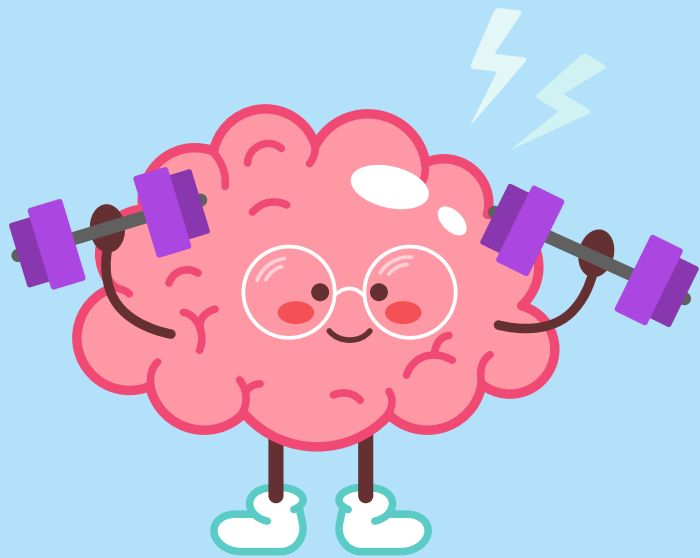


MINDFUL MONTHS



LCAC | Levittown
Community
Action
Coalition



YES Community
Counseling
Center

***Calendar Year
2023-2024***

Our Mission

As a community coalition dedicated to the prevention of youth substance use, our aim is to provide the Levittown and Island Trees communities with the tools to maximize protective factors and minimize risk factors. This includes supplying parents with ways to protect their child's brain health. With this calendar, we hope you learn new ways to support your child's growth as their brain adapts and transforms with the evolving world around them. We use the domains listed below as supports to strengthen and maintain youth brain health.

Academic Engagement

The extent to which a student applies themselves and engages in learning/school activities.

Social Activities

An informal, recreational activity with others that enriches and provides joy to the participant.

Substance Use

The use of selected substances that when consumed may cause dependence or detrimental effects.

Mindfulness

Maintaining a conscious awareness of thoughts and feelings through a non-judgmental and gentle perspective.

Physical Activity

Any bodily movement that expends energy, all activities of any intensity fall under this term.

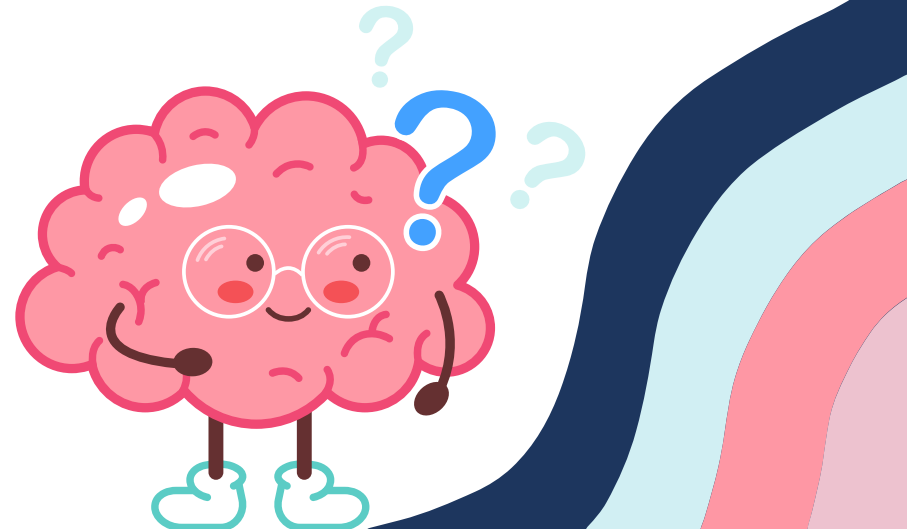
Sleeping Habits

Behavior regarding time to bed, time to rise, and the duration of a night's sleep.

