

# What's **SAP**pening

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE CENTER FOR HUMANISTIC CHANGE STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LIAISONS

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## Upcoming Events

- American Heart Month
- Black History Month
- Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month
- Children's Dental Health Month
- 4th—World Cancer Day
- 8th—Boy Scout Day
- 11th—Make a Friend Day
- 14th—Valentine's Day
- 16th—Mardi Gras
- 22nd—Walking the Dog Day
- 27th—Polar Bear Day

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## CBD: Health Experts Concerned

CBD (cannabidiol) seems to be everywhere; a new study confirms it's one of the hottest health trends for Americans. The research found that each month, as many as 6.4 million Americans head to Google to learn about or buy CBD, equaling or surpassing interest in almost all other health products or topics.

With the boom in consumer interest comes real worry from health experts. That's because many vendors claim that CBD is a "cure-all" chemical that can treat a wide range of conditions. Right now, claims are being made for CBD's curative powers against conditions ranging from acne to anxiety, opioid addiction, pain and menstrual problems. CBD products include droplets, massage oils, gummies and even ice cream. However, CBD's new popularity is also cause for concern, one expert said. So far the FDA has approved only one CBD-containing product, Epidiolex, sanctioned by the agency to curb the symptoms of rare forms of epilepsy. And a review of available data on the effectiveness of CBD, published in August in the journal *Mayo Clinic*, found little hard evidence to back up claims.

"There are findings in pre-clinical studies that suggest CBD has anti-inflammatory effects and may be helpful with improving sleep and anxiety," said that study's author, Dr. Brent Bauer, director of research for the Mayo Clinic Integrative Medicine program.

"But trials in humans are still limited, so it is too early to be definitive about efficacy and safety."

Those sentiments were echoed by Dr. Davey Smith, a physician and chief of Infectious Diseases and Global Public Health at University of California San Diego. "At this time there are no known benefits for taking CBD over-the-counter. CBD is this generation's snake oil, where millions are engaging with the product without evidence of any benefit," he says in the University news release.

"Moreover, some consumers might forgo seeing a physician or taking medications with known, tested and approved therapeutic benefits in favor of CBD and thereby become sicker or succumb to their illness," Smith added.



## More Teens Driving While High

about 50% of teens who use marijuana on a regular basis admit to driving while high, according to a study published in *Journal of the American Medical Association Network Open*.

"Marijuana can impair cognitive abilities that are critical for safe driving," says researcher Dr. Motao Zhu, professor of epidemiology at Ohio State University College. "This is a serious issue that requires our attention." States legalizing medicinal or personal use of marijuana is a contributing factor to the number of teens driving

high. Maybe teens feel marijuana isn't as harmful as they thought in the past.

Helen Witty, national president of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, said her organization has had to pivot in the face of marijuana legalization, to help teens and parents understand that it's not safe to drive while stoned.

"MADD has its work cut out for us, because the programs that we had for alcohol, we are now adjusting for alcohol and marijuana, so that people are at least informed," she said.

"Impairment is impairment," Witty said. "You're having a hard time focusing. You're having a hard time staying in the lane. There's all kinds of spatial disparity, you might think something is farther away when it isn't. You may be speeding and have no idea you're speeding."

There's no rapid test that police can use to determine marijuana intoxication, as the breathalyzer does for drinking.

But touch-your-nose and walk-the-line tests remain useful in ferreting out impaired drivers.

There's no standard for impairment, but a person who is impaired on marijuana will usually fail the roadside test.



## Question Bank: Student Well-Being Check-ins

1. How are you feeling today?
2. What emotion are you feeling the most today?
3. What was the best part of the past week for you?
4. What was the hardest part of the past week for you?
5. What can teachers or others at school do to better help you?
6. This past week, how often did you feel [Excited? Happy? Loved? Safe? Hopeful? Angry? Lonely? Sad? Worried? Frustrated?]
7. How clearly did I teach things in class today?
8. If your friend missed class today and asked you to explain the lesson, what would you tell them?
9. What was confusing for you today?
10. How much did students in class help each other learn today?
11. How included did you feel in class today?
12. What was your favorite part of class today?
13. What got in the way of your learning today?
14. What's the biggest thing I/you could do better tomorrow to help you learn?
15. Do you feel bullied by other students?
16. How have you been sleeping recently?
17. If you could do laundry at school, how much would that help you?
18. If you could get free clothes (like jackets and shoes) at school, how much would that help you?
19. Would you like to talk privately with an adult from school about how you're feeling or is there something on your mind?

## How are our students doing?

If you're an administrator, teacher, or counselor, this has likely been on your mind—more than ever—this school year.

Checking in with students has always been important. But when routines are disrupted and we may not be in the same physical location as students, it's even more critical to keep a regular pulse on how students are doing.

Bi-weekly or monthly "check-in" surveys are a great way to gather quick feedback and find the students who need extra help right now—

academically, socially, and emotionally. They can also be an effective relationship-building tool between educators and students, especially in a virtual environment.

Explore the sidebar in the first column on this page for designing your own check-in survey for students. The questions cover areas such as well-being, the learning environment, and what students may need immediate help with. Feel free to take and modify the questions as you



## Pandemic Parenting

Parents are very stressed, frustration and anger are inevitable. You might find yourself losing your temper at kids who aren't on their best behavior either.

It's time to lower expectations. You won't be able to do as much as a parent, employee or partner. Focus on you and your children's emotional state and strive to maintain positive family dynamics. Kids can't learn if they're not feeling safe and loved. Your relationship is the precursor for everything else falling into place."

**You're yelling.** Parents need to be conscious of their own: diet/nutrition, activity level and sleep. They impact our mood, our ability to problem solve, stay calm, concentrate and focus. If any of those things are off, it can have a impact on your ability to be your best self."

If you do lose your cool, wait to apologize until everyone has calmed down. Be honest with your kids and tell them if you're tired or overwhelmed. Let them know you will work to do better. Involve your kids in some problem solving about what can be done differently.

**Everyone needs you right now!** You need to prioritize. Make sure everyone is safe and basic needs met. Determine what you and your kids can realistically accomplish, structure everyone's days so you're not overwhelmed.

**You're throwing tantrums.** Sharing your mishaps and finding humor in them is important, especially now. It's our job to model appropriate behavior. When you feel yourself getting upset, take some quiet time to yourself.

Scheduling some time to do things you enjoy can be a way to head off your own frustration before it starts. Setting aside 15 minutes for you can help you feel centered. Remembering that this time is there for you can be a source of calm in especially challenging moments.

**And sometimes you need to ask for help.** We should be reaching out for help when we need it. Think about who you regularly turn to.

**Your kids can't sleep and they want to get in your bed.** Even with regular bedtime rituals and good sleep hygiene, kids of all ages may struggle to fall asleep right now — they need their parents more than usual right now.

If we look at it from their perspective, we are their safe place. Your kids want extra connections with you, and there's plenty of reason to shift habits and let them sleep with you if that feels okay. If not, think about how you can give them what they need. Maybe it's extra hugs and cuddles right before bed or maybe it's promising to check on them every 15 minutes as long as they're quiet."

For anxious children, use this time to teach when to worry, which is never right before bed. Give them time to discuss their worries every morning or afternoon. Before bed, engage in positive conversations about things they like or what they plan to do tomorrow.

**And remember reduce stress by celebrating successes, no matter how small!**