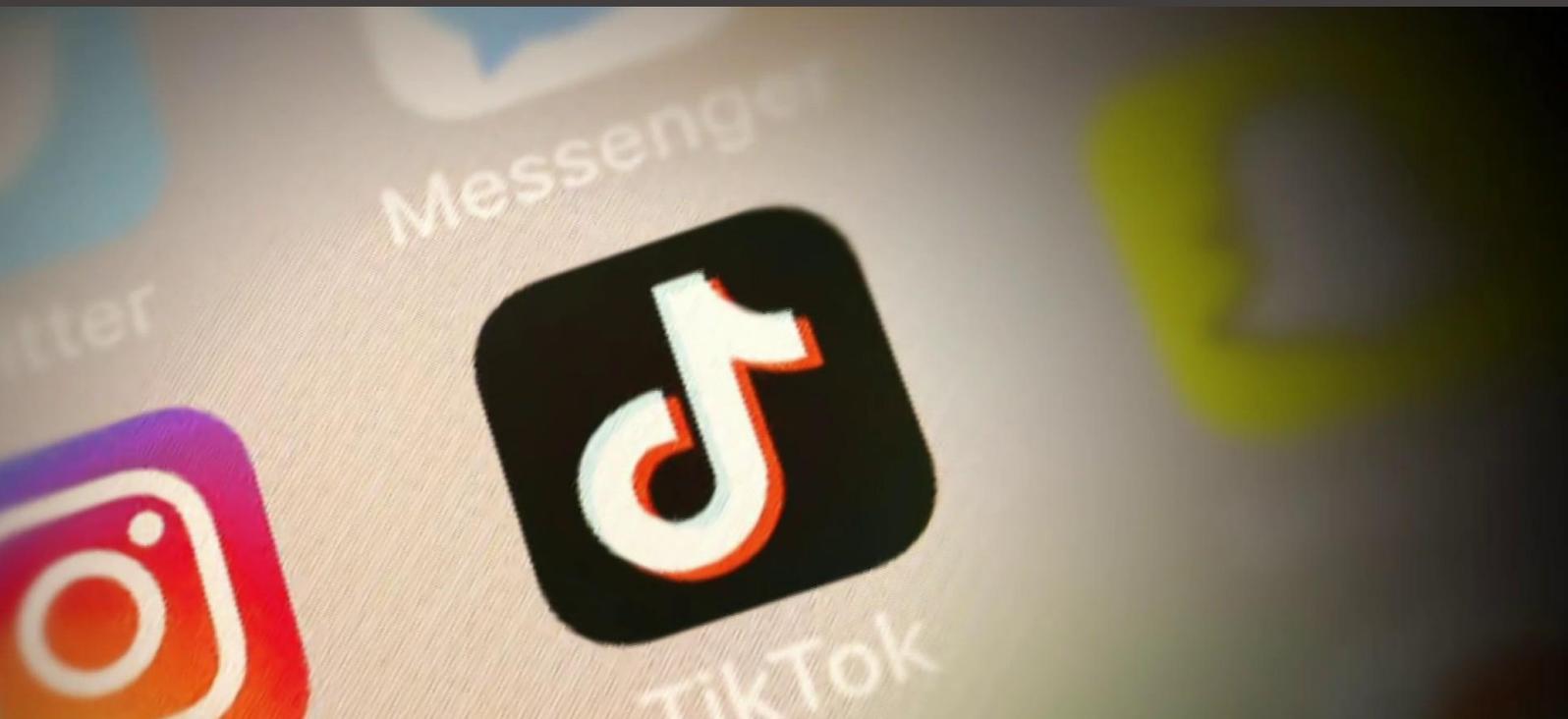
We're Here For You!

This monthly publication will be offered to parents/guardians of youth in middle and high school to provide relevant information and resources to keep your kids safe in regards to the following: peer pressure, alcohol and other drugs/substances, youth mental health, internet safety, trafficking, physician prescribing safety, and other current trends in our area.

According to the Department of Justice, parents are still the more powerful influence in their children's lives. Youth who learn about drugs and alcohol from their parents are 50% less likely to use than those who don't. Healthy, frequent conversations are the key to creating a safe environment for youth to ask questions and become more knowledgeable about the dangers of early drug/alcohol use, and we're here to help arm parents with the tools to make that happen!

Our Goals:

1. To prevent youth from using substances.
2. To keep parents updated on current trends related to substance use/abuse in youth.
3. To offer information on different substances youth are exposed to at various ages.
4. To share resources on substance use and mental health challenges in youth.
5. To talk about different strategies parents can use to have conversations with their youth about topics such as alcohol, substance use, mental health, addiction, and other challenging topics.
6. To provide information/resources to address youth that may already be using/abusing/experimenting with alcohol and/or other drugs.
7. To support parents.