Levittown Community Action Coalition (LCAC)

Founded in 2015, LCAC works together with dedicated individuals and entities from the Levittown community to reduce substance misuse through education, awareness, and empowerment. Members of the coalition include representatives from our schools, youth, law enforcement, media, hospitals, libraries, substance abuse treatment agencies, civic groups, businesses, religious organizations, state and local agencies, and other organizations involved in substance abuse prevention.

www.lcacoalition.org
516-719-0313, x223



LCAC Partners and Stakeholders

LCAC is comprised of a dedicated group of individuals representing state and local stakeholders who share in our mission to reduce substance misuse. Our partners and stakeholders offer their unique strengths and abilities to promote recognition, education, and community awareness of substance misuse within the community. These invaluable members include:

- Dalton Funeral Home
- District 15 Nassau County Legislature
- District 13 Nassau County Legislature
- Girl Scouts of Nassau County
- Hispanic Alliance for Prevention
- Island Trees Library
- Island Trees Public Schools
- Island Trees PTA
- Levittown PTA
- Levittown Chamber of Commerce
- Levittown Community Council
- Levittown Fire Department
- Levittown PAL Program
- Levittown Public Schools
- Levittown Y.O.U.T.H.
- Levittown/Island Trees Youth Council
- Levittown Library
- Long Island Prevention Resource Center
- Nassau County Office of Mental Health, Chemical Dependency, and Developmental Disabilities Services
- New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services/NYS OASAS
- Nassau County District Attorney's Office
- New York State Assembly District Office
- Nassau County Police Department
- New York National Guard Counterdrug Task Force
- Parent Advocates
- Partnering in Action Change for Tomorrow - YES
- Saint Bernard's Parish
- Seaford Library
- St. Joseph's Hospital
- Town of Hempstead Council VFW Post 9592
- Wantagh Levittown Volunteer Ambulance Corp.
- Anton News
- Wantagh Lions Club
- YES Community Counseling Center



Funding and School Partnerships

LCAC is funded through the Drug Free Communities Support Program, managed in partnership with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. This grant was accepted by the Levittown Union Free School District in 2019 and has allowed for LCAC to build dynamic partnerships and tangible prevention strategy.

LCAC thanks the Levittown and Island Trees school districts for their partnerships, which greatly contribute to LCAC's ability

to evaluate youth substance use and implement population level change.



YES Community Counseling Center

LCAC operates out of YES Community Counseling Center at 152 Center Lane in Levittown. YES is Levittown's licensed prevention and substance use treatment provider delivering a wide range of counseling and services to youth and families including addiction treatment services, school-based prevention programming, youth financial literacy, community education, coalition building, and professional training.

YES has locations in Massapequa and Levittown, but services individuals within southeastern and central Nassau County.



Academic Engagement

Defining Engagement

True learning occurs when children actively engage with their educational activities.¹

Engagement refers to a combination of the level of intensity and the duration that children actively interact with adults, peers, materials, and activities in their surroundings, aligning appropriately with their developmental stage, skill level, and environmental context.²

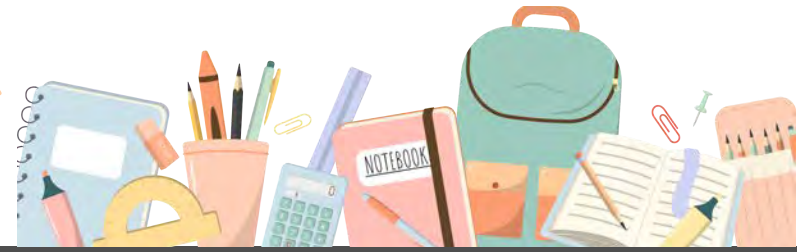


The Science

- School engagement is a primary factor in predicting completion of schooling and future academic and professional success.³
- Engaged students are 4.5 times more likely to be hopeful about the future versus their disengaged peers.⁴

Communicating With Your Child

- Some children feel controlled when it comes to their education, causing them to withdraw from their learning experience.
 - When at home, it is important to give them the power to control their own learning experience and allow them to choose their own activity outside of school as an outlet.
- As your child's first source of validation, it is important to praise them when deserved and show genuine interest in their education while supporting them.⁵
- Maintain a relationship with your child that is open, respectful, and positive.
- Focus on supporting and encouraging them instead of worrying or harping on shortcomings in school.
- Being firm yet understanding sends the message to your child that you know they can succeed.⁶





September 2023



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Sleeping Habits

No one likes a bad night of sleep. In the short term, bad sleep can cause visible fatigue, difficulty concentrating, moodiness, and more. Did you know that poor sleeping habits in childhood may put your child at risk for health problems later in life, including mental health issues and substance use disorders?