NOW TRENDING

By now, most of the world is familiar with the social media platform TikTok, and most of the world knows about the challenges on there we all hate to love! The catchy songs and dances are appealing to teens and adults alike, but the seemingly more hidden challenges popping up have many people wondering, *Could my child be exposed to a TikTok challenge that puts their health at risk?*

Enter: The Benadryl Challenge. That's right, an alarming new trend on the popular social media platform has teens all over the world "challenging" others to take dangerously high doses of the antihistamine, an activity experts are warning could be fatal. In July, Cook Children's Medical Center in Texas reported that three teens had been hospitalized in a single week after ingesting large amounts of Benadryl. In Oklahoma, preliminary reports suggest the "challenge" may be connected to the death of a 15 year old whose cause of death has yet to be revealed.

"One of the teens who ended up at Cook Children's is a 14 year-old named Rebekah," the July 14th post reads. "She took 14 Benadryl pills in the middle of the night on Memorial Day." Cook Children's added that the Benadryl binge was inspired by TikTok videos that reportedly showed teens hallucinating from ingesting high doses. The phenomenon is the latest in a string of dangerous TikTok trends including the Nutmeg Challenge and the Cinnamon Challenge." -Abby Haglage: September 2, 2020

Vaping: Too Close For Comfort

E-cigarette use, also known as vaping, has been steadily increasing among teens for the past three years. The Wisconsin DHS estimates that one out of every 5 teens engages in regular e-cigarette use, with that number being even higher since COVID-19 restrictions were put in place. One of the major concerns about vaping is that vape devices can be used as a delivery system for other drugs. Nearly any type of drug can be vaped but the most common substances are nicotine and marijuana. According to the DHS health advisory, about one third of middle and high school students who use e-cigarettes use them as a delivery device for marijuana.

There are hundreds of vaping devices on the market today. Some are designed for vaping nicotine, others are specific to vaping dry marijuana, and some are made to vape THC concentrates. Pod style devices such as JUUL, Novo, Alto, Sourin Drop, Edge, and Air are popular among teens because they are easy to conceal, draw activated, and produce little to no vapor. Other popular vape devices found in school settings are dab pens and THC carts. These types of devices look like any other vape device, making it difficult to distinguish a nicotine vape from a marijuana vape. Like the pod style devices, these devices don't produce large clouds of vapor and they hide the smell of marijuana, making them easy to use virtually anywhere undetected. Some of the newer devices on the market, such as Airis, allow users to vape nicotine on one end and THC concentrate on the other.

Disposable Fruit and Candy-Flavored Vape Devices Raise Concerns

By City of Milwaukee Tobacco-Free Alliance



On February 6, 2020, a new FDA regulation went into effect banning certain types of e-cigarettes thought to be most attractive to youth --reusable pod-based devices in all flavors except tobacco and menthol. New types of disposable e-cigarettes, however, seem to have no trouble blasting through the many loopholes in the new federal regulation.

Take Puff Bars, for example, which seem to be replacing JUULs as the go-to vape device that appeals to youth. Puff Bars, like JUUL, look like USB drives and offer tasty flavors, like O.M.G. (orange, mango, and guava), Café Latte, watermelon, Banana Ice, and lemonade. But JUUL isn't able to sell fruit- and candy-flavored vape pods under the new regulations. Puff Bars, in contrast, sell a limitless number of flavors because they're disposable, and single-use devices in all flavors are allowable under the new regulations, assuming they received FDA market authorization if introduced after August 8, 2016. Puff Bars and similar devices have not received market authorization, according to research from Rutgers University.

Another difference? The price point. JUULs cost up to \$34.99, while the single-use Puff Bars are priced as low as \$4.60 and deliver more nicotine than JUULs, according to research from the Truth Initiative.

Puff Bars contain nicotine salts, "a formula that allows for much higher levels and efficient delivery of nicotine with less irritation compared to earlier generations of e-cigarettes," Truth Initiative states.

Although Puff Bars slipped through the cracks in the new regulations, there's one bright spot. The maker of Puff Bars said it will no longer distribute or license these devices, although Puff Bars still can be purchased online. Look for more devices on the market that exploit the loopholes in the flavor ban, and expect more youth to grab onto the latest e-cigarette that is tailored to their tastes.

Maryland recently took action to prevent a new generation of youth addicted to nicotine by extending the federal ban on flavored e-cigarette cartridges to disposable devices.

COVID-19: Resilient Wisconsin

The COVID-19 pandemic has temporarily changed the way we work and live, go to school, and spend time together. Limiting close contact with each other protects everyone's health, including those who are most vulnerable. It also helps ensure vital health care resources remain available for those who need them. But knowing that change is important doesn't make it easy. As we all adapt to recent events, it's natural to feel stress, worry, and even anger.