The science

- In a landmark study, researchers found that poor quality of sleep among children aged 3 to 5 years old significantly predicted early onset of alcohol, marijuana, cigarette, and illicit drug by age 12 to 14.⁷
- Sleep disturbances in childhood have been shown to contribute to later development of mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Likewise, depression and anxiety can also contribute to difficulties sleeping.⁸

BEARS



How can I identify if my child is having sleep problems:

B - Bedtime - Does my child have trouble going to bed? Or trouble falling asleep?

E - Excessive Daytime Sleepiness - Is my child difficult to awaken in the morning? Does my child seem sleepy or groggy during the day?

A - Awakening During the Night - Does my child awaken during the night and have trouble going back to sleep?

R - Regularity and Duration of Sleep - What time does my child go to bed and get up on weekdays? On weekends? Does this allow my child to get enough sleep every day?

S - Snoring - Does my child snore? Loudly? Every Night?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, your child may have a sleep problem that should be discussed with your pediatrician.⁹



October 2023



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Physical Health

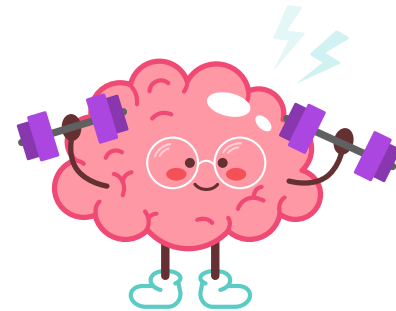
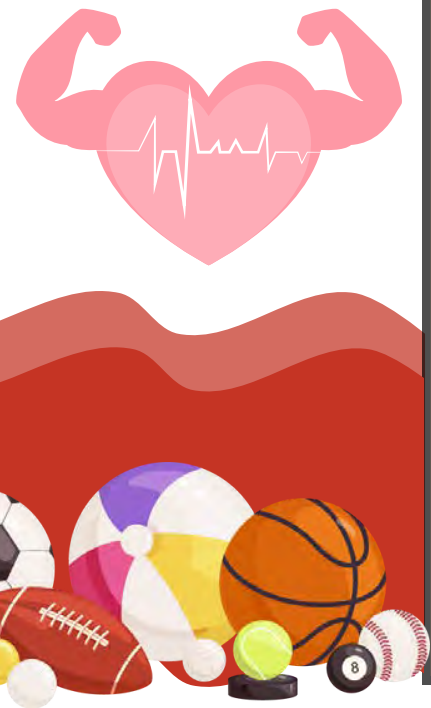
Children ages 6 through 17 are recommended to be complete at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Physical activity promotes healthy growth and physical, mental, social, and emotional development. Children tend to be more active when they are outdoors, so in the colder months it is important to bring physical activities inside.¹⁰

The Science

- Regular physical activity triggers the release of chemicals in the brain that encourage growth and promote brain plasticity, the ability to form new neural connections.
- Exercise leads to an increase in neurotransmitters such as serotonin or dopamine, helping improve mood, alertness, and focus.

What are the benefits?

- **Cardio activities**
 - Certain sports, walking/running, playing outside, dancing, etc.
 - These activities help to increase the size of the hippocampus and preserve brain matter, improving memory and cognitive function.¹¹
- **Strengthening activities**
 - Gymnastics, football, martial arts, resistance exercises, sit ups, skiing/snowboarding, climbing, etc.
 - These activities help to create brain changes in the frontal lobe that help us plan, focus, remember, and multitask.¹²





November 2023



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Substance Use



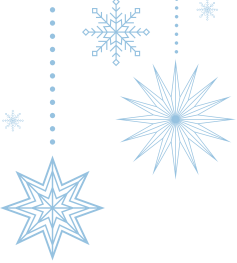
The holidays often mean celebrations and good cheer. They're a time to gather with close friends and family to share love and laughter after a long year. It's no surprise that alcohol is used as a part of the celebrations. However, it's important for your child to associate holidays with positive memories, and not substance use.

The Science

- Youth and young adults are vulnerable to adult substance use. One study found that a 5% increase in binge drinking among adults is associated with a 12% increase among youth.¹³
- Alcohol use significantly increases on holidays, with one study finding a 112% increase in alcohol use on Christmas Eve alone compared to baseline use.¹⁴

Tips for this Holiday Season

- **Model healthy celebrations** - Adolescents often mimic what they learn from their parents. Be mindful that your kids are watching and listening.
- **Plan holiday celebrations that are substance free** - Make a gingerbread house, host a holiday movie night, bake holiday cookies, or attend nearby light shows.
- **When engaging in alcohol use, try to do so in moderation.**
- **Don't be afraid to have a conversation about alcohol use with your child**, making sure to note that alcohol is intended only for adults aged 21 and older.




December 2023



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Mindfulness



Mindfulness is a state of mind, granting the ability to be fully aware of the present moment. This is done through maintaining an awareness of thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and the surrounding environment, knowing that there is no "right" or "wrong" way to feel. Phones, tablets, and social media often make it difficult to feel present in the current moment and be aware of how we feel.¹⁵

Mindful Activities

- Pretend to walk on thin ice
 - Walking slowly and carefully teaches your child to become more aware of their body and the movements of their body.
- Journaling
 - Your child can write about their daily activities (or you could listen and write it down for them). With more practice, these entries will become more detailed, and will allow for greater reflection.¹⁸
- Limit screen time and do activities that require physical presence and attention like yoga and meditation.



The Science

- Mindfulness has many benefits, physically, mentally, and emotionally.
 - Decreased stress and anxiety
 - Improved focus and awareness, problem solving, and impulse control.¹⁶
- Mindfulness increases the amount of connections in the brain as well as the ability to form such.
 - These connections help people to be less reactive to their stressors and to recover more efficiently from stress.¹⁷

A Mindful Approach to New Years Resolutions

- Consider your intentions.
- Focus on progress, not results.
- Be kind to yourself.
- Turn your attention to the habits that you want to change, and look at what sustains those habits.¹⁹





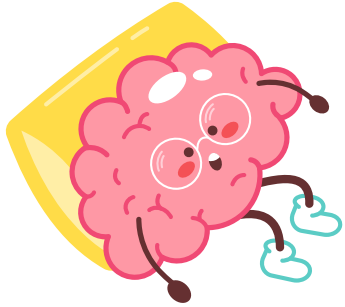
January 2024



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Sleeping Habits



October discussed the risks of poor sleep and how to identify poor sleeping habits in your child, but how do you make sure they're getting enough restful sleep? Here are some tips and tricks to consider:

REMEMBER! → Preschoolers (ages 3-5 years) generally need between 10-13 hours of sleep per night, and school-age children (ages 6-13 years) need between 9-11 hours of sleep per night.

- 1** Stick to the same bedtime and wake time every day, even on weekends. Bedtime routines should also be consistent and predictable.
- 2** **Beds are for sleeping.** Lying on a bed and doing other activities like watching TV makes it hard for your child's brain to associate their bed with sleep.
- 3** A child's bedroom environment should be cool, quiet, and comfortable.
- 4** Turn alarm clocks away from children who tend to stare at the clock, waiting and hoping to fall asleep.
- 5** **Quiet, calm, and relaxing activities.** Avoid activities that are excessively stimulating right before bed like watching television, using a tablet or computer, and playing video games. It is best to keep video games, televisions, or phones out of the bedroom and to limit their use at least 1 hour before bedtime.
- 6** **Start the day off right with exercise.** Exercising earlier in the day can help children feel more energetic and awake during the day, have an easier time focusing, and even help with falling and staying asleep.
- 7** Cuddle up with a stuffed animal or soft blanket.
- 8** **Maintain a sleep diary** in order to track naps, bedtimes, wake times, and behaviors. This will help to find patterns and work on particular problems when things are not going well.²⁰



Social Activities

Socializing

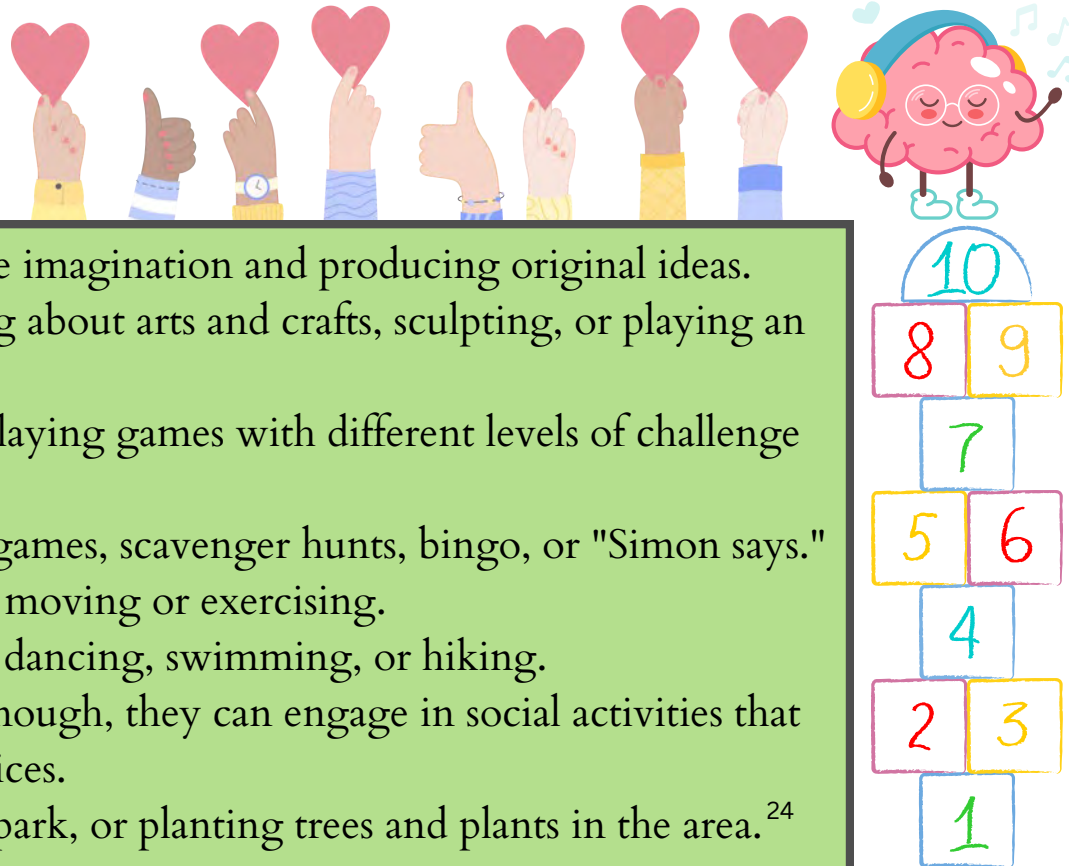
Socializing in early childhood is extremely important for brain development. When children have the opportunity to create friendships and interact with people outside of the family, they are able to improve their language skills, foster empathy, understand sharing and teamwork, grow self-confidence, and be better prepared for the expectations of others in different settings.²¹

The Science

- Research has found that social ties in childhood are crucial to brain health.
 - Socialization stimulates attention and memory, strengthening networks in the brain.²²
- Social isolation in children leads to higher levels of cortisol (stress hormone) in the brain and possible deficits in cognitive development.²³

Types of Social Activities

- **Creative Social Activities** - Activities that involve imagination and producing original ideas.
 - Examples: Drawing, painting, singing, learning about arts and crafts, sculpting, or playing an instrument.
- **Game Social Activities** - Activities that involve playing games with different levels of challenge and competition.
 - Examples: Problem solving, tug of war, video games, scavenger hunts, bingo, or "Simon says."
- **Motion Social Activities** - Activities that involve moving or exercising.
 - Examples: Riding a bike, playing a team sport, dancing, swimming, or hiking.
- **Altruism Social Activities** - Once a child is old enough, they can engage in social activities that involve doing things for others and providing services.
 - Examples: Volunteering, picking up litter at a park, or planting trees and plants in the area.²⁴





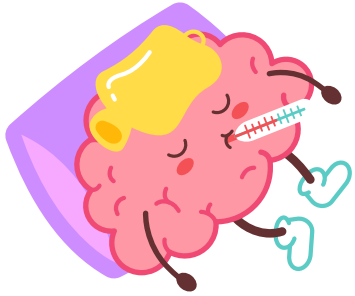
March 2024



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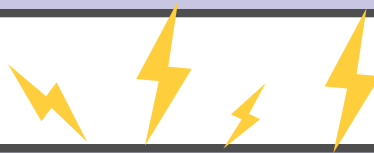
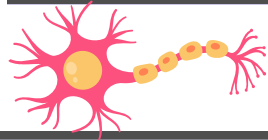


Substance Use



It can be hard to think about drugs or alcohol ever weaving its way into your child's life, especially when they are at a young age. Helping to identify risk factors and protective strategies early in life can help prevent these problems. One major risk factor contributing to youth substance use is stress, which parents can help to identify and manage.

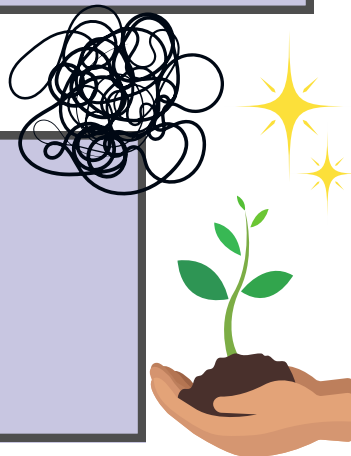
The Science



- In adolescence, your child's brain undergoes extensive "rewiring," that ultimately helps them to process information more efficiently and respond appropriately.
- Adolescents are particularly sensitive to stressors and when facing excessive stress or harm, the brain is "rewired" under these conditions, This can lead to poor emotional and behavioral regulation and increase their likelihood to use and misuse substances.²⁵

Signs and symptoms of stress

- Anger, irritability, and outbursts
- Behavioral changes
- Changes in diet and eating habits
- Change in sleep patterns or trouble sleeping
- Getting sick more often²⁶



Managing stress as a risk factor

- Take care of your mental health and model healthy coping mechanisms. Your child looks to you for guidance.
- Encourage your child to independently problem-solve. This will give them confidence to deal with stress on their own.
- Limit screen time. Social media and can serve as a major stressor for kids especially because of the content they may find or because of cyberbullying.
- Teach positive self-talk. Encourage children to reframe how they think of themselves. This will help to be resilient in the face of stress.²⁶

April 2024



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Mindfulness

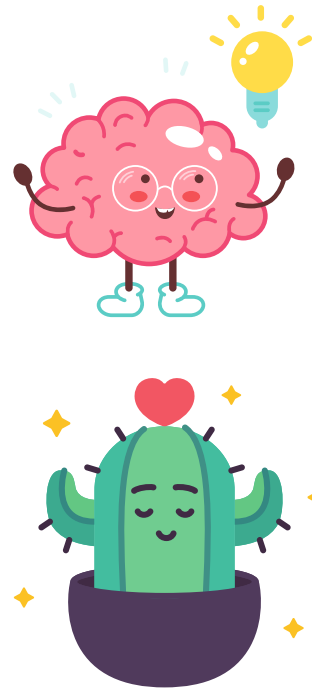
Gratification

Instant gratification is the term for seeking out immediate pleasure without thinking about long term goals. **Delayed gratification** refers to the ability to delay an instant reward for the purpose of achieving greater benefits at a later time.²⁷

We receive constant instant gratification in everyday life from social media, video games, or overuse of screen time.

The Science

- Researchers have found that children who are able to delay gratification have higher SAT scores, better social skills, and better emotional coping skills.²⁸
- Dopamine release is high in the brain when instantly gratified, but repeated instant gratification will cause a child to need more dopamine than normal to feel good during an activity. This can eventually even cause depression and anxiety. Practicing delayed gratification can eventually reverse the effects of instant gratification, making dopamine have a stronger effect on the brain.²⁹



THE FAMOUS MARSHMALLOW TEST

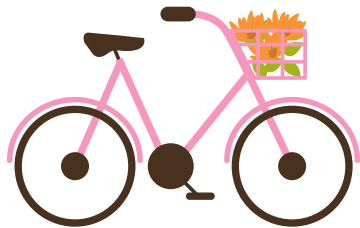


Positive distraction helps to prevent your child from acting on impulse. In the famous marshmallow test, children are left alone with a marshmallow for 15 minutes, and are promised a second one if they don't eat the first right away. Children that could distract themselves with song or play were able to delay the impulse to eat the first marshmallow and received the reward of a second.³⁰

Practicing Delayed Gratification

Self-regulation

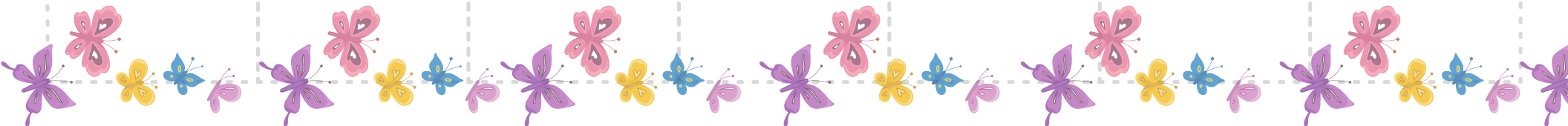
- It can be difficult for children to regulate their emotions and impulses. Practices like making a wish list for toys they want, goal-setting, journaling, and positive self-talk makes children reevaluate their impulses, emotions, and expectations.³⁰



May 2024



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Academic Engagement

Motivate Your Child

- Incorporate the "When You" Rule
 - Start by saying things like:
 - "When you finish studying, you can go play with your friends" or "When your homework is done, we can go and do something fun" .
- Create Structure for your child
 - This may include scheduled homework times without technological distraction or extra study time by reviewing and reading.
- Break Assignments into Manageable Pieces
 - If you need to, help them break down their assignments into smaller pieces or use a calendar to mark what they should get done each day.
- Be Consistent with Homework Rules
 - Enforcing the rules with effective consequences may be necessary to help your child pay more attention to their school life. ¹
- Help Your Child Get Started With Their Homework
 - Children may be overwhelmed or unsure where to begin, so spending the first few minutes with them to make sure they understand the assignment may be helpful. ³²



Reminder

Be your child's coach and give direction, but do not be afraid to let them fail, it is part of growing up and learning to take responsibility. Be sure to pay attention to their emotions, and remember that what is happening now may look very different as your child develops

The Science

Compared to schools that were found to have low student engagement, high student engagement schools had a 129% higher rate of students exceeding progress in all subjects.

31





June 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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Substance Use



Summer means BBQs, visits to the pool, beach days, concerts, and lots of relaxation and fun. However, in the summer months, substance use, particularly alcohol use, increases. Here are some tips to talk with your child about alcohol.



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

1. Show you disapprove of underage drinking and other drug misuse. Send a clear and strong message that you disapprove of underage drinking and misuse of other drugs.

2. Show you care about your child's health, wellness, and success. Reinforce why you don't want your child to drink or use other drugs—because you want your child to be happy and safe.

3. Establish yourself as a trustworthy source of information on alcohol and other drugs. You want your child to make informed decisions about alcohol and other drugs with reliable information about their dangers.

4. Show you're paying attention and you'll discourage risky behaviors. Show you're aware of what your child is up to, but in a subtle and caring matter without prying.

5. Build your child's skills and strategies for avoiding underage drinking and drug use. Talk with your child about what they would do if faced with a decision about alcohol and drugs, such as texting a code word to a family member or practicing how they'll say "no thanks."³³

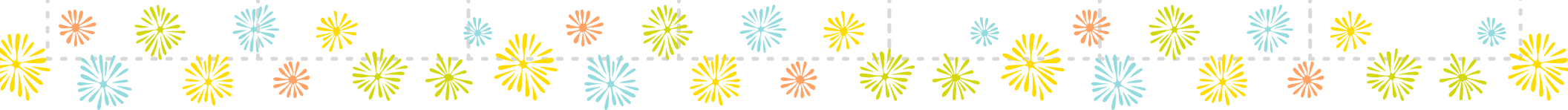
The "Talk. They Hear You." Campaign aims to help parents of children ages 9 and up to take action to prevent youth alcohol use. For more information, visit www.samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you.



July 2024

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Physical Health

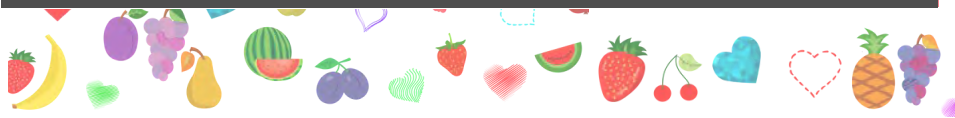
The Science

- Adolescent body dissatisfaction has been shown to predict the onset of risky health behaviors later in life such as alcohol, drug, and cannabis use.
- Poor relationships with food and disordered eating has a strong effect on an adolescent's body dissatisfaction, contributing further to their likelihood for later substance use.
- Parents and community members can help children to develop healthy attitudes towards food and a healthy and happy body. ³⁴

Supporting Children's Body Image

Be a positive body image role model for your child by:

- Accepting that bodies come in all shapes and sizes.
- Encouraging your child to be aware of social media and societal messages about appearance.
- Avoiding talking about diets, engaging in dieting, and encouraging your child to diet. ³⁵