Recognizing the signs of stress and anxiety:

Strong emotions, and even physical reactions, are a natural response to traumatic events like a natural disaster or pandemic. There's no right or wrong way to feel or act, and your reactions may change over time. That's why it's important to understand your responses during stressful events—so that you can better manage what you're feeling and recognize when you may need the support of a mental health or medical professional.

Look for these common reactions to traumatic events, now and as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.

- Mood swings and intense feelings, including fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, sadness, anger, guilt, and disorientation
 - Denial, detachment or avoidance
 - Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Irritability, strained relationships and conflicts with family, friends and co-workers
 - Changes in your normal sleep or eating patterns
 - Soreness, nausea, head or stomach aches
- Elevated breathing, heartbeats, and blood pressure
- Sensitivity to unusual sounds, smells and changes in your environment
 - A worsening of preexisting chronic or mental health conditions
 - Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

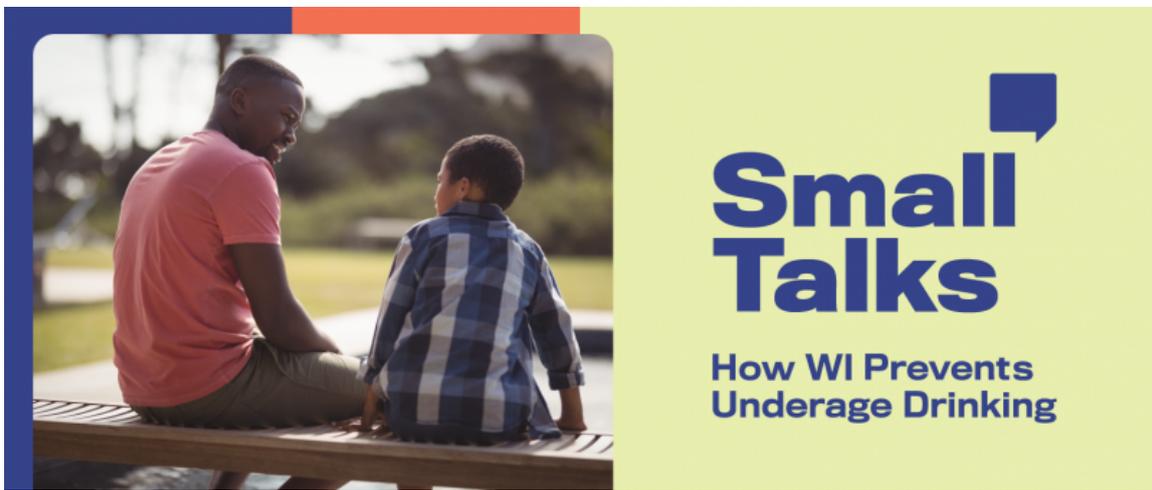
Research shows that people are resilient. With time and support, we're able to recover from adversity. It's OK to ask for help. Remember the challenges you've overcome in the past; it's good to remind yourself of your own ability to bounce back. Just remember that recovery is a process. Give yourself time to adjust, now and after the COVID-19 pandemic ends.

Remember that your children are adjusting to this "new normal" right along with you, many grieving the loss of their freedom and routine as well as some missed milestones. While some may have developed coping skills of their own over the years, many will be looking to you as an example during this time, making the importance of taking care of yourself even greater. For helpful resources on self-care for you and your child, visit www.centerhealthyminds.org/well-being-toolkit-covid19

A word about suicide risk in teens

Not everyone who considers suicide will talk about it, and not everyone who talks about suicide will act on their words. However, any talk about suicide should be taken seriously. If you are worried about your teen, it is critical to make your home safe by removing weapons and ammunition from the house and securing medications in a locked cabinet.

Seek help immediately by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK or texting the Crisis Text Line by texting 'TALK' to 741741. Reserve 911 for situations where self-harming actions are happening or are about to happen. In a non-crisis situation, talk with your pediatrician about any concerns you have about your teen's mental health.



Small Talks: Get the Facts on Underage Drinking

Why should you talk to kids about alcohol? Underage drinking is a real problem in Wisconsin, and it starts earlier and can be more dangerous than you might think. But parents, loved ones, and other caring adults can make a real difference. All you have to do is talk. That's right. Having small, casual conversations with kids, starting around age 8, can help prevent underage drinking.

Underage drinking in Wisconsin

The good news? Nationally, underage drinking is becoming less popular. The bad news? Wisconsin's kids aren't keeping up with the trend. The percentage of Wisconsin teens who've tried alcohol exceeds the national average. While underage drinking rates dropped 6 percentage points between 2013 and 2017 nationwide, Wisconsin's rate dropped only 1 percentage point.





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