Being healthy does not require perfection! Eating foods like fruits, vegetables, proteins, and healthy fats will help your child's growth and development, but children are still deserving of treats and fun foods. Teaching your child to enjoy everything in moderation and not labeling certain foods as "bad foods" will help to avoid unhealthy views of food and promote more long-term healthy food habits. ³⁶



REMEMBER!
STAY HYDRATED

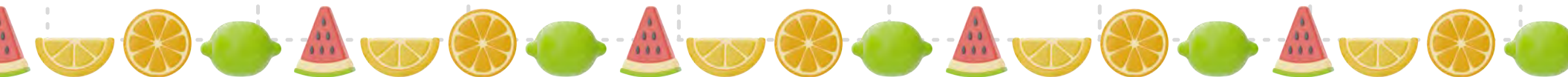
Children under 8 years old should drink at least 4-6 glasses of water and those older than 8 should have at least 6-9 glasses. In the hotter months, however, children are at a greater risk of dehydration, especially if they are active outside, and should drink more than this recommended amount. ³⁷



August 2024



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Levittown Young Organizers United to Help

As a group of youth from the Levittown and Island Trees Middle and High Schools, we create positive change in the Levittown community by raising awareness about the risks and consequences of drug and alcohol use among youth and helping to reduce access to these substances. We accomplish this through a variety of projects, including Sticker Shock Campaign, Drug Take-Back Events, Environmental Scans, Media Campaigns, Town Hall Meetings, and Presentations.



**TO LEARN MORE
SCAN BELOW:**



Working together, we can reduce underage drinking and youth substance use.



YES COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER'S CLINICAL SERVICES

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1977

All services are provided alongside Individual and Family Counseling. Telehealth services are available.

Our mission is to help increase awareness about personal and community issues, prevent and treat substance misuse, and promote healthy families and a safe community. We assist young people, adults, and families in our effort to enable them to develop to their potential.

Adult Group Services



- **Addiction/Stress Management**
- **Education and Recovery Support**
- **Family Support** (for those coping with addiction within the family)
- **Young Adult Support**
- **Women's Groups**
- **Self-Management and Recovery Training** (SMART)
- **Mindful Recovery** (focus on coping, mindfulness, managing addiction/mental health)

Adolescent Group Services



- **Education and Recovery Support**
- **Girls Self-Awareness**
- **Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress** (SPARCS focuses on coping, mindfulness, and communication skills)

Children's Group Services



- **Mindful Kids/Tweens** (Stress Management)
- **Project Connect** (Socialization Skills for Tweens)

Other Services

- **Medication for Addiction Treatment/Psychiatric Services**
- **Parenting Classes**
- **Bereavement Support**
- **Trauma-Informed Treatment**
- **Narcan Training**
- **Food Pantry**



FOR MORE INFORMATION

call: (516) 799-3203, visit: www.yesccc.org or email: info@yesccc.org

YES MASSAPEQUA OFFICE (MAIN)

75 Grand Ave., Massapequa, NY

YES LEVITTOWN OFFICE

152 Center Lane, Levittown, NY



A Project of YES Community Counseling Center

BRIDGES PROGRAM



**FREE
MOBILE
SERVICES**

BRIDGES seeks to engage, support, and empower **young adults (16-25)** who are at risk for or living with substance misuse and mental health issues on Long Island, NY.

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Screening and assessment
- Short-term individual and family counseling
- Assistance in accessing referrals and resources
- Development of recovery plans
- Medical screening & medication evaluation
- Smoking/vaping cessation groups & more



CONTACT US

(516) 719-0313 Ext 218

www.bridgesyes.org

YES Community Counseling Center
152 Center Lane, Levittown, NY 11756

**SCHEDULE A FREE
DISCOVERY CALL IN
PERSON OR ON ZOOM!**



SERVICES ARE OFFERED IN ENGLISH & SPANISH



**YES Community Counseling Center's
Coalición Alianza Hispana
para la Prevención**

La cultura de colaboración de HAP con las Escuelas Públicas del Condado de Nassau y la comunidad incluye educación preventiva basado en evidencia, intervencion, estrategias, y programas destinada a reducir el consumo de alcohol y el uso indebido de sustancias por parte de menores.

Para mas informacion sobre recursos contacte:

